

14 January 2022

Helen Wallis

By email: fyi-request-17603-adbc4f92@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202117600

Tēnā koe Helen

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 14 December 2021 for:

...any and all documentation given to the Prime Minister and or her cabinet about vaccinating teachers to protect our children.

I would like to amend it to I am requesting any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes provided by any and all persons involved with the Ministry of Health (including but not limited to employee, advisor, recipient of information) to the Ministry of Health to the Minister of health and/or the Director general of health about the effect (benefits, risks, social consequences, loss of staff etc) of vaccinating teachers to protect children.

I am also requesting any and all (including but not limited to) studies made, research funded, documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes provided by any and all persons involved with the Ministry of Health (including but not limited to employee, advisor, recipient of information) to the Minister of Health and/or the Director general of health about the effect of vaccinating children in all age groups from 0 -18 years.

I would like to request any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes received from or sent to the New Zealand Medical council in regards to what doctors and medical staff may and may not do, say, advise, prescribe, or question in regards to Covid 19: in general, treatment thereof (pre and post infection), vaccination, natural immunity generated.

I would also like to request any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes that the MoH has in regards to the omicron variant of covid 19.

On 22 December 2021, the Ministry contacted you about refining your request, because the way it was currently worded was for a very large volume of information. You were advised that your request could be refused under section 18(f) of the Act. You did not respond.

On 12 January 2021, the Ministry contacted you again about refining your request. You responded asking for advice as to how to refine your request. The Ministry advised you could select a specific time frame or specify a topic. You replied with a refined request of:

Please focus this section on the communication to the minister of health and Director general of health. for the last two months leading up to the vaccination mandate for teachers.

I would like to amend it to I am requesting any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes provided by any and all persons involved with the Ministry of Health (including but not limited to employee, advisor, recipient of information) to the Minister of health and/or the Director general of health about the effect (benefits, risks, social consequences, loss of staff etc) of vaccinating teachers to protect children.

Please focus the following on the the time period 1st October 2021 - 31 December 2021. Please ensure that all information from all time frames are included regarding the benefit to risk is discussed for children aged 5-11

I am also requesting any and all (including but not limited to) studies made, research funded, documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes provided by any and all persons involved with the Ministry of Health (including but not limited to employee, advisor, recipient of information) to the Minister of Health and/or the Director general of health about the effect of vaccinating children in all age groups from 0 -18 years.

The following section need not be refined as I imagine there is a summary already made.

I would like to request any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes received from or sent to the New Zealand Medical council in regards to what doctors and medical staff may and may not do, say, advise, prescribe, or question in regards to Covid 19: in general, treatment thereof (pre and post infection), vaccination, natural immunity generated.

Omicron is relatively new therefore a time frame doesn't make sense.

I would also like to request any and all (including but not limited to) documentation, communication, notes, emails, online meetings minutes and meeting minutes that the MoH has in regards to the omicron variant of covid 19.

Your refined request is still very large and would require the involvement of many Ministry staff across multiple directorates, and the potential to have hundreds of documents within scope. Searching for communications and emails would involve one member of staff searching through multiple email inboxes, which would unreasonably interfere with the workings of the Ministry. Therefore, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. I have considered whether charging or extending the time to compile the information that would enable the Ministry to respond, however, as each piece of correspondence would have to be individually reviewed. The Ministry remains willing to engage with you on a revised scope for your request.

Please note, the Ministry does not conduct scientific research or studies. The Immunisation Handbook (Chapter 5) provides references to scientific studies conducted regarding COVID-19 and the vaccine: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/immunisation-handbook-2020/5-coronavirus-disease-covid-19.

Medsafe also publishes up to date information regarding the Comirnaty vaccine, including its clinical efficacy and safety at: www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/PUArticles/June2021/Spotlight-on-Comirnaty-vaccine.html.

More studies and research regarding the vaccine can be found at:

- *PubMed* (pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/), and
- The New England Journal of Medicine (www.nejm.org/coronavirus)

The datasheet for Comirnaty for the use in children aged 5-11 years old is publicly available at: medsafe.govt.nz/profs/Datasheet/c/Comirnaty0.2mlOrangeCapinj.pdf.

Information regarding Omicron from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can be found at: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html

Further information about Omicron that you may find useful is available at:

- www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/about-covid-19/covid-19-about-omicron-variant
- www.health.govt.nz/news-media/news-items/omicron-update

For information regarding the vaccination mandate of teachers, please contact the Ministry of Education at: www.education.govt.nz/our-work/contact-us/.

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



Jan Torres

**Acting Manager OIA Services
Office of the Director-General**