

27 Septembr 2021

Mr Berger

By email: fyi-request-15883-1c758758@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202110729

Tēnā koe Mr Berger

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) received on 19 August 2021 for information regarding the number of ventilators and ICU beds available.

You specifically asked:

*“Can you now provide an update on the number of ventilators and ICU beds available?
Alternatively, can you provide any estimates of the number of ventilators and ICU beds?”*

Please note that the Ministry does not keep a regular count of ICU beds under normal circumstances. ICU bed capacity in New Zealand changes daily, depending on local need, planning, and staffing. While the DHBs are not currently required to report this data, it can be activated if needed as part of any increase in our COVID-19 response.

Due to the present outbreak, DHBs are reporting ICU capacity to the Ministry. Current reporting to the Ministry is based on the number of DHB reported ICU/high-dependency beds. Resourced beds are staffed, have a ventilator, and available to receive a critical patient. As of 4 September 2021, there were 332 resourced ICU beds in public hospitals in New Zealand.

As of 16 August 2021, the latest available data, there were 621 ICU-capable ventilators in public hospitals, and 132 in the national reserve for DHBs if required. This is an increase of 300 ICU-capable ventilators since March 2020, when the country had 321 ICU-capable ventilators in public hospitals. Note these figures do not account for capacity in private hospitals, or other parts of the public sector such as search and rescue, or anaesthetic machines.

Information on the number of resourced ICU beds is used to measure ICU bed capacity in New Zealand. This number changes daily, depending on local need, planning, and staffing.

I trust this 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: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

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

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robyn Shearer', written over a faint horizontal line.

Robyn Shearer
Deputy Chief Executive
Sector Support and Infrastructure