

14 June 2024

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Tēnā koe Erika

Your request for official information, reference: HNZ00048451

Thank you for your email on 16 May 2024, asking Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- 1. Was Covid 19 a disease reported to Worksafe by Health New Zealand/Te Whatu Ora?*
- 2. Did Covid 19 arise out of the nature of work at district health boards and their facilities?*
- 3. Is there or was there in the past, any genetic “gain of function” work taking place at Health New Zealand facilities on corona viruses?*
- 4. Is there or was there in the past the nursing of corona virus patients in their own separate wards with negative air pressure? If so how many wards in each facility and the dates these negative air pressure corona virus wards operated.*

Please provide the written authorisation:

- 5. The written authorisation from the Director General specifying persons at Health New Zealand who were authorised enforcement person(s) under section 18 (2) the Covid-19 Public Health Response Act 2020.*
- 6. Please provide the functions and powers that could be carried out by the authorised enforcement person(s).*

Response

- 1. Was Covid 19 a disease reported to Worksafe by Health New Zealand/Te Whatu Ora?*

No, Worksafe notified the Ministry of Health in writing at the beginning of the outbreak that they did not require a notification.

- 2. Did Covid 19 arise out of the nature of work at district health boards and their facilities?*

No.

- 3. Is there or was there in the past, any genetic “gain of function” work taking place at Health New Zealand facilities on corona viruses?*

No.

- 4. Is there or was there in the past the nursing of corona virus patients in their own separate wards with negative air pressure? If so how many wards in each facility and the dates these negative air pressure corona virus wards operated.*

Some patients with Covid-19 were treated in negative air pressure or Airborne Infection Isolation Rooms during the earlier stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. These facilities are designed to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and other infectious diseases. We are not able to provide information on the number of such wards that operated as this would require substantial manual collation and research. Your request for this information is therefore refused under section 18(f) of the Act.

5. The written authorisation from the Director General specifying persons at Health New Zealand who were authorised enforcement person(s) under section 18 (2) the Covid-19 Public Health Response Act 2020.

6. Please provide the functions and powers that could be carried out by the authorised enforcement person(s).

Parts 5 and 6 of your request were transferred to the Ministry of Health on 23 May 2024 as these parts of your request are more closely connected to its functions.

How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at h.nzOIA@tewhatuora.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ may proactively release a copy of this response on our website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Danielle Coe
Manager (OIA) Government Services
Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora