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25 January 2023

Tracy Livingston

By email: fyi-request-21566-99caa9d1@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H2023019237

Tēnā koe Tracy

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 14 January 2023 for information regarding iatrogenic fatality reports. You requested:

“...full and complete (personal data excluded obviously) iatrogenic fatality reports for the past two years, 2021 and 2022.”

Your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by Manatū Hauora and there are no grounds for believing it is held by another agency subject to the Act.

After the close of a calendar year, there is a 12–18-month process to assign cause of death codes to the majority of deaths in that year. This function is undertaken by the Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand clinical coding team, who review the death certificate and health history of the deceased to assign cause of death codes. Approximately 10% of deaths are referred to the Coroner each year to determine the cause. Deaths which require a coronial inquiry can take two to three, or more years, for a cause of death to be assigned. Mortality data is not made publicly available until the majority of deaths have been assigned a cause of death. This is so the data released is complete and accurate. The Chief Coroner has noted delays in the time it is taking them to assign cause of death codes.

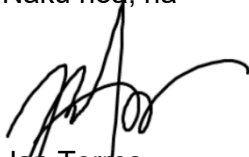
Te Whatu Ora publishes preliminary mortality statistics in December each year. The statistics do not include injury-related deaths information, which are typically more influenced by coronial cases. The 2020 preliminary data is published in the mortality web tool available here:

www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/mortality-web-tool

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Torres', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jan Torres

Manager, OIA Services

Government and Executive Services | Te Pou Whakatere Kāwanatanga