

26 November 2020

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I refer to your Official Information Request dated 27 October 2020 to the Ministry of Health (MoH) and transferred from the MoH to Auckland DHB on 9 November 2020 requesting the following information:

Under section 12 of the Official Information Act 1982 I request all original communications including briefings, reports, memos, aides memoirs, cabinet papers and texts regarding the following information:

- 1. Around the Westpac worker who tested positive for Coronavirus in October including interviews,**
- 2. Date: time stamps for when the Coronavirus specimen was taken, processed and reported,**
- 3. The self isolation that they undertook on Friday Oct 16,**
- 4. Any explanations or narrative for the time difference between self isolating and testing and what testing options they explored and when.**

I am responding from Auckland District Health Board (Auckland DHB) as the DHB responsible for Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS).

ARPHS provides public health services to all three metro Auckland District Health Boards – Waitemata District Health Board, Counties Manukau Health and Auckland District Health Board, and the populations they serve. ARPHS's core role is to protect and promote public health.

Please see below responses:

I request all original communications including briefings, reports, memos, aides memoirs, cabinet papers and texts regarding the following information:

- 1. Around the Westpac worker who tested positive for Coronavirus in October including interviews?**

Your request for original communications including interviews has been considered however under s9(2)(a) Official Information Act, a decision has been made to withhold this information to protect the privacy of natural persons. It is acknowledged whilst there may be a public

interest in being able to understand certain aspects of the response to the pandemic, there is an even greater interest to ensure public health actions are not undermined by ensuring people feel comfortable with their personal information being shared with public health units for the purposes of contact tracing. The release of this information may have the serious consequence of people not being open and honest about their movements. Information that is relevant to the public health response, such as where there is the possibility of exposure to others during the individual's infectious period is made available publicly in a timely way to allow the public to act to protect themselves and others.

2. Date: time stamps for when the Coronavirus specimen was taken, processed and reported

- a) COVID swab collected: 1117hrs, 22/10/2020
- b) COVID swab received in lab: 1735hrs, 22/10/2020
- c) Positive COVID result notified to ARPHS: 2307hrs, 22/10/2020

3. The self isolation that they undertook on Friday Oct 16,

The Westpac worker was not in self-isolation as they had not had any contact with a COVID positive case at this time.

4. Any explanations or narrative for the time difference between self isolating and testing and what testing options they explored and when.

On 19 October 2020 the casual contact of the COVID case developed symptoms, and as a result the household contact (Westpac worker) was asked to self-isolate while the casual contact underwent testing.

The casual contact tested positive for COVID and was notified to ARPHS at 0645hrs, 21/10/2020. This meant the Westpac worker became a close contact and the initial interview was completed. As per ARPHS guidelines the person was asked to self- isolate, and testing was arranged for 22/10/2020, as per ARPHS best practice of testing on Day 5 from first exposure to a positive case while infectious.

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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Auckland District Health Boards website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)