

19 SEP 2019

Mr Daniel Reurich
fyi-request-11046-4ed66556@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: H201907594

Dear Mr Reurich

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your email of 24 August 2019 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- 1. Please provide a comprehensive list of all the studies the Ministry has considered in coming to its current determination on community water fluoridation.*
- 2. Please also provide the details of all participants that were involved in making or reviewing this determination, including their full title, relevant qualifications, place of employment and conflict of interest disclosures at the time they were involved in each committee or review board considering the issue of the safety and/or efficacy of community water fluoridation leading to the Ministry's current determination.*
- 3. Please provide a list of all meetings/hearings/conferences that occurred with respect to the formation the Ministry's current determination on Community Water Fluoridation.*
- 4. Please provide all minutes, notes, reports and conclusions of each meeting/hearing/conference.*
- 5. Please provide details of all communications, meetings, and consultations with all third-party persons, organisations, or other government agencies that contributed in the formulation of the Ministries current determination.*

The response of the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) to your request is as follows:

Parts one to five of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and we have no grounds to believe that the information is held by or connected more closely with the functions of another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

The Ministry does not collect or hold a list of the studies that have contributed to the Ministry's position on community water fluoridation. Neither does it hold the information requested about meetings held and participants involved in work contributing to the Ministry's position on community water fluoridation.

The reason for this is that the practice of community water fluoridation in New Zealand is based on the advice of the World Health Organization and other international health authorities. The advice of these organisations is based in turn on consideration of the large

body of international scientific evidence regarding the safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness of community water fluoridation.

You may be interested, for example, in the New Zealand report *Health effects of water fluoridation: A review of the scientific evidence*, published on behalf of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the Office of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor (the Report), which comprehensively reviewed the scientific evidence on the efficacy and safety of community water fluoridation. The Report found that there are no significant adverse effects of community water fluoridation within the range of concentrations currently recommended by the Ministry and used in New Zealand, and provides compelling evidence of dental health benefits for New Zealanders. The report can be found on <https://www.pmcsa.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Health-effects-of-water-fluoridation-Aug2014.pdf>.

Additional information on community water fluoridation is available on the Ministry's website, including information provided in relation to the Health (Fluoridation of Drinking Water) Amendment Bill currently before the House of Representatives:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/fluoride-and-oral-health/water-fluoridation/proposed-legislative-changes-decision-making-fluoridation-drinking-water-supplies>.

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Woodley

**Deputy Director-General
Population Health and Prevention**