



23 November 2023

Leah Wilson

By email: fyi-request-24560-db7fe975@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H2023032652

Tēnā koe Leah

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 27 October 2023 for information regarding abortion data. You requested:

“In the following date range (grouped by month) how many abortions, delineated by the number of weeks' gestation have been performed in New Zealand (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023). How are these abortions recorded in the births deaths and marriages register as well please.”

Manatū Hauora has been responsible for maintaining data relating to abortion service provision in Aotearoa New Zealand since the enactment of the Abortion Legislation Act in March 2020.

Before the passing of the Abortion Legislation Act 2020, the Abortion Supervisory Committee (ASC) had oversight of abortion services. Abortions performed before legislation change were reported to the ASC and collated by Tatauranga Aotearoa Statistics New Zealand (StatsNZ).

Abortion statistics from the year ended December 2019 are published on the StatsNZ website: www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/abortion-statistics-year-ended-december-2019/. This data includes a breakdown by duration of pregnancy. Requests for any further breakdowns of data prior to 2020 should be directed to StatsNZ.

A monthly summary of abortions by gestational duration for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and the first half of the year 2023, are provided in the appended tables. Please note that 188 abortions were reported in 2020 (the first year of the law change) without providers having completed information relating to gestational term. Monthly summaries of these occurrences are included within Table 1.

Due to low numbers of procedures occurring when delineating by gestational week and month of procedure, the portion of your request relating to gestational duration has been addressed applying 5-weekly intervals, up until 20 weeks gestation.

Similarly, all abortions occurring at 21 weeks gestation and above are grouped due to low numbers of procedures occurring following 20 weeks gestation when delineated by month. A further breakdown is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Relating to the year 2023, preliminary data up until and including June 2023 (within the same 5-weekly intervals up until 21 weeks gestation) are also included. Please note data relating to the year 2023 is provisional and may change as final provider reports are received and collated.

Births, Deaths and Marriages (BDM) registers and maintains New Zealand birth, death, marriage, civil union and name change information, and issues certificates and printouts. Abortions sit outside the scope of BDM. However, abortions that occur at 20+ gestation are recorded in the BDM as part of normal protocol. This is done by individual regions and not the responsibility of the Ministry.

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

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 Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Rob McHawk
**Acting Group Manager, Quality Assurance and Safety
Regulation and Monitoring | Te Pou Whakamaru**