

14 August 2023

Lance Lavery
fyi-request-22774-95ffddf0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Lance,

Official information request HNZ00019863

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), which was transferred from Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) to Te Whatu Ora on 1 June 2023.

- “1. Comprehensive annual mortality rates in New Zealand from 2015 through 2023, inclusive of data on cause-specific mortality, where available.
2. Data regarding the official COVID-19 death count in New Zealand, inclusive of a breakdown by age, gender, and comorbidity status, where possible.
3. Information about the vaccination program in New Zealand, specifically data related to the number of individuals vaccinated, the types of vaccines administered, and any adverse events reported post-vaccination.
4. Any internal reports or communications discussing the potential impact of the COVID-19 vaccination program on mortality rates.
5. Any research or official documentation the government possesses that discuss a potential correlation between the COVID-19 vaccination program and excess deaths, if any.
6. Information about the government's stance and policies regarding the use of genetically engineered mRNA vaccines and the potential risks associated with them.”*

Manatū Hauora subsequently advised Te Whatu Ora that that your request asks for information which is more closely aligned with the functions of Manatū Hauora. For this reason, On 12 June 2023 Te Whatu Ora transferred **parts 4 - 6** of your request back to Manatū Hauora under section 14(b)(ii) of the Act.

Please find responses to the remaining parts of your request below.

- 1. Comprehensive annual mortality rates in New Zealand from 2015 through 2023, inclusive of data on cause-specific mortality, where available.*

Currently, 2018 is the most recent year for which final cause specific mortality data is available. Preliminary data is available for 2019 and 2020. Mortality information is published online at: <https://tewhatauora.shinyapps.io/mortality-web-tool/>.

After the close of a calendar year, there is a 12–18 month process to assign cause of death codes to the majority of deaths in that year. Te Whatu Ora's clinical coding team reviews the death certificate and health history of the deceased to assign cause of death codes. Approximately 10% of deaths are referred to the coroner each year to determine cause. Deaths which require a coronial inquiry can take 2-3 or more years for cause of death to be assigned. We do not make mortality data available publicly until the majority of deaths have been assigned a cause of death, so that the data we release is complete and accurate. The Chief Coroner has noted delays in the time it is taking them to assign cause of death codes.

Mortality rates, not including cause of death, are available online from Stats NZ.

The earliest fact of death information is available online from the Stats NZ COVID-19 data portal here: www.stats.govt.nz/experimental/covid-19-data-portal. Stats NZ also publish mortality statistics here: www.stats.govt.nz/tools/stats-infoshare. Select 'Populations', and then 'Deaths'.

2. Data regarding the official COVID-19 death count in New Zealand, inclusive of a breakdown by age, gender, and comorbidity status, where possible.

Please refer to the attached excel file for this information.

Please note that a breakdown of comorbidities is not provided in this as this information is not held in a readily collatable form.

The data in the response to question 2 has had confidentiality methods applied to it. These methods are described below

Confidentiality methods

To avoid revealing sensitive information about identifiable individuals in our data, we apply two data confidentiality methods, **perturbation** and **suppression**, to any data that is not already released as exact counts on the Ministry's website. This is under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of the individuals concerned.

Perturbation is the adding of random noise to data and **suppression** is not providing data, where doing so could compromise confidentiality.

For data that is not already provided exactly on the website:

- All values between 1 and 5 are suppressed
- Zero values are provided exactly, except for in sensitive categories where a zero value may be suppressed to protect other low values
- Values of 6 and above are perturbed using fixed random rounding to base 3 (FRR3). This entails rounding values to neighbouring multiples of 3. For example, 11 may be rounded to 12 or 9.

For more information, visit: www.data.govt.nz/toolkit/privacy-and-security/understanding-data-confidentiality/data-confidentiality-principles-and-methods-report/.

Examples:

True value	Displayed value
4	.s (suppressed)
11	9 or 12
15	15
16	15 or 18
301	300 or 303

3. Information about the vaccination program in New Zealand, specifically data related to the number of individuals vaccinated, the types of vaccines administered, and any adverse events reported post-vaccination.

On 13 June 2023, Te Whatu Ora contacted you to clarify what information you are seeking specifically. To date, we have not received a response from you. However, we believe the information you are seeking is available at:

- www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/covid-vaccine-data, for COVID-19 vaccination data; and
- www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-report-overview.asp, for information about adverse events following immunisation (AEFI).

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nzOIA@health.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Te Whatu Ora may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Gaynor Bradfield
Manager
Office of the Chief Data and Digital