

9 May 2022

Chuck Schooner

By email: fyi-request-18215-a243ff9d@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202204611

Tēnā koe Chuck

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your follow up request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 27 March 2022. You asked for information regarding declined temporary medical exemption (TME) applications which have been addressed below.

Who supported the application - eg GP & Cardiologist

TME applications must be submitted by a medical or nurse practitioner on behalf of the consumer. The criteria for temporary COVID-19 vaccine medical exemptions supporting evidence requirements are listed for each category. This includes where documentation from a medical specialist or health practitioner is required. A copy of the criteria is available at: www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/vaccine-temporary-medical-exemption-clinical-criteria-clinical-guidance-resources-updated-mar-30-2022v2.pdf.

Who declined the application - Ashley Bloomfield as the only signatory? Or were other doctors / experts involved? - for example this article states Ashley Bloomfield declined the application

The TME panel (the Panel) meets regularly to consider each application against the category exemption criteria. This panel includes, a Māori health leader, a Clinical Immunologist and Allergist, Consultant Neurologist, Clinical Pharmacologist and Endocrinologist, and members with primary health care expertise. The panel also consults with external experts as required. A recommendation is then made to the Director-General of Health (DG) and he makes the decision to grant or decline the TME application.

I assume there is reporting completed by the person(s) that declined the application and reasons why? Please provide a sample of reports completed by the signatory for the application being declined - personal information can be redacted - I would accept 5 reports - if possible can you include the reporting that was completed for the refusal in the above case. I want to know the context for why these applications were declined

There is no reporting completed by the DG that includes the decision to decline. While the Act enables people to request official information from the Ministry, there is no obligation to create information or compile information it does not hold in order to respond to requests. As mentioned in the response to your previous question, the Panel's recommendation is provided to the DG in form of a memo to assist with his decision on the application. For privacy reasons,

the Ministry has not provided a copy of the recommendation memo. Instead under section 16(1)(e) I can advise that the contents of the recommendation include details on:

- The consumer's full name
- NHI number
- If the consumer is covered by a Vaccinations Order
- The applicant (the name of the medical or nurse practitioner)
- The category the exemption was applied under
- The Panel recommendation
- Supporting comment

Where the Panel considers any of the criteria are not met, this is noted in its consideration and the Panel's comment is provided from the to the DG.

I trust this fulfils your request. 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.

Nāku noa, nā



Astrid Koornneef
Director
National Immunisation Programme