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15 March 2024

Chris Johnston

By email: [fyi-request-24923-c7713c16@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-24923-c7713c16@requests.fyi.org.nz)  
Ref: H2024036288

Tēnā koe Chris

### **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 – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 16 February 2024 as a follow up to information provided to you under reference: H2024034795. You requested:

*“The Ministry of Health does not file information that is publicly available. ” Can you please produce the documents that substantiate that this is the policy of the organisation... 2.If you cannot find such a retention policy, then please proceed to state this and answer the original question that you numbered item 8.”*

Publicly available information that is not owned by the Ministry does not generally need to be filed separately as this may be deemed redundant and may incur unnecessary administrative costs. It is important that resources are prioritised to effectively manage and maintain information. While the Ministry does not have a specific policy for filing publicly available information, our practices for the creation and maintenance of official information are guided by the Public Records Act 2005<sup>1</sup>.

Turning to the remainder of your request regarding the referenced report, *NTP Monograph on the State of the Science Concerning Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects: A Systematic Review*, please refer to our earlier response which notes that in October 2021, the Office of the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor considered an earlier version of the draft National Toxicology Programme report as part of a review of evidence on community water fluoridation: [www.pmcsa.ac.nz/topics/fluoridation-an-update-on-evidence/](http://www.pmcsa.ac.nz/topics/fluoridation-an-update-on-evidence/) (refer to page 25).

Research can influence exposure guidelines or regulations, so it is important for it to be able to withstand scientific scrutiny. Individual studies or papers are considered within the broader body of scientific research. The analysis of evidence requires an assessment of all relevant information available and should not be based on a single study or opinion.

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<sup>1</sup> Public Records Act 2005: [www.archives.govt.nz/manage-information/how-to-manage-your-information/key-obligations-and-the-standard/key-obligations-public-records-act-2005#s3-your-responsibilitie](http://www.archives.govt.nz/manage-information/how-to-manage-your-information/key-obligations-and-the-standard/key-obligations-public-records-act-2005#s3-your-responsibilitie)

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: [oiagr@health.govt.nz](mailto:oiagr@health.govt.nz).

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](mailto: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 Manatū Hauora website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jan Torres', written in a cursive style.

Jan Torres

**Manager, OIA Services**

**Government and Executive Services | Te Pou Whakatere Kāwanatanga**