

31 March 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)
Ref: H202203652

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 the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) received on 7 March 2022. Please find a response to each part of your request below.

"1. When is the vax status of the deceased going to be updated and why are there no more detailed weekly moh covid reports? Current vax/death status shows only 15 deaths total, however we are now at 65 deaths "with" covid 19. We were at 15 deaths at approx Nov 2020!

The Ministry moved to a new approach to reporting deaths of people who have COVID-19. We are automatically reporting all deaths of people who die within 28 days of testing positive for COVID-19. This is the approach used by the UK and many other countries. We will also be providing the following additional details that will include some deaths reported outside of the 28-day window:

- People for whom it is clear that COVID-19 is the cause of death.
- People who had (or were subsequently found to have) COVID-19 when they died but their cause of death was clearly not COVID-19 related
- People whose cause of death is still under investigation e.g. it is being considered by the Coroner, but we know they had COVID-19 when they died.

Over time, as more information is provided about some of the reported deaths, our website data will be updated to reflect that. Whenever new deaths are publicly reported, the Ministry will include a new total of deaths in its 1pm statements. You can find out daily statements here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/news-items>.

2. Please provide me with the data behind hospitalisations where c19 was/is the predominant or underlying cause of admission. E.g someone tests positive for c19 upon admission for a broken leg but never are treated for it, it doesn't worsen/develop etc and they would have otherwise been fine at home.

This level of detail is not routinely available for current hospitalisations at a national level. The Ministry receives clinically coded hospitalisation information after a patient has been discharged. District Health Boards (DHBs) have 21 days after the month of discharge to report the information. This data would allow you to identify the number of people who had COVID-19 and were in hospital, and it would allow you to identify the number of people whose primary

diagnosis on discharge was likely caused by COVID-19, but it would not allow you to identify whether they were diagnosed with COVID prior or after being admitted.

We have been working with the DHBs to include chief presenting complaint for Emergency Department events, however diagnostic coding is not fully implemented at every hospital yet.

3. Please break down the death data by age, individual health status and comorbidity. E.g. how often was covid the predominant/underlying cause of death - and how often was it peripheral or incidental. E.g. palliative care patient, shooting victim, car accident etc.”

Details of COVID-19 related deaths by age and ethnicity is available at the following link: www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-case-demographics. As noted in response to question 1, work is also underway at the Ministry to look at how further information on those who have died with COVID-19 can be reported, such as comorbidities, in a way that protects the private medical information of those involved.

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.

Nāku noa, nā



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