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1 June 2023

s 9(2)(a) [redacted]
Ref: H2023024780

Tēnā koe s 9(2)

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 4 May 2023 for information regarding medicinal cannabis. You requested:

> *"Total number of units of CBD oil sold each month nationally for the months of MARCH 2023 and April 2023.*
> *Total number of units of THC dominant oil sold each month nationally for the months of MARCH 2023 and April 2023.*
> *Total number of units of THC flower products sold each month nationally for the months of MARCH 2023 and April 2023."*

Appended to this letter is the number of packs of unapproved medicines containing cannabis that have been verified as meeting the minimum quality standard and have been supplied under the exemption provisions in section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981 for the month of March 2023.

As data is supplied retrospectively to supply, the data for April was not received at the time of your request. Therefore, the number of packs of medicines containing cannabis supplied in the month of April 2023 is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry on the date of your request and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act. The information provided relates to products containing either cannabidiol (CBD) only, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) only or CBD plus THC.

The information supplied as per the exemption provisions of section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981 is provided directly from importers/manufacturers to Medsafe. Medsafe then records the information provided by the supplier into a database, from which the information provided to you is generated.

When conducting searches in response to requests for information relating to section 29 supply, the information is drawn from the database, based on the active ingredient(s) in the product rather than the product name, dosage form or other features. To provide a breakdown of the information in this way could negatively affect the commercial position of those who supplied it.

Therefore, the specific breakdown of information you have requested has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) where its release would likely unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information; and

- Section 9(2)(ba)(i) to protect information that is subject to an obligation of confidence and making it available would likely prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source.

Where information is withheld under section 9 of the Act, I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

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.

Nāku noa, nā

Chris James
Group Manager
Medsafe

Number of packs of products containing cannabidiol only

2023

Month	Number of packs
March	5007

Number of Packs of products containing tetrahydrocannabinol only

2023

Month	Number of packs
March	1380

Number of Packs of products containing both tetrahydrocannabinol and cannabidiol

2023

Month	Number of packs
March	6326

When considering this data, it is important to note:

- That the number of packs supplied cannot be used to determine the number of prescriptions or the number of patients or the number of doses.
- Reporting information is supplied retrospectively and therefore the number of packs reported as supplied may change if additional reports are received.
- Sativex has consent for distribution as a medicine, and so the reporting requirements associated with the supply of unapproved medicines in section 29 of the Medicines Act 1981 do not apply. The data provided do not include the number of packs of Sativex supplied.