

14 September 2020

[REDACTED]
By email: [REDACTED]
Ref: H202006051

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Medicinal Cannabis Agency (the Agency) on 11 August 2020 for information regarding medicinal cannabis.

I will respond to each part of your request in turn.

Number of prescriptions for cannabis-based products per each quarter of 2019 and 2020, with breakdown for cannabidiol products (CBD) v other medicinal cannabis products (i.e. > 2% THC).

One medicine containing CBD and THC has been granted consent for sale, supply, distribution and advertising by the Minister of Health, or his/her delegate under section 20 of the Medicines Act 1981. This medicine is not currently funded by PHARMAC and so information on prescribing and supply is not reported to the Ministry. I am therefore unable to provide information about prescriptions under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by the Ministry or any other agency subject to the Act.

Other medicines containing CBD and/or THC that have been prescribed, have been supplied under the exemption provisions in section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981. Information on prescription numbers is not required to be supplied to Medsafe, though it must be held by the supplier and available to Medsafe if needed. Where not held, this information is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

In some instances, this information has been supplied to Medsafe, but this cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. This information is refused under section 18(f) of the Act. Further to this, please note that the information requested would also need to be withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act, as making this information available would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

Number and trade names (+ active ingredients and strength) of products brought within the Medicinal Cannabis Scheme (if any), with the date of "approval" by the Medicinal Cannabis Agency. Also, breakdown of products "approved" under the Scheme per product source (i.e. number and names of domestically produced medicinal cannabis products v medicinal cannabis produced overseas).

To date, no products have been verified as meeting the minimum quality standard under the medicinal cannabis scheme.

Number of applications for product assessment currently being considered by the Medicinal Cannabis Agency (and the number of individual licensed companies that have applied for product assessment).

Applications currently being considered: 10
Number of individual companies that have applied: 3

Number of medicinal cannabis licenses issued (with information on licensed activities, i.e. cultivation, research, nursery, supply...) and number of individual companies (+ company names) licensed to operate under the Scheme (i.e. if one company holds more than 1 license).

As at 10 August 2020, four licences have been granted. A breakdown of these licences is provided in Table One below. Four individual companies were licenced to operate under the scheme as at 10 August 2020.

Table One: Breakdown of licences granted under the medicinal cannabis scheme	
Licensed activities:	Number of licences:
Applications for cultivation activity	3
Applications for nursery activity	3
Applications for possession for manufacture activity	1
Applications for research activity	0
Applications for supply activity	1

Please be aware, we cannot provide the names of companies, that have been granted a licence under the medical cannabis scheme, under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act. As releasing this information would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information.

Of the licenses with cultivation activity, what are predicted total amounts of cannabis (kgs) and cultivation areas (as submitted by applicants in the license applications) for the year?

The predicted total amount of cannabis across issued licences with cultivation activity is between 8,380 kilograms and 14,880 kilograms for the year 2020 to 2021. The total cultivation area across issued licences with cultivation activity is 1.272 hectares.

Number of licensed companies (+ company names) that are Maori-led (or otherwise address the social-equity issues in the Scheme, e.g. received a license despite previous MODA conviction).

Information on ethnicity is not requested during the application process. This information is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act as we do not hold the information and do not believe it is held by any other agency subject to the Act.

How many license applications are being assessed at present (i.e. in the initial check, full assessment or inspection stage but license not issues yet)?

As at 10 August 2020, 38 applications are being assessed.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) 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 Medsafe website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris James', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris James
Licensing Authority
Medicinal Cannabis Agency