

31 October 2023

Chris McCashin  
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Tēnā koe Chris

**Your request for Official information, reference: HN20028956**

Thank you for your email of 25 August 2023 to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) that was transferred to Te Whatu Ora on 29 August 2023, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*“Please provide from 2020 - 2023 broken down per month*

*Total number of woman that passed away during child birth*

*Whether the infant also passed away*

*And whether the infant passed during, days after or within twelve months of the birth”*

The Mortality Collection, which is available on the following web link [www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our\[1\]health-system/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and\[1\]surveys/collections/mortality-collection/](http://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our[1]health-system/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and[1]surveys/collections/mortality-collection/), classifies the underlying cause of death for all deaths registered in Aotearoa New Zealand and all registered foetal deaths (stillbirths). Currently, 2018 is the most recent year for which final cause specific mortality data is available. Preliminary data is available for 2019 and 2020. 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. As such, your request for data in New Zealand from 2020 to 2023 is declined under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

However, there is some more recent information on this subject area available, published in June was the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual report of the Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee:

<https://www.hgsc.govt.nz/resources/resource-library/fifteenth-annual-report-of-the-perinatal-and-maternal-mortality-review-committee-reporting-mortality-and-morbidity-2020/>

**How to get in touch**

If you have any questions, you can contact us at [h.nzOIA@health.govt.nz](mailto: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](http://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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Cleary', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Michael Cleary  
**Acting OIA Manager**  
**Government Services**