

16 JUL 2020

James Fuller
Fyi-request-12709-9218b09b@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Fuller

Official Information Act 1982 request

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 4 May 2020 to the Ministry of Health (MOH). On 12 May 2020, the MOH transferred your request to the Ministry of Justice (Ministry) for a response. We apologise for the delay in providing the requested information. This delay was a result of an administrative error.

Your request was for the following information:

The number of coronial cases where a person has died of pneumonia to cover the period 1 January 2018 to 30 April 2020. Also include coronial cases where the patient was hospitalised with pneumonia.

On 22 June 2020, the Ministry attempted to clarify your request. As we have not heard back, I have interpreted your request to be for the total number of coronial cases relating to pneumonia between 1 January 2018 and 30 April 2020.

In response to your request, please find Table one attached.

Please note, a death is referred to the Coroner when a medical professional is unable to ascertain cause of death and the doctors are unable to issue a cause of death certificate. A death that is known to be, or suspected most likely to be, from pneumonia will generally not need to be reported to a coroner. This is because the death is from a natural cause and the probable cause of death is known.

This means that the data provided should not be seen as representing every instance of a person dying of pneumonia between 1 January 2018 to 30 April 2020.

It is also important to note that this information includes some active cases which are provisional pending the Coroner's final finding. The Chief Coroner has approved the release of this information.

We are unable to provide a breakdown of coronial cases where the deceased was a patient hospitalised with pneumonia as the Ministry's case management system does not record this level of data. Therefore, I am refusing your request under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA as there are no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department, Minister of the Crown, organisation, or local authority.

If you require any clarification of the information contained in this response please contact Jerram Watts, Team Leader (Acting), Media and Official Correspondence, by calling (04) 918 8980; or emailing media@justice.govt.nz

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to complain to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA. You can contact the Office of the Ombudsman by writing to PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143; calling 0800 802 602; or emailing info@ombudsman.parliament.nz

I trust that this information assists.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials 'JS' followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jacquelyn Shannon
Group Manager, Courts and Tribunals, Regional Service Delivery

Ref: 82293

Encl: Table 1: Number of coronial cases related to pneumonia between 1 January 2018 and 30 April 2020, broken down by calendar year

Table 1: Number of coronial cases related to pneumonia between 1 January 2018 and 30 April 2020, broken down by calendar year

Year	2018	2019	2020*	Total
Cases	176	179	31	386

*30 April 2020

Notes:

- Only deaths with the key word "pneumonia" in a cause of death field have been included.
- Every effort is made to ensure that all information is correct. Due to the manner in which information has been recorded by or presented to the Coroner, the statistics provided should not be taken as representing every such instance.
- Active cases are being investigated by the Coroner, and as such, are provisional pending the Coroner's final finding.
- Case Management System data as at 6 June 2020. As this is an operational system, data may have been updated since any previous publications.

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT