



22 FEB 2024

M Bell

fyi-request-25127-dcdaa7fd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear M Bell

Your request for official information, reference: SROIA-032

Thank you for your email on 11 December 2023, asking for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*"Below is a paste of the statement you have recently issued.
"There are many conspiracy theorists out there who unfortunately disseminate harmful disinformation, however, as Minister and as a physician, the public can and should continue to have confidence in vaccines. I am reassured by experts confirming that there is no evidence supporting the allegations that have been made." Under the official information act please provide all of the correspondence and analysis from those said experts that directly supports the statement you have made that "there is no evidence supporting the allegations that have been made."*

Three items have been identified in scope of your request. Please find these itemised in Appendix 1, which also outlines the grounds under which I have decided to withhold information. Copies of the documents are enclosed.

In considering the information that is withheld under section 9 of the Act I have concluded the interest in this information does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

Where phone calls between my office and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora staff are discussed, I consider the emails provided to be summaries of these phone calls, in accordance with section 16(1)(e) of the Act.

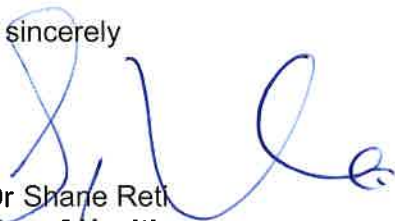
It is important to remember that, to date, four deaths have occurred in New Zealand where a link to COVID-19 vaccination could not be excluded. This is in the context of 3,361 people whose deaths have to date been directly attributed to COVID-19 in New Zealand, with more than 12.6 million vaccines administered to eligible New Zealanders as of 2 October 2023.

In addition to the information above, please also see the following publicly available information relating to COVID-19 vaccines:

- www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/safety-monitoring.asp
- www.tewhatuora.govt.nz/publications/final-report-of-the-covid-19-vaccine-independent-safety-monitoring-board-cv-ismb/.
- <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-facts-and-advice/>
- <https://info.health.nz/immunisations/vaccines-aotearoa/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccines-aotearoa/>.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Reti', written over the printed name.

Hon Dr Shane Reti
Minister of Health

Appendix 1: List of items in scope

#	Date	Title	Decision on release
1	30 November 2023	Email correspondence	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Act, to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of Ministers, members of organisations, officers, and employees from improper pressure or harassment.
2	30 November 2023	Email correspondence	Some information withheld under the following sections of the Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons; and• 9(2)(g)(ii). Some information is also removed as it is deemed out of scope of your request.
3	1 December 2023	Email correspondence	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Act. Some information removed as it is deemed out of scope of your request.

From: S9(2)(g)(ii)
Sent: Thursday, 30 November 2023 12:39 pm
To: S9(2)(g)(ii)
Subject: Email by TWO staff member

Hi S9(2)(g)(ii)

As discussed I can confirm TWO leadership are aware of the email and steps are being taken internally in regard to it. Also please see below our messaging on COVID 19 deaths.

LINES

There is no evidence that vaccination is responsible for excess mortality in New Zealand.

Publicly available data shows that four deaths in New Zealand are possibly linked to adverse reactions following COVID-19 vaccination.

This is in the context of 3,361 people whose deaths have to date been directly attributed to COVID-19 in New Zealand, with more than 12.6 million vaccines administered to eligible New Zealanders as of 2 October 2023.

By chance and separate to a prior COVID-19 vaccination event, some people will experience new illnesses or die from a pre-existing condition shortly after vaccination, especially if they are elderly.

The Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) and Medsafe have investigated these deaths.

In addition to this, the COVID-19 Vaccine Independent Safety Monitoring Board (CV-ISMB) has compared natural death rates to observed death rates following vaccination.

In the monitoring period for the Pfizer/ BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (19 February 2021 to 30 September 2022), the observed number of deaths was less than the expected number of natural deaths.

More information about this can be found here: [Who we're working with – Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand](#)

In the meantime, we all have a responsibility to stop misinformation spreading, and encourage people to only go to trusted sources to get reliable information.

We also continue to encourage media organisations and social media companies to continue to be proactive in helping to manage misinformation.

