

30<sup>th</sup> November 2021

s9(2)(a)

Dear Requester

**Official Information Act Request for – Fetal & Neonatal Deaths**

I write in response to your Official Information Act request received by us 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021, you requested the following information:

- Would you please supply the total of 'Medical Certificate of Causes of Fetal and Neonatal Death' forms that have been filled out, per month, since June 2020 to date in your District Health Board area. (Ministry of Health web page reference: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/regulation-health-and-disability-system/burial-and-cremation-act-1964/completing-death-documents/medical-certificate-causes-fetal-and-neonatal-death>) Please separate into Fetal Deaths and Neonatal Deaths per month. If permissible, please advise the cause of death.

**Counties Manukau Health Response:**

For context Counties Manukau Health (CM Health) employs over 8,500 staff and provides health and support services to people living in the Counties Manukau region (approx. 601,490 people). We see over 118,000 people in our Emergency Department each year, and over 2,000 visitors come through Middlemore Hospital daily.

- Would you please supply the total of 'Medical Certificate of Causes of Fetal and Neonatal Death' forms that have been filled out, per month, since June 2020 to date in your District Health Board area  
Table 1 below reflects the HP4721 Certificates that were issued between June 2020 to October 2021.

HP4721 Certificates Issued between June 2020 to October 2021												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	-	-	-	-	-	9	10	10	13	7	12	4
2021	7	11	9	10	10	12	7	12	15	12	-	-

Table 1: Data Source Bereavement Care Services November 2021

Table 2 below reflects the deaths in the Neonatal Unit between June 2020 to October 2021. Where numbers are less than 3 we have withheld the exact number due to privacy reasons as stating the exact number may make individuals. This information is being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 – protect the privacy of the natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. We have considered whether the public interest outweighs the need to protect the privacy of individuals and have determined that it does not.

Neonatal Unit Deaths June 2020 to October 2021													
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2020	-	-	-	-	-	<3	<3	<3	-		<3	<3	7
2021	-	<3	<3	-	<3	-	-	-	<3	<3	-	-	7

Table 2: Data Sourced, Bereavement Care Services November 2021

In relation to the cause of death, this is not data that is centrally collected by CM Health and would involve a manual search through individual patient files. In addition, due to the sensitivity of this information it is necessary to protect the privacy of the natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. We have considered whether the public interest outweighs the need to protect the privacy of individuals and have determined that it does not. We have, therefore, determined to decline this element of your request under Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 due to substantial collation and research and Section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act to protect the privacy of the natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

I trust this information answers your request. You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response or an edited version of this may be published on the Counties Manukau Health website. If you consider there are good reasons why this response should not be made publicly available, we will be happy to consider this.

Yours sincerely



**Fepulea'i Margie Apa**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Counties Manukau Health**