

25 January 2022

ASE

By email: fyi-request-17762-42d251a8@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202116888

Tēnā koe ASE

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 29 November 2021 for:

“Can The Ministry of Health disclose all changes between these two documents, and the reasons for all such changes?”

Can The Ministry of Health disclose what basis of evidence was used to support its 19 Nov position statement (eg data, research, and other information)? In particular, what basis of evidence was used to substantiate the assertions which were removed or de-emphasised from version 2.0 of this position statement?

Can The Ministry of Health disclose how such changes/revisions to this position statement are beneficial to public health, on the basis of evidence-based public health policies? Or, were such changes based on something other than evidence-based public health policies?

Aside from public health goals, supported by evidence-based risk/benefit and cost/benefit analyses, what other influences led The Ministry of Health to revise this position?”

The position statement was produced to support healthcare professionals in their day-to-day work. The statement was revised following feedback from and consultation with healthcare professionals, to ensure the position was clear and to avoid confusion. We also became aware of the mis-use of information by those opposed to vaccination by quoting sentences out of context, which the revision has addressed. There has been no change to the overall meaning or intent of the statement. A copy of the original document has been provided to you for your convenience. This is attached to this letter as Document 1.

Please note, while the Act allows New Zealanders to ask for information from Ministers and government agencies, there is no requirement for agencies to create new information, compile information they do not hold or provide or prove an opinion. The Act does not support requests where an opinion, comment, argument, or hypothetical statement is put to the Ministry for response, couched as a request for information. These questions are therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act on the grounds that the information sought is not held by the Ministry.

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 'Robyn Carey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robyn Carey
Chief Medical Officer