

11 November 2020

H. Campbell
fyi-request-12717-02094e09@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear H. Campbell

Re: Response to Office of the Ombudsman investigation ref: 526231

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) has been advised of your complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman in response to the Ministry's decision to withhold the ethnicity and age of those who had died from COVID-19 in New Zealand in your request of 28 April 2020 (H202002618 refers).

The Ombudsman has held that the Ministry was entitled to withhold most of the information you requested but should have released information on three deaths that were already publicly announced at the time. For this reason, the Ministry can confirm that as at 28 April 2020, three of the 20 individuals who had died from COVID-19 were of European/Other ethnicity and the ages were 62, 74 and 87 years.

The Ombudsman has also directed the Ministry to release a summary of the information, in the public interest.

As at 28 April 2020, 16 of the 20 people who had died from COVID-19 were of European/Other ethnicity. The remaining four people were Māori or another ethnicity group used for COVID-19 reporting (Middle Eastern/Latin American/African).

I trust this information addresses your complaint.

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Drew
Group Manager COVID-19 Science and Insights
COVID-19 Health System Response

cc Michael Cleary, Investigator, Office of the Ombudsman
(Michael.Cleary@ombudsman.parliament.nz)