One of the best ways to stop misinformation from spreading is by only sharing information from official sources like Te Whatu Ora, the Ministry of Health, health providers, or reputable peer-reviewed scientific journal publications. More information about New Zealand's adverse event reporting can be found here:

<https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-report-overview.asp>

Covid-19 vaccination data can also be found here: <https://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/covid-vaccine-data/>

ENDS

S9(2)(g)(ii)

S9(2)(g)(ii)

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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

From: S9(2)(g)(ii) [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 30 November 2023 5:16 pm
To: S9(2)(g)(ii) [redacted]
Cc: S9(2)(g)(ii) [redacted]
Subject: Email from S9(2)(a) [redacted]
Attachments: processed-D78EA078-1BE8-426F-A135-F353C1DEF4AA-C198BDB7-56A5-48BC-A5E2-86C02E15CA5C.jpeg; processed-54C5CED8-E420-4203-9364-896FC1BFE7C5-9F850E0A-86B3-4983-A8FF-8D7765256053.jpeg

Out of Scope [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of Scope



Core messages on COVID vaccination (the subject of the email)

- There is no evidence that vaccination is responsible for excess mortality in New Zealand.
- Publicly available data shows that four deaths in New Zealand are possibly linked to adverse reactions following COVID-19 vaccination.
- This is in the context of 3,361 people whose deaths have to date been directly attributed to COVID-19 in New Zealand, with more than 12.6 million vaccines administered to eligible New Zealanders as of 2 October 2023.
- By chance and separate to a prior COVID-19 vaccination event, some people will experience new illnesses or die from a pre-existing condition shortly after vaccination, especially if they are elderly.
- The Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) and Medsafe have investigated these deaths.
- In addition to this, the COVID-19 Vaccine Independent Safety Monitoring Board (CV-ISMB) has compared natural death rates to observed death rates following vaccination.
- In the monitoring period for the Pfizer/ BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (19 February 2021 to 30 September 2022), the observed number of deaths was less than the expected number of natural deaths.



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Statement of confidentiality: This e-mail message and any accompanying attachments may contain information that is IN-CONFIDENCE and subject to legal privilege.

From: S9(2)(g)(ii) [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 1 December 2023 9:42 am
To: S9(2)(g)(ii) [redacted]
Subject: FW: DISCLOSURE incident - approach for a proactive release

Proactive

We remind people that vaccines remain safe and effective and that they should keep up to date with their shots to protect themselves, whanau and their communities.

Out of Scope [redacted]

We assure people there is no evidence whatsoever that vaccination is responsible for excess mortality in New Zealand and that they can continue to have confidence in vaccines.

Publicly available data shows that four deaths in New Zealand are possibly linked to adverse reactions following COVID-19 vaccination. This is in the context of 3,361 people whose deaths have to date been directly attributed to COVID-19 in New Zealand, with more than 12.6 million vaccines administered to eligible New Zealanders as of 2 October 2023.

By chance, and separate to a prior COVID-19 vaccination event, some people will experience new illnesses or die from a pre-existing condition shortly after vaccination, especially if they are elderly. The Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) and Medsafe have investigated these deaths.

In addition to this, the COVID-19 Vaccine Independent Safety Monitoring Board (CV-ISMB) has compared natural death rates to observed death rates following vaccination.

In the monitoring period for the Pfizer/ BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (19 February 2021 to 30 September 2022), the observed number of deaths was less than the expected number of natural deaths.

Out of Scope [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- The public can and should continue to have confidence in vaccines.
- There is no evidence whatsoever that vaccination is responsible for excess mortality in New Zealand.

Out of Scope [redacted]

[redacted]

- Out of Scope [Redacted]
- Publicly available data shows that four deaths in New Zealand are possibly linked to adverse reactions following COVID-19 vaccination.
- This is in the context of 3,361 people whose deaths have to date been directly attributed to COVID-19 in New Zealand, with more than 12.6 million vaccines administered to eligible New Zealanders as of 2 October 2023.
- By chance and separate to a prior COVID-19 vaccination event, some people will experience new illnesses or die from a pre-existing condition shortly after vaccination, especially if they are elderly.
- The Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) and Medsafe have investigated these deaths.
- In addition to this, the COVID-19 Vaccine Independent Safety Monitoring Board (CV-ISMB) has compared natural death rates to observed death rates following vaccination.
- In the monitoring period for the Pfizer/ BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (19 February 2021 to 30 September 2022), the observed number of deaths was less than the expected number of natural deaths.

S9(2)(g)(ii) [Redacted]

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