

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

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15 June 2021

9(2)(a)

RE Official Information Act request CDHB 10625

I refer to your email dated 5 June 2021 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act from Canterbury DHB regarding Covid vaccinations. Specifically:

Maori and Pacific islanders in the Canterbury DHB area who are 70 or over are classified as being in Priority Group 2 for vaccination. I seriously doubt that specific ethnic groups in Canterbury currently are more vulnerable than others.

1. Why are not individuals of other races 70 and over also in Group 2?

Our data shows us that our health system is inequitable. As a result, older Māori and Pacific people get sicker, and die earlier, than Pakeha. This is the reason behind the Covid vaccine being offered first to those most at risk of getting very sick from the virus.

Ministry of Health data (<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-case-demographics#ethnicity>) since this pandemic began, shows that 7.7% of COVID-19 infections in NZ have been Māori but 19.2% of deaths by COVID-19 were Māori and more than half of those Māori deaths occurred in Canterbury.

This demonstrates a significant inequity and is evidence of the much greater risk of mortality (approx. 2.5 times greater) for Māori. Hence, the targeting of Māori in Group 2.

Additional information can be found on the Ministry of Health website.

<https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/our-covid-19-vaccination-plan/covid-19-vaccine-rollout-groups/#group-2-%E2%80%94-currently-being-vaccinated>

You may also like to read this article about the inequities in our health system:

<https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/the-side-eye/19-05-2021/the-side-eyes-two-new-zealands-the-2700-day-gap/>

I trust that this satisfies your interest in this matter.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Canterbury DHB website after your receipt of this response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R La Salle', is positioned below the closing 'Yours sincerely'.

Ralph La Salle
Acting Executive Director
Planning, Funding & Decision Support