

20 September 2024

Julia Schiller  
[fyi-request-27885-962b5a8d@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-27885-962b5a8d@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe Julia

### Your request for official information, reference: HNZ00059015

Thank you for your email on 2 August 2024, clarified 15 August, asking Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*It is Covid testing I am particularly interested in learning about.*

- 1) Covid 19 testing protocols: you've said these are publicly available, can you point me to where I would find them?*
- 2) Can you reveal what the overall budget for in-hospital Covid testing was for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 fiscal years, across all public hospitals? How much has been budgeted for the present financial year?*
- 3) Likewise, what was the actual expenditure for this testing for the 2022/23 and 2023/2024 financial years?*

### Response

For the sake of clarity I am answering each of your questions in turn. Our response to question one is has been broken down for clarity as well.

- 1) Covid 19 testing protocols: you've said these are publicly available, can you point me to where I would find them?*

### Guidance on testing

[The COVID-19 Testing Plan for Aotearoa/New Zealand](#) sets out how testing will support our COVID-19 response. The COVID-19 Testing Guidance provides testing advice to health care professionals.

With regards to testing in long Covid, current guidelines do not support any specific testing at this stage.

### Taking a clinical specimen for COVID-19 and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) use

For guidance on how to take nasopharyngeal, and oropharyngeal + anterior nasal specimens for COVID-19, and the correct PPE to use see [COVID-19: Infection prevention and control recommendations for health and disability care workers](#).

### Information on rapid antigen testing below:

[Guidance on how to take a rapid antigen test \(RAT\) for COVID-19 \(PDF, 64KB\)](#)

## Notification of cases

We are releasing a copy of the plan itself, as Appendix One COVID-19 Testing Plan. Please see this appendix attached.

*2) Can you reveal what the overall budget for in-hospital Covid testing was for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 fiscal years, across all public hospitals? How much has been budgeted for the present financial year?*

There is no dedicated overall Health NZ budget for in-hospital COVID-19 testing. This part of your request is refused s18(e) of the Act, the information requested does not exist.

*3) Likewise, what was the actual expenditure for this testing for the 2022/23 and 2023/2024 financial years?*

Health NZ does not budget for specific respiratory test categories and in order to provide a response to this part of your request, we would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair our ability to carry out our other core functions. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as it requires substantial collation.

I have considered whether fixing a charge for the supply of the information or extending the timeframe for response would enable us to respond. I do not consider that either option would remove the impact that supplying the information would have on our other operations.

## How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at [hnzOIA@tewhatuora.govt.nz](mailto:hnzOIA@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](http://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



PP

**Danielle Coe**

**Manager (OIAs) – Government Services  
Office of the Chief Executive**

[TeWhatuOra.govt.nz](http://TeWhatuOra.govt.nz)

Health NZ, PO Box 793,  
Wellington 6140, New Zealand

**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government