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24 April 2024

s 9(2)(a)

Ref: H2024038582

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 28 March 2024. You requested:

1. I'm keen to find out if the long covid expert advisory group listed on the Te Whatu website is still operating?

The Ministry established the Long COVID Expert Advisory Group in May 2022 to assess the evidence on long COVID, to help inform recommendations for clinical practice and guidelines. This work concluded in November 2022. For more information please see: www.tewhatuora.govt.nz/corporate-information/about-us/expert-groups/long-covid-expert-advisory-group

2. Please could you let me know the last time the group met formally?

An Evidence Review of the guidance produced by the Expert Advisory Group was conducted in December 2023 which confirmed it was fit-for-purpose. The Ministry intends to undertake a further review to ensure any guidance material remains current. However, this group hasn't met since work concluded in November 2022.

3. I'd also like to know how many FTE across the Ministry of Health and Te Whatu Ora are dedicated to dealing with

- 1. Long Covid*
- 2. ME/CFS*

The Ministry has no dedicated staff.

4. Finally I'd be keen to know how much the Ministry and Te Whatu Ora spent in the past year (2023) on research into Long Covid and ME/CFS, and any specialised treatment for Long Covid and/or ME/CFS."

The specific amount of funding for the individual contracts is withheld under section 9(2)(ba)(i) to protect information that is subject to an obligation of confidence and making it available would likely prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source. However, these projects were part of a contestable fund where each project was eligible for up to a maximum of \$500,000. Two of these were Ministry of Health funded and one from the National Immunisation Programme (now Te Whatu Ora).

I trust this information fulfils your request. If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request with us, including this decision, please feel free to contact the OIA Services Team on: oiagr@health.govt.nz.

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



Dr Martin Chadwick

Chief Allied Health Professions Officer | Te Āpiha Hauora Haumi

Chief Clinical Officers | Ngā Āpiha Hauora