

21 August 2018

T Monk

Email to: fyi-request-8273-2f484dcf@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: H201804875

Dear T. Monk

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your email dated 7 August 2018 in which you seek further clarification about the information held by the Ministry of Health that relates to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and prostitution.

Our response to your previous request for official information (H201804875) included information held by the Ministry of Health and referenced information which is publically available. To assist you with interpreting the Ministry's response I can provide the following additional advice.

Prostitution was legalised in New Zealand in 2003. The Prostitution Reform Act 2003 is available from the Government's legislation website (www.legislation.govt.nz).

The legislation describes a framework for prostitution and includes the requirement that business operators must take all practicable steps to keep their workers and clients safe from sexually transmitted diseases.

Transmission of STDs is due to individuals participating in unprotected sex. The Prostitution Reform Act mandates the practice of safe sex. The legislation also provides for the welfare of sex workers empowering them to refuse unprotected sex with clients.

In 2003 when the Prostitution Reform Act came into force, the only notifiable STD under the Health Act 1956 was AIDS. Other STDs were reported on a voluntary basis by Sexual Health Clinics. The Ministry contracts ESR (the Institute of Environmental Science and Research) to publish laboratory data on STDs.

Data from 2003 onwards is available on the Public Health Surveillance section of the ESR website, www.esr.cri.nz. Data to fulfil your request for infection rates spanning the last 35 years is not available.

The Ministry does not regard the legalised sex industry to present a risk to public health from STDs. Therefore, the Ministry does not analyse STD data for a correlation with the legalisation of prostitution, keep registers of prostitutes or regulate brothels.

The Prostitution Reform Act is administered by the Ministry of Justice. Your concerns regarding enforcement or suggestions for amendment should be addressed to:

The Registrar (Prostitution Reform Act)
Auckland District Court
Private Bag 92191
Auckland 1142

I trust this is the information that you are seeking.

Yours sincerely



Dr Caroline McElnay

Director Public Health