

28 September 2021

Paul Jones

By email: fyi-request-16489-b2375a56@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Paul

Official Information Act Request: COVID-19 case count

On 24 August 2021 you sent a request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 to the Ministry of Health, who transferred your request to ESR on 31 August 2021. Your request was as follows:

1) Provide a breakdown of "Confirmed Active" cases for the "Total since first NZ case" for each of the categorisations used in the definition above being;

- a) PCR validated Specimen, that was NOT weak positive,
- b) PCR validated Specimen, that was weak positive and required second confirmed sampling,
- c) PCR validated Specimen confirmed with SARS-CoV-2 sequencing,
- d) Significant rise in IgG antibody level

2) For all "Confirmed Active" cases for the "Total since first NZ case" provide a break down of cases into the following groups;

- a) Asymptomatic cases,
- b) Symptomatic cases

3) For the Symptomatic cases at (2) provide a total count of the clinical criteria symptoms, being;

- a) fever (at least 38°C)
- b) new or worsening cough
- c) sore throat
- d) shortness of breath
- e) sneezing and runny nose (coryza)
- f) anosmia (loss of sense of smell) or dysgeusia (altered sense of taste).

Our response to your request:

PCR validated Specimen, that was NOT weak positive

- 2537 cases that did not require a repeat PCR test
- Note: the 2537 cases here is derived from 2698 – 161 (from (b) below).

PCR validated Specimen, that was weak positive and required second confirmed sampling

- To look at the number of cases for which a second test may have been required to confirm an active infection we have used a definition of a repeat test within two days of the initial positive PCR test. Based on this definition there are 161 cases that have a reported repeat positive PCR test within two days of the first positive test.

PCR validated Specimen confirmed with SARS-CoV-2 sequencing

- Of the 2698 confirmed cases, genomes were obtained for 1803.
- Note: whole genome sequencing is not used as a diagnostic test.

Significant rise in IgG antibody level

- 12 of the 2698 cases are reported as having a significant rise in IgG antibody level between paired sera.
- Note: serology is not being used as a confirmatory diagnostic test. All of these cases were diagnosed with PCR test.

Asymptomatic cases

- 653 cases

*Symptomatic cases**

- 2012 cases
- * Symptomatic cases include 1911 cases who were symptomatic at diagnosis + 101 cases who were asymptomatic at diagnosis but later developed symptoms

Unknown

- 33 cases

Breakdown of symptomatic cases

Symptoms	Number of symptomatic cases*
Fever	921
Cough	1354
Sore Throat	829
Shortness of Breath	425
Coryza	814
Anosmia	519
Dysgeusia	21

* Symptomatic cases from (2) above, cases may have reported multiple symptoms.

Your right to seek a review

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jill Vintiner', is centered on the page.

Jill Vintiner
**Joint General Manager Health and Environment Group - Health
ESR**