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30 November 2022

s 9(2)(a)

Email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H2022016111

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 1 November 2022. Information in response to each part of your request is outlined below.

The number of abortions notified for 2021 that were of a duration of pregnancy of 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 weeks and over. These statistics were previously provided by the Abortion Supervisory Committee.

The information you have requested is provided below in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of reported abortion procedures in 2021 by gestation

Gestation (weeks)	Number of reported abortion procedures
20	20
21	30
22	14
23	14
24	5
≥ 25	21

The number of requests for abortion in 2021 at post 20 weeks' gestation that were declined on the grounds that they were inappropriate

The specific grounds that abortions in 2021 post 20 weeks' gestation were declined as inappropriate

Manatū Hauora does not collect information on grounds for abortion in individual cases. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act. Services were first asked to report on the number of cases where they refused to provide an abortion in 2021. Some services did not capture this data.

Data which has been collected shows that, among those reporting service refusals, the main reason for refusing services was that they were not able to provide the service required. This was either because the person presented at a later gestation of pregnancy than the service provided abortion for, or the person required a surgical service when the service only provided early medical abortion.

During 2021, seven services reported that they refused to provide an abortion for a viable, ongoing pregnancy and made no referral to another service. Manatū Hauora is unable to provide exact numbers of these cases at post 20 weeks due to the nature of the service reporting, specifically not requiring services to report patient gestation for service refusals and obtaining partial reporting for 2021.

The number of medical abortions in 2021 post 22 weeks' gestation where the unborn child was not subject to feticide to stop the baby's heart before commencement of the abortion.

Manatū Hauora does not collect data on feticide prior to medical abortion. The New Zealand Aotearoa Abortion Clinical Guideline recommends feticides for all abortions at 22 weeks' gestation or later.

The number of babies that were born alive in 2021 following a medical abortion

Manatū Hauora has not had any reports which match the situation outlined. As such, your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act. It is very unlikely that a live birth occurs after an intended abortion. A live birth sits outside the Abortion Contraception Sterilisation Act and is no longer considered an abortion. As with all live births, there is a requirement to provide care as required.

The number of women who revoked their decision with an abortion provider in 2021 to proceed with an abortion.

Services were first asked to report on cases where a person decided to not proceed with an abortion at some stage following an initial consultation in 2021. Some services did not capture this data. Fifteen services reported that at least one person chose to not proceed with an abortion following an initial consultation, while three services reported that more than 100 individuals chose to not proceed following an initial enquiry. Manatū Hauora is unable to provide exact numbers of these cases due to the nature of the service reporting, specifically not capturing the reason an individual did not proceeding to have an abortion and also due to obtaining partial reporting for 2021.

The number of women who in 2021 after taking mifepristone and prior to taking misoprostol exercised their right to change their mind and ceased the abortion

This data is not collected by Manatū Hauora, as such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) of the Act.

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 Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ruihua Gu'.

Ruihua Gu
Acting Group Manager, Quality Assurance and Safety
Regulatory Services | Te Pou Whakariterite Ratonga