

[REDACTED]

By email: [REDACTED]
Ref: H202009440

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 22 December 2020. I shall respond to each part of your request below:

1. *What is the procedure of gaining the results after gathering the patients PCR sample?*

All results are reported electronically from the testing laboratory to the patient's requesting doctor, who will then inform the patient of the outcome. In some situations, a patient may also receive their results via text message or be emailed a secure PDF.

2. *Eg :How many times does the sample get amplified for interpretation/ how many cycles? Example: 30-35*

A sample processed for RT-PCR testing utilised in our accredited laboratories typically run for 40 cycles.

3. *How many people have died of (not with) Covid 19 in New Zealand?*

For information regarding data and statistics please follow the below link:

www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-current-cases.

4. *How reliable is the RT PCR test?*

All the RT-PCR tests employed in NZ are specific for SARS-CoV-2. PCR is highly specific by nature of its primer and probe designs which bind specifically to genomic areas that are unique to SARS-CoV-2. The reliability of the tests is supported by technical and clinical validation both overseas and in the New Zealand labs using these tests. Additionally, the laboratories participate in internal and external quality assurance programmes to monitor the performance of the testing to ensure the validity of the reported results.

5. *If I or my family take the Pfizer vaccine and get injured and / or get sick or medical conditions occur or that come from it long-term who is accountable and liable for prosecution and if any financial losses occur who's responsible for people's compensation?*

As for all medicines including vaccines, in the event of treatment injury this may be the subject of a claim under the Accident Compensation Act 2001. It is not considered that there would be any scope for criminal liability arising from the appropriate use of an approved medicine.

6. *Will any limits or restrictions be put on my human rights and freedoms if I decide not to take them vaccine?*

A person may refuse vaccination in reliance on section 11 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, but there may be other restrictions on persons (such as on employment, accommodation or travel) as a result of the public health risks associated with non-vaccination and potential transmission of any infectious disease.

7. *How safe is the vaccine(Pfizer)? How safe is the vaccine if you have significant allergies? or are pregnant or breastfeeding?*

The known side effects to medicines are listed in the data sheet published on the Medsafe website at: www.medsafe.govt.nz/Medicines/infoSearch.asp.
Once a medicine is approved for use in New Zealand a data sheet is published.

8. *Does the Pfizer vaccine stop the transmission of the Sars -cov -2?*

At present, there is no evidence to suggest that the vaccine can stop the transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

9. *Did scientists/researchers use the RT PCR test to determine the results and safety of the vaccine?*

During clinical trials, rtPCR tests were used to determine if someone had COVID-19.

10. *Has there ever been a successful safe RNA vaccine developed before this present pandemic?*

No companies have applied to Medsafe for consent to distribute a mRNA vaccine prior to Pfizer. The Ministry is unable to comment on their use in other jurisdictions.

11. *Could the RNA vaccine compromise the human immune system?*

For risk benefit analysis and safety information, please refer to:
www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/q-and-a.asp.

This details information about the safe and effective use of medicines.

12. *Will the Pfizer vaccine cause or lead to female sterilization at all? (From spike protein)*

13. *Does the Pfizer vaccine have any impact on infertility for people?*

14. *Do you have to have a resuscitation unit in the area when giving the vaccine to people overseas? and in New Zealand when rolled out ?”*

For further information regarding your questions 12, 13 and 14 please refer to the Medsafe website at: www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-approval-process.asp.

The Ministry is unable to comment on overseas programmes. New Zealand vaccinators are trained in resuscitation and have the equipment to deal with serious allergic reactions to any vaccine administered.

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. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kel-Watson', is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Dr Kelvin Watson
Group Manager, COVID-19 Testing and Supply
COVID-19 Health System Response