

2 July 2021

Chris McCashin

By email: fyi-request-15932-99725ee5@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202107928

Dear Chris

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 30 June 2021 for:

"please provide the document that outlines how the Ministry of Health [the Ministry] determines how "Deaths are unlikely to be related to the Covid-19 vaccine".

Can you also comment on what the criteria would be to determine if and when the experimental Pfizer vaccination is deemed to be doing more damage than the Covid-19 virus based on the statistics below?

The Ministry expects healthcare professionals involved in certifying the death of a person to follow normal processes in determining and registering the cause of death. Further information can be found here: www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections/mortality-collection.

While anyone – either a healthcare professional or a member of the public – can report an adverse reaction following vaccination (AEFI), reporting is voluntary. The form for reporting AEFI from a COVID-19 vaccine is publicly available at: <https://report.vaccine.covid19.govt.nz/s/>

If a death is reported to the Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) at the University of Otago they make sure they have information on underlying conditions and other events near the time of death, and correspond with the healthcare professionals involved. CARM use World Health Organization (WHO) causality assessment criteria to determine the probability that there was a connection between vaccination and any events occurring after. Further information can be found here: www.who.int/publications/m/item/WHO-causality-assessment. Determining the cause of death is the role of the coroner, should the death be referred to them.

Regarding part two of your request, while the Act enables people to request official information from the Ministry, it only applies to information it holds. There is no obligation to compile information it does not hold or create information in order to respond to requests, nor is the Ministry obliged to provide or prove an opinion.

This part of your request appears to seek comment about the merits of the Ministry's COVID-19 vaccine programme rather than a request for official information. The Act does not support requests in which a requester states an opinion and then seeks some form of comment on it, couched as a request for official information.

Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

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 website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris James', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris James
Group Manager
Medsafe