

21 August 2023

s 9(2)(a)



**Your request for Official information, reference: HNZ00026403**

Thank you for your tweet on 22 July 2023, asking for the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*“Please provide the data on NZ excess mortality for 2021, 2022, and to the end of June for 2023 and all cause mortality categories (cause of death) for the same years.”*

Mortality rates, not including cause of death, are publicly available online from Stats NZ.

The earliest fact of death information is available online from 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). Select ‘Populations’, and then ‘Deaths’.

For other published mortality data and statistics, there is the following Manatū Hauora link: [www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/health-statistics-and-data-sets/mortality-data-and-stats](http://www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/health-statistics-and-data-sets/mortality-data-and-stats)

For information about cause of death, Te Whatu Ora has a mortality web tool [www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/mortality-web-tool](http://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/mortality-web-tool) that presents mortality and demographic data for deaths registered in New Zealand from 1948 to 2020. The Mortality Collection, which is available on the following web link [www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections/mortality-collection/](http://www.tewhatauora.govt.nz/our-health-system/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections/mortality-collection/), classifies the underlying cause of death for all deaths registered in Aotearoa New Zealand and all registered foetal deaths (stillbirths). Currently, 2018 is the most recent year for which final cause specific mortality data is available. Preliminary data is available for 2019 and 2020.

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. Te Whatu Ora’s clinical coding team reviews 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 cause. Deaths which require a coronial inquiry can take 2-3 or more years for cause of death to be assigned. We do not make mortality data available publicly until the majority of deaths have been assigned a cause of death, so that the data we release is complete and accurate. The Chief Coroner has noted delays in the time it is taking them to assign cause of death codes.

As such, your request for cause of death data in New Zealand for 2021 to 2023 is declined under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

**How to get in touch**

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

**Manager**

**Office of the Chief Data and Digital**