

15 February 2021

By email: [REDACTED]
Ref: H202100482

Dear [REDACTED]

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 28 January 2021, relating to Ivermectin. Responses to your questions are set out below.

“1. Please Would you advise whether NZ medical practitioners are legally able to prescribe Ivermectin p.o? (ie: is Ivermectin a registered drug for human use orally in NZ?).”

One product containing the active ingredient Ivermectin has been approved in New Zealand. Further information is available at:

<https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/regulatory/ProductDetail.asp?ID=11299>

“2. If Ivermectin is allowed to be prescribed for humans p.o in NZ, please would you advise whether there are any reasons NZ doctors would not be able to prescribe its use for other conditions where they believe it may be beneficial for their patient (for example Covid-19)?”

Section 25 of the Medicines Act 1981 permits authorised prescribers to prescribe approved medicines for unapproved uses. Further information is available at:

www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/Rlss/unapp.asp

“3. Has the Ministry and government been made aware yet about the new information available about the use of Ivermectin p.o for Covid-19 patients showing it to be an effective treatment? (Please see references below).”

The Ministry is aware of this information. Please note, however, that under New Zealand’s medicines approvals process a pharmaceutical company would need to make an application for new or approved medicines to be used to treat COVID-19. To date, no application for Ivermectin to treat COVID-19 has been received. Further information is available at:

www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/medicine-approval-process.asp

“4. If the Ministry is aware of the new studies showing Ivermectin is effective against Covid-19, have they considered whether to take a position of “not being against” NZ doctors prescribing Ivermectin p.o for Covid-19 as outlined in the new study paper, if the NZ doctor feels it would benefit their patient? If so, please advise the outcome and the reason for the decision reached.”

As noted above, an authorised prescriber can prescribe approved medicines for unapproved uses.

“5. If Ivermectin is not allowed for human oral use in NZ at all and/or is not allowed to be used to treat Covid-19, have you considered changing this in light of the new information now available about the effectiveness of Ivermectin against Covid-19 (listed in references)? Note the NIH has recently changed their stance on this.”

As noted above, one product containing the active ingredient Ivermectin has been approved for use in New Zealand.

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 'Chris James', is positioned above the typed name.

Chris James
Group Manager
Medsafe