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Tēnā koe Sam

**Your request for Official information, reference: HNZ00034201**

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) relating to Excess Death Rates for the previous 5 years. On 15 December 2023, Ministry of Health - Manatū Hauora transferred your request to Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand under section 14 of the Act.

*“please would you let me have details of the excess deaths from 01.01.2017 - to the 31.05.2022 inclusive, broken down by months and age bands.”*

Information on the number of people who have died in New Zealand is available online from Stats NZ.

The most up to date data is available on the Stats NZ COVID-19 data portal here:

[www.stats.govt.nz/experimental/covid-19-data-portal](http://www.stats.govt.nz/experimental/covid-19-data-portal).

Stats NZ also publish mortality statistics here, [www.stats.govt.nz/tools/stats-infoshare](http://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/stats-infoshare). Click on the link 'Use Infoshare', select 'Populations', and then 'Deaths'.

Aotearoa experienced changes in the frequency of death from all causes across the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the winter of 2020, there was a reduction in deaths compared to what was expected based on previous years. In 2021, there was a slight reduction in deaths. Due to border restrictions and alert level restrictions, respiratory viruses such as influenza and the common cold were circulating at significantly lower levels than in previous years, likely accounting for most of the reduction in expected mortality in 2020 and 2021. Over the winter of 2022, there was potentially an excess of deaths compared to what was expected based on previous years.

Excess mortality (i.e., an increase in all-cause mortality compared to pre-pandemic years) was observed in 2022. The excess mortality observed in 2022 coincided with the Omicron wave of COVID-19 in New Zealand and the subsequent deaths attributable to SARS-CoV-2 infection. In 2022, the number of excess deaths was lower than the number of deaths attributed to COVID-19, which may mean that COVID-19 accounts for most of the excess deaths in 2022. However, cause of death data is required to make this evaluation. Data on cause of death takes time to become available, but reporting for cause of death is underway. The [COVID-19 Trends and Insights](#) reports published by Manatū Hauora show that just under 2,400 deaths in 2022 were identified where the cause of death was attributable to COVID-19.

Overall, New Zealand has not experienced an excess of deaths in 2020 - 2022 (inclusive) compared to previous years (see Figure 2, in the appended document).

Taken as a whole, evidence suggests that Aotearoa has not experienced an excess of deaths during the pandemic.

You might also be interested in the Ministry of Health's report on Inequalities in COVID-19 deaths, which can be found here: [COVID-19 Mortality in Aotearoa New Zealand: Inequities in Risk \(health.govt.nz\)](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/inequalities-in-covid-19-deaths)

### How to get in touch

If you have any questions, you can contact us at [h.nzOIA@health.govt.nz](mailto:h.nzOIA@health.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, Te Whatu Ora 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



Gaynor Bradfield  
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