

1 December 2021

Richard McLeod

By email: [fyi-request-17145-0ef3870e@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-17145-0ef3870e@requests.fyi.org.nz)  
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Ref: H202114098

Dear Richard

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 11 October 2021.

As per section 18A(2) of the Official Information Act 1982, the Ministry can combine multiple requests that are about the same or similar subject matters, and received simultaneously or in short succession. Please find a response to your request below.

1. *which, if any, nasal spray treatments for COVID-19 are being considered for approval*
2. *what criteria are being used to determine approval of a nasal spray treatment*
3. *what criteria are being used to determine rejection of a nasal spray treatment*

Before Medsafe can consider a Medicine for approval the sponsor company must first send in an application for the product which includes relevant supporting data. Medsafe has not received any applications to date for any new medicines in a nasal spray dosage form indicated for the treatment of COVID-19. More information about the Medsafe approval process can be found at: [www.medsafe.govt.nz/Consumers/Safety-of-Medicines/Medsafe-Evaluation-Process.asp](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz/Consumers/Safety-of-Medicines/Medsafe-Evaluation-Process.asp)

*Can you please detail the policy behind why the Pfizer vaccine is exclusively approved for rollout.*

A single vaccine roll out using the Pfizer Comirnaty vaccine was chosen for a number of reasons. These include vaccine availability, safety profile and efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine. Alongside this, there are logistical benefits to rolling out a single vaccine to a large group, including ease of training staff and storage of the vaccine as well as simplifying post vaccination monitoring.

Papers on the decision to use Pfizer in the COVID-19 immunisation programme have been proactively released – you can find them here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/release-ministerial-decision-making-documents/covid-19-immunisation-programme-cabinet-papers-and-minutes>.

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](mailto: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](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gibbs', followed by a period.

Joanne Gibbs  
**National Director, Operations**  
**COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme**