

Abortion Supervisory Committee

10 April 2019

Danny Pickering

fyi-request-9977-xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xxx.xx

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your request of 1 April 2019 sent to the Ministry of Health seeking information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Your request has been transferred under section 14 of the OIA to the Abortion Supervisory Committee (ASC) as it relates more closely to the functions of that department.

Specifically, you have requested:

The total number of abortions carried out per annum, broken down by DHB. Please break this down by year as far back as records permit. Please further break this down by ethnicity.

Please refer to table 1 which lists the total number of abortions reported to the ASC for each year between 1978 to 2017. There is a slight discrepancy with the way data was recorded in 1978 as the annual report for that year recorded data from 1 April 1978 to 1 March 1979.

The ASC is not able to provide this information broken down by DHB. Your request is refused under section 18(g) of the OIA as the information is not held by the ASC.

Information collected and reported on by Stats NZ prior to 2008 either did not contain a breakdown by ethnicity or was not collated in a way than can be reported in the table provided. Over the previous 40 years there have been different Committee's, Secretaries and forms used to collect data. As a result, annual reports to Parliament have been inconsistent.

Please contact xxx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xx to request ASC annual reports, which contain comprehensive statistical data that you may find helpful including information on ethnicity and abortions by hospital.

If you are not satisfied with our response to your request, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA. The Ombudsman may be contacted by writing to the Office of Ombudsman at PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143, by email to xxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xx or by phone to 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Rachael Cole

Secretary

Abortion Supervisory Committee

Table 1: Number of Induced Abortions by Year 1978 – 2017; Broken Down by Ethnicity*

Year	Total Abortions	European	Maori	Pacific	Asian	MELAA	Other
1978	**2,654						
1979	3653						
1980	5945						
1981	6759						
1982	6903						
1983	7198						
1984	7275						
1985	7130						
1986	8079						
1987	8789						
1988	10044						
1989	10200						
1990	11173						
1991	11613						
1992	11595						
1993	11893						
1994	12835						
1995	13652						
1996	14805						
1997	15208						
1998	15029						
1999	15501						
2000	16103						
2001	16410						
2002	17380						
2003	18511						
2004	18211						
2005	17531						
2006	17934						
2007	18382						
2008	17940	10499	4250	2230	2875	206	25
2009	17550	10113	4131	2360	2892	216	23
2010	16630	9378	4056	2228	2778	207	17
2011	15863	9044	3855	2054	2649	189	22
2012	14745	8266	3596	1985	2480	169	12
2013	14073	8015	3459	1712	2405	158	20
2014	13137	7564	3012	1544	2358	156	23
2015	13155	7613	3080	1487	2382	165	13
2016	12823	7283	2896	1380	2563	170	12
2017	13285	7519	3111	1369	2630	199	6

*Each abortion has been included in every ethnic group specified. For this reason, some abortions are counted more than once. Therefore, the figure provided under total abortions will be fewer than the ethnicity numbers combined.

**The Abortion Supervisory committee does not have accurate abortion numbers for 1978 as the total was from 1 April 1978-31 March 1979 in its Annual Report of 1979

Note:

- (a) MELAA = Middle Eastern, Latin American and African
- (b) Other includes "New Zealanders"