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Ross Francis

By email: fyi-request-16457-080b632c@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202110800

Tēnā koe Ross

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 20 August 2021 for information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Ministry is confident that the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective and that any risks outweigh the benefits of the protection the vaccine provides. The vaccine has met international standards for quality, safety and efficacy and Pfizer is providing ongoing data to Medsafe, New Zealand's medicines regulator.

In answer to your specific questions:

"...all information held, since 1 January 2021, about the vaccine's effectiveness. That includes information held about its ineffectiveness."

Medsafe, the Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) and the Ministry of Health are closely monitoring the safety of the COVID-19 vaccines. Medsafe publishes a weekly safety report for the COVID-19 vaccine which provides information on the most commonly reported side effects, adverse events of special interest and possible safety signals.

The effectiveness of the vaccine is not exclusively measured by number of breakthrough infections (those infected with COVID-19 despite being fully or partially vaccinated). The effectiveness can also be measured by the number of people who are admitted to hospital and the number of deaths from COVID-19. Please see Document 1 attached, with all information regarding vaccine effectiveness for mRNA vaccines from a range of international studies. This includes:

- case numbers in vaccinated groups
- reduced transmission
- efficacy against hospital admissions/severe cases
- number of severe cases in the vaccinated groups.

The Ministry is supporting and providing guidance to the 'Ka Mātau, Ka Ora' study, which is investigating the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine in New Zealand. This study will inform the Ministry on the effectiveness of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in a New Zealand population setting, with equity at the centre of these investigations. The press release of the vaccine study can be found at: www.malaghan.org.nz/news/new-study-into-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine-to-provide-unique-nz-data.

“As of today (20 August 2021), how many partially vaccinated people, including those in MIQ, have become infected with Covid-19 post-vaccination?”

“As of today, how many fully vaccinated people, including those in MIQ, have become infected with Covid-19 post-vaccination?”

Based on the data available, the breakdown of COVID-19 data and vaccinations is as follows as of 20 August 2021:

- 36 people were unvaccinated at the time of being reported as a case
- six people had received one dose of the vaccine less than 14 days before becoming a case
- two people had received one dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before becoming a case
- one person was fully vaccinated at least 14 days before becoming a case.

The vaccination status of positive COVID-19 cases in managed isolation and quarantine facilities (MIQF) is as follows as of 20 August 2021:

- 51 people were unvaccinated at the time of being reported as a case
- six people had received one dose of the vaccine less than 14 days before becoming a case
- five people had received one dose of the vaccine at least 14 days before becoming a case
- three people were fully vaccinated at least 14 days before becoming a case.

“Does the Ministry have a record of the number of health professionals that have declined to be vaccinated in New Zealand due to concerns about its safety and or lack of effectiveness?”

The Ministry does not hold information about the number of health professionals that have declined to be vaccinated. This part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist. However, in the interests of being helpful, I am releasing to you information on the number of people who have been vaccinated. This is in document 2.

“What action, if any, has the Ministry taken to determine how many health professionals have declined to be vaccinated in New Zealand”

The Ministry has provided advice to district health boards (DHBs) and healthcare providers, which can be found at: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-information-health-professionals. The Ministry is preparing information for the Minister for COVID-19 Response regarding the vaccination status of frontline health workers. This information is withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

For reliable and trusted information about the vaccine, please visit the covid19.govt.nz, health.govt.nz, karawhiau.nz, and Ministry for Pacific People or websites.

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: 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.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo Gibbs', with a period at the end.

Jo Gibbs
National Director
COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme