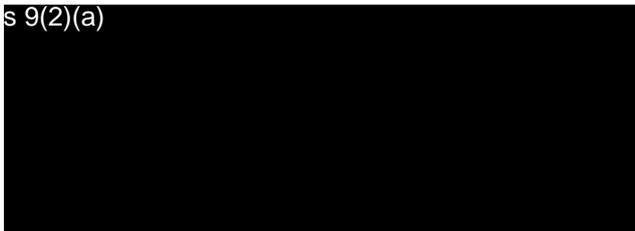


24 June 2021

s 9(2)(a)



### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 26 May 2021 for information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

I will respond to each part of your request in turn.

*“How many deaths in NZ does the NZ government (any ministry or department or person within) know about, or have information about following the administration of the Comirnaty vaccine? How many of these have been reported to CARM or Medsafe?”*

The Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM) at the University of Otago is contracted by the Ministry of Health to receive and review all adverse reactions linked to medications, including deaths. The Ministry is only aware of deaths if they are reported to CARM. While both health practitioners and members of the public can report a suspected adverse event to CARM it is important to note that reporting is voluntary. The form to report adverse reactions is publicly available at: <https://nzphvc.otago.ac.nz/reporting>.

A small number of deaths have been reported to CARM where a person subsequently died after receiving the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. These cases have been reviewed by CARM and no safety concerns relating to the vaccination have been identified.

Weekly reports summarising the number and type of adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) reported with COVID-19 vaccines (including deaths) can be found on the Medsafe website here: [www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-report-overview.asp](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz/COVID-19/vaccine-report-overview.asp).

*Please can you include the time frame between vaccination and death. Please can you include any relevant information about the deaths you currently have on file after vaccination such as for example coroner's reports or other relevant information about what may have caused the death.*

Of the reports received by Medsafe, all deaths occurred within a week of the most recent dose. It is important to note that as more than 30,000 people die in New Zealand every year, it is expected that some deaths will be reported after vaccination or use of any medicine. Similar reports are recorded during the influenza vaccination programme.

As the Comirnaty vaccine is approved for use in New Zealand for people 12 years and older, the Ministry expects to continue to see coincidental events, including deaths, following

vaccination. Every event reported to CARM will be reviewed and any identified safety concerns will be publicly communicated as soon as possible, and appropriate action taken.

To protect the privacy of individuals, including deceased individuals, we are unable to provide any further detail about each death under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

I trust this information 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](mailto: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](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Yours sincerely



Chris James  
**Group Manager**  
**Medsafe**