



15 December 2021



Dear 

Re: OIA request – Stillbirth, fetal and neonatal deaths

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received 18 November 2021 seeking information from Waitematā District Health Board (DHB) about the vaccination status of women who had experienced a stillbirth, fetal or neonatal death. You requested the following information:

Please can you provide me with the COVID-19 vaccination status of mothers who have experienced a stillbirth, fetal or neonatal death in Waitematā DHB since the start of COVID-19 vaccination in New Zealand?

Please can you also provide the temporal relationship between receipt of the vaccine and the fetal medical event/stillbirth/neonatal death?

On 1 December, we contacted you to advise that to provide this information would require the manual review of individual patients' clinical records and we did not have the capacity to provide a response in full to your request during a time when our clinicians, managers and staff were concentrating on measures to manage the current COVID-19 Delta outbreak in the region.

We asked you to narrow the scope of your request to September and October 2021, noting that vaccinations were not widely available for the general population before September 2021. You confirmed on 2 December that you were happy to narrow the scope of your request.

Before responding to your specific questions, it may be useful to provide some context about our services.

Waitematā is the largest and one of the most rapidly growing DHBs in the country, serving a population of around 650,000 across the North Shore, Waitakere and Rodney areas. We are the largest employer in the district, employing around 8,600 people across more than 80 locations.

In addition to providing care to our own resident population, we are the Northern Region provider of forensic mental health services and child rehabilitation services, plus the metro Auckland provider of child community dental services and community alcohol and drug services.

In response to your request, we are able to provide the following information:

The COVID-19 vaccination status of mothers who have experienced a stillbirth, fetal or neonatal death in Waitematā DHB for the months of September and October 2021.

As provided previously in our response to your OIA request in November 2021, there were four stillbirths in September and two stillbirths and two neonatal deaths in October. Of these eight women, two were fully vaccinated, two were partially vaccinated and four were not vaccinated. The rate of vaccination for these women was largely consistent with rates of vaccination for the pregnant population at this time. The time between vaccination and fetal or infant demise was variable from between five and 32 days.

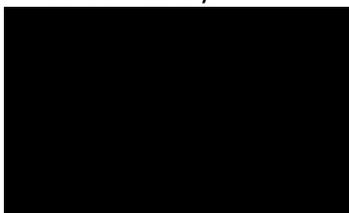
As these numbers are small, it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the role that the vaccine may have played. Medsafe has recently (17 November 2021) updated their advice following a review of the latest international evidence and has concluded that: "COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy: no safety concerns with Comirnaty (Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine)". For further information, please visit: <https://www.medsafe.govt.nz/safety/Alerts/covid-19-vaccination-in-pregnancy.asp>

I trust that this information is helpful.

Waitematā DHB supports the open disclosure of information to assist community understanding of how we are delivering publicly funded healthcare. This includes the proactive publication of anonymised Official Information Act responses on our website from 10 working days after they have been released.

If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider your views.

Yours sincerely



**Executive Director Hospital Services
Waitematā District Health Board**