

J Harris

By email: fyi-request-13789-cfdc3534@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202007128

Dear J Harris

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 14 September 2020 to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) asking for:

"...the total costs of all the PCR tests the Ministry of Health has run (approx. 370,000) since August 6th to September 14th 2020? Please include the costs of; the primary care person for test and notification, the laboratory test, any costs relating to transport, any costs related to the reporting of results, but please exclude the plant costs of testing clinics..."

There were 389,515 tests carried out between 6 August and 14 September 2020. Since 1 July 2020, the Ministry has funded district health boards (DHBs) an average price of \$120 per swab and it pays the laboratories \$70 per test processed - a total average cost of \$190. This is an average cost and includes variables such as location, and type of swabbing facility. Individual DHBs pay local service providers for community swabbing and the labs for their actual costs incurred.

The total costs spent by the Ministry is difficult to determine with certainty as individual DHBs pay local service providers for community swabbing and the labs for their actual costs incurred. The approximate cost of the tests carried out in the period mentioned is in the range of \$74 million. You may wish to contact the DHBs directly for detail regarding their actual spend on testing as this information is not held by the Ministry.

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



Dr Kelvin Watson
Group Manager COVID-19 Immunisation, Testing and Supply
COVID-19 Health System Response