

11 September 2020

Dan Simperingham

By email: fyi-request-13589-269cd3a7@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202006466

Dear Dan Simperingham

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 25 August 2020 for:

“Can you please inform me of the total number of cases of any and all types of influenza that are not recorded as a Covid 19 case in NZ between 1 Jan 2020 and 23 August 2020. Please also share the total number of deaths related to these influenza cases. And lastly comparison data from the same period in 2019, 2018, 2017”

The most recent influenza death data currently available is the preliminary 2017 numbers published on the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) website at:
<https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/mortality-2017-data-tables>

Cause of death data is not currently available for the complete period specified. The Ministry's clinical coding team reviews the death certificate and health history of the deceased to assign cause of death codes. Any death which requires a coronial inquiry can take two or more years for cause of death to be assigned. We currently anticipate preliminary 2020 mortality cause of death data becoming available in December 2022.

Influenza case information is available from the Institute of Environmental Science and Research Ltd (ESR). Surveillance data is collected from Week 18 (27 April) to Week 39 (27 Sept 2020). At 27 August 2020, general practitioner (GP)-based influenza-like illness (ILI) surveillance, and hospital-based severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) surveillance and community-based Southern Hemisphere Influenza and Vaccine Effectiveness Research Surveillance (SHIVERS)-II and SHIVERS-III cohort surveillance had zero influenza detection being reported. The laboratory-based non-sentinel surveillance reported six influenza positive cases, three influenza A and three influenza B. Please refer to ESR for further information on surveillance data.


Regarding previous years 2019, 2018 and 2017 data, please refer to the following links on the ESR website:

- https://surv.esr.cri.nz/PDF_surveillance/Virology/FluVac/FluVac2020.pdf
- https://surv.esr.cri.nz/PDF_surveillance/Virology/FluVac/FluVac2019.pdf
- [https://surv.esr.cri.nz/PDF_surveillance/Virology/FluVac/FluVac2018\(1\).pdf](https://surv.esr.cri.nz/PDF_surveillance/Virology/FluVac/FluVac2018(1).pdf)

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.

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

Yours sincerely



Gaynor Bradfield
**Manager, Office of the Deputy Director-General
Data and Digital**