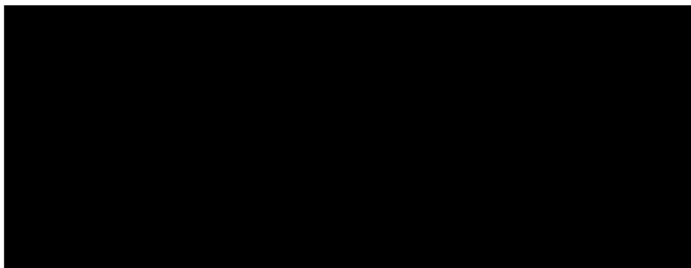


27 AUG 2019



Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request of 30 July 2019 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for:

"Under OIA please give me an update if these regulations are not in force as yet, and if not, why not?"

You might find this interesting, 1.1 Background New Zealand currently has no compulsory national surveillance system for poisonings or other injuries caused by chemicals. This is widely considered to be a deficit of the national public health system. It is also contrary to current legal requirements under the Toxic Substances Act (1979), and is inconsistent with the imminent hazardous substances portion of the HSNO Act that requires hospitalisations from a hazardous substance injury to be notified to the Ministry of Health. A discussion document developed by ESR and issued by the Ministry of Health reviewed the feasibility of introducing a comprehensive surveillance system for chemical injuries in New Zealand that would fill this current gap (Bates and Fowles, 2000). This discussion document proposed specific features such a system would need to include in order for it to be an effective research, surveillance, and regulatory tool at the local and national level. The current guidelines and prototype surveillance system include many of the suggestions found in the submissions received during this consultation. The Ministry of Health determined in 1999, from consultation with PHS, that approximately 5,000 poisonings resulting in hospital notifications occur each year nationally. ESR has determined from coroners reports that about 280 combined unintentional and intentional poisoning deaths occur each year (Bates and Fowles, 2000; MOH 2000). These statistics constitute a considerable public health burden, and the Ministry of Health and a number of PHS have accordingly instituted national and local poisoning prevention and intervention programmes aimed at reducing morbidity and mortality from these injuries. These policies and programmes will require a sound basis in chemical injury surveillance to be successful. I have sent this to the MH to get an update"

New Zealand does have an existing 'compulsory national surveillance system for poisonings or other injuries caused by chemicals'. Under section 143 of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, it states that any medical practitioner who finds that a person is suffering from an injury caused by a hazardous substance must give notice of the injury to the

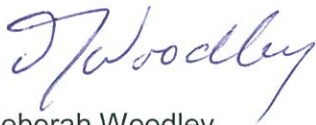
Medical Officer of Health. National reports on hazardous substance injury notifications and detailed statistical reports are available on the Environmental Health Indicators New Zealand website:

- <http://www.ehinz.ac.nz/indicators/hazardous-substances/>
- <http://www.ehinz.ac.nz/indicators/hazardous-substances/health-effects-of-hazardous-substances/>

I trust that this information fulfils your request. Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry of Health website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "D Woodley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and 'W'.

Deborah Woodley
Deputy Director-General
Population Health and Prevention