

16 November 2020

Debbie Leyland

By email: fyi-request-14069-711b7c87@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202008041

Dear Ms Leyland

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 2 November 2020 for:

"I would like to request the number of people who have a Prescription Subsidy Card issued by your Ministry."

From 1 February 2020 to 31 October 2020 there have been 663,702 people (individuals) who are recorded as having a Prescription Subsidy Card (PSC). The number of PSCs is provided from 1 February 2020 as PSCs expire on 30 January each year. In each new year (1 February to 30 January the following year) a new PSC can only be issued after a family unit has paid the prescription co-payment for 20 new prescription items.

Please note that the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) does not issue PSCs. They are issued by individual pharmacies when the patient (or their family unit) becomes eligible.

The Ministry only holds PSC data if the numbers are included in the pharmacy claim. This is when the pharmacy submits a reimbursement claim to the Ministry for payment of the medicines the pharmacy has dispensed. The Ministry has no record of PSC numbers if the pharmacy does not include them in the claim. As the PSC number is not a mandatory field, the Ministry's data may be incomplete.

More information on the PSC scheme is available on the Ministry's website at the following link: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/treatments-and-surgery/medications/prescription-subsidy-scheme>.

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



Clare Perry
**Acting Deputy Director-General
Health System Innovation and Improvement**