

14 April 2021

Simon

By email: fyi-request-14979-a8215100@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202103319

Dear Simon

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 22 March 2021 for information regarding Cycle Threshold (Ct) values.

My responses to your questions are as follows.

“1: why is New Zealand running at 40?”

Information in response to this part of your request is publicly available at the following links:

- www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/information-release/h202100070_26_jan_2021_covid-19_cycle_threshold_value_for_pcr_testing_0.pdf
- www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/information-release/h202008534_11_jan_2021_covid_pcr_testing_cycles_0.pdf

“2: on January 20 WHO change its guidelines, has New Zealand adopted these guidelines?”

Points 1 to 3 of the World Health Organization notice (<https://www.who.int/news/item/20-01-2021-who-information-notice-for-ivd-users-2020-05>) did not require any change to the New Zealand clinical laboratories performing RT-PCR COVID-19 testing, as all laboratories in the national network are ISO 15189 accredited, which means these points would already be incorporated in their standard operating procedures.

In addition, New Zealand laboratories have not adopted reporting of Ct values to the healthcare provider (Point 4) as the clinical application of the Ct value is uncertain. Ct values are not standardised across all RT-PCR platforms; therefore, results cannot be compared across different tests. Furthermore, no clinical studies have validated the use of Ct value to guide patient management.

“3: what are the current cycle threshold settings?”

Information in response to this part of your request is publicly available at the following link:
www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/information-release/h202008534_11_jan_2021_covid_pcr_testing_cycles_0.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. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [@..](#) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Darryl Carpenter', written over a horizontal line.

Darryl Carpenter

**Group Manager, COVID-19 Immunisation, Testing and Supply
COVID-19 Health System Response**