

15 July 2021

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Ross Francis

By email: fyi-request-15796-b3920582@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202107158

Tēnā koe Ross

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 15 June 2021. Responses to each part of your request are as follows:

1. *“Statistically, what is the probability of an unvaccinated person in New Zealand, aged under 50 years of age, in excellent health and with no pre-existing conditions, dying from Covid-19 in 2021?”*

While it appears there is a low chance of an individual as described above dying from COVID-19, this cannot be predicted with statistics that estimate an average risk, and tend not to account for individual characteristics or pre-existing conditions – for example, current medications the individual is receiving, the level of risk and exposure given their occupation, whether they are a current or former smoker etc. Therefore, it is possible that an outbreak could occur in 2021 which could lead to deaths from SARS-CoV-2 among those in the category referred to above. On average, the mortality risk prior to the introduction of the variants associated with more severe disease was about 0-0.2% for the under 50s. Some of the new ‘variants’ of the COVID-19 virus are associated with higher rates of severe disease, and about twice the rate of hospitalisation of previous cases of COVID-19. It is important to note that these rates do not include the rate of long-term effects, that, such as respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological and other potential long-term disorders, which form part of the risk, in addition to mortality.

2. *In the year to 31 December 2020, how many people aged under 50 years of age died in New Zealand? How many of those died from Covid-19?*

The Ministry is unable to release infant death numbers as data quality work has not yet been completed. The number of deaths aged 1 to 49 year registered in 2020 was 2039.

Please find COVID-19 case demographic data on the Ministry website: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-case-demographics. No one under the age of 50 has passed away from COVID-19 in New Zealand.

3. *Please provide me with all information that recipients of the Covid-19 vaccine (who are aged under 50) are given about the risk of dying from Covid-19.*

Please refer to the following link for information regarding what to expect when you receive your vaccine and side effects etc: www.covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/how-to-get-a-covid-19-vaccination/what-to-expect-when-you-get-your-vaccinations/.

4. *Vaccinators are informed that severe reactions to the Covid-19 vaccine may include: acute myocardial infarction, Bell's Palsy, appendicitis, stroke, convulsions/seizures, myocarditis/pericarditis, pulmonary embolism and anaphylaxis.*

Vaccinators are fully aware of the safety and adverse events that may occur following vaccination.

5. *Please provide me with all information that recipients of the Covid-19 vaccine are given about acute myocardial infarction, Bell's Palsy, appendicitis, stroke, convulsions/seizures, myocarditis/pericarditis, pulmonary embolism and anaphylaxis.*

People receiving the vaccine are not given specific information on the conditions you have listed. They are given the pamphlets by a healthcare professional who explains the potential side effects prior to the vaccine being administered.

6. *Since the beginning of roll-out, how many people have reported the following serious reactions: acute myocardial infarction, Bell's Palsy, appendicitis, stroke, convulsions/seizures, myocarditis/pericarditis, pulmonary embolism, anaphylaxis?*

This information can be found in the adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) reports www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-report-overview.asp. If you scroll of the bottom of the page of the most recent report, a detailed list of individual AEFI is attached under *Latest listing of all cases received*.

7. *How many, if any, under 16-year-olds have received one or two doses of the Pfizer vaccine in New Zealand?*

As of 22 June 2021, the Ministry's COVID-19 Vaccination and Immunisation Programme (the programme) have received confirmation of 13 individuals (under the age of 16 years) who have received the Comirnaty/ Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination.

Out of these individuals, 11 under 16-year-olds have received one dose of the Comirnaty vaccine and 2 under 16-year-olds have received two doses of the Comirnaty vaccine.

8. *Please provide me with all information that vaccinators provide to children under 16 before administering the Covid-19 vaccine?*

The COVID-19 vaccine is not approved by the programme for those under the age of 16. At present there is no specific COVID-19 vaccine information for this age group. While the use of vaccine for age 12-15 is approved by Medsafe, we await Cabinet approval for the CVIP rollout in this age cohort. If there is a change to the programme's age range, then age appropriate COVID-19 vaccine information will be made available.

In the instance of a person under the age of 16 being vaccinated, this is a reportable event and should be reported to the Centre of Adverse Reactions Monitoring aka CARM. The Ministry continues to monitor and support quality improvement processes to prevent those under the age of 16 being vaccinated.

9. *What information is given to vaccinators, as part of their online education course, in June 2021 that they were not given in April 2021?*

Please find attached a document provided to vaccinators as part of their online education course. This is released to you in full.

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 or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Joanne Gibbs
Director, National Operations
COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme