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7 September 2021

Ross Francis

By email: fyi-request-16367-3172ea78@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202110199

Tēnā koe Ross

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 10 August 2021 for information regarding the meeting of the Immunisation Implementation Advisory Group, on 22 January 2021.

Please find a response to each part of your request below.

> *"What risks, if any, did the Ministry identify given that it knew that the vaccine would be approved and was aware of concerns about its safety?"*

This part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist. Please note, Medsafe operates independently from the Ministry, therefore, the Ministry was unaware of what decision Medsafe would make regarding approval of the Pfizer vaccine.

> *"On what date, if prior to 22 January, were officials informed that the vaccine would be approved by Medsafe?"*

Provisional consent for the Pfizer vaccine was granted on 3 February 2021.

> *"Are vaccine recipients informed, when being vaccinated, that the Ministry of Health knew the vaccine would be approved, even though it was aware of safety concerns?"*

This part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information does not exist. As noted above, Medsafe operates independently from the Ministry, therefore, the Ministry was unaware of what decision Medsafe would make regarding approval of the Pfizer vaccine.

> *"Please provide me with all information held by the Ministry, including in the minds of officials, about the Norwegian trial data.*
> *Have vaccinators been supplied with information about the concerning Norwegian trial data? If so, please supply me with all such information given to vaccinators.*
> *At the same meeting, the group discussed: "There is no specific control group for trialling the vaccine in New Zealand.*
> *Has a control group since been established? If so, please supply me with all information about the trial group."*

Under section 12(2) of the Act, this part of your request lacks due particularity. The Ministry is not aware of the "Norwegian trial data" referred to in your request. Therefore, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g) 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. The Act only applies to information that is already held by the Ministry. There is no obligation for the Ministry to create information in order to respond to a request. The Ministry is also not obliged to prove an opinion. Some aspects of your request appear to be asking the Ministry to either create information, provide an opinion, or compile information it does not hold in order to respond to your request.

The Ministry remains willing to engage with you on a revised scope for 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

Clare Perry
Deputy Director-General
Health System Improvement and Innovation