

2 March 2022

Mr Melvin

By email: fyi-request-18551-d923b126@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202201285

Dear Mr Melvin

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 12 February 2022 for information relating contract tracers at the Ministry of Health (the Ministry). You specifically requested:

“How many people are currently working/employed for the Ministry as contact tracers?”

Contact tracing is undertaken by several agencies including the National Investigation and Tracing Centre in the Ministry, public health units (PHUs) and telehealth call providers such as CBG Health Research and Whakarongorau Aotearoa, who are contracted by the Ministry to undertake telehealth work. People working in these organisations undertake a range of roles including contact tracing. Most people undertaking contact tracing that are employed by the 12 PHUs (which form part of district health boards) also manage their business-as-usual public health activities. The contracted telehealth providers are used across a range of telehealth services including, but is not limited to:

- Contact tracing (including case investigation self-service support)
- COVID-19 vaccine booking (including registrations and enquiries)
- COVID-Info Line
- Quarantine free travel
- Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities
- Rapid Antigen Testing (including enquiries and self-service support)
- Care in the Community.

While the Ministry cannot advise the numbers working on contact tracing, it can advise the total current workforce across our contracted providers in the above mentioned COVID-19 telehealth services is more than 3,280 full-time equivalents (FTE) rostered over seven days. This excludes any supervisory, support and management staff. It also excludes PHUs, or Ministry staff who provide operational support and guidance for the telehealth providers.

I trust this satisfies 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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CO'Connor', written in a cursive style.

Chrystal O'Connor
Group Manager Tracing, Testing & Supply
COVID-19 Health System Response