

Official Information Act Request

Covid Vaccination Injury Analysis - February 2022

Reference IPA-5768

Question

Please provide data for all covid related vaccination claims including death and side effects also including age, gender and ethnicity.

Please also provide me with data on deaths related to covid vaccine and successful injury claims stating the injured persons age, gender and ethnicity. The time it took for the injury to occur after receiving the covid vaccine dose and if it was a first dose or second dose.

Can you please advise how many claims ACC is dealing with due to adverse reactions to the Cominarty injection?

Recently there was an article in one of media outlets the New Zealand Herald, you provide an update of the statistic of Covid cases work related, and vaccine injuries. These Stats only take us up to the 10th September, I am now requesting a further update to the 10 of October 2021. Could you please provide an update on the following stats:

1. Pfizer vaccine injuries accepted
2. Vaccine injuries declined?
3. Vaccine injuries still pending?
4. How many ACC vaccine injury deaths has accepted/dismissed by the Corporation?

These figures would be helpful at keeping our Database up to date. Also I am advising the vaccine injured on how to make a claim, and also advising if they don't have a claim, but I always advise people to talk to their GPs first.

Can I have a breakdown of ACC claims relating to treatment/adverse effects to the COVID-19 vaccine since January 2021 broken down by month, DHB, Age (5 year age bands are acceptable), ethnicity, permanence of effect, and clinical nature of effect?

Can this please be in Excel spreadsheet format.

Can you please advise the following associated with Covid vaccine adverse effects or harm claims (minor, serious, death or otherwise), if any:

Total number of reports/claims to ACC (categorised by adverse affect/harm type) AND for each:

Total of claim outcomes for each category (pending, declined, granted etc).

How many ACC claims have been made for AEFIs and/or injuries related to the COVID-19 vaccine In total for the year 2021 including reports made up until 12 Oct 2021? How many of these claims have been accepted? How many are still being processed? And how many have been declined? Could you also please provide raw data and/or statistics inclusive of age, type of injury, and dates reported?

Background information about treatment injury data

Before responding to your request, we would first like to provide you with some background information about treatment injuries.

ACC has provided cover for treatment injuries since 1 July 2005. The treatment injury provisions replaced the medical misadventure provisions of the Accident Compensation Act 2001, to bring it more in line with the no-fault nature of the scheme.

A treatment injury is a personal injury caused as a result of seeking or receiving medical treatment from, or at the direction of, a registered health professional. In order to fulfil the criteria for cover, the person must have suffered a personal injury and there must be a clear causal link between the treatment and the injury, and the injury must not be a necessary part or ordinary consequence of the treatment.

When considering treatment injury data, it is important to note that the number of claims lodged with ACC cannot be taken as an accurate indication of the occurrence of injury during treatment or the quality of care. This is because, among other reasons, not all occurrences of injury during treatment are lodged with ACC.

Context

Treatment injury (TI) data is available from 1 July 2005, when treatment injury provisions came into law.

The ACC website contains further information on treatment injury <https://www.acc.co.nz/for-providers/treatment-safety/>.

A full overview of treatment injury in public and private surgical hospitals and general practice settings is available at <https://www.acc.co.nz/assets/provider/ACC7971-Supporting-Treatment-Safety-2021.pdf>.

Claim lodgement rates are dependent on several factors. They can be influenced by:

- population demography i.e. the characteristics of the resident population, visitors and referred patients
- health status of the population treated
- what level of facility the organisation provides i.e. tertiary versus secondary
- familiarity of health providers or clients in recognising and/or lodging treatment injury claims.

Privacy

ACC does not routinely disclose low value numbers related to claims. Accordingly, some of the values in the tables only indicate that the number is less than 4 (denoted as <4). In other instances, values are suppressed and notated as (--) to limit the potential for particular individuals or matters specific to certain individuals from being identified.

Withholding in this way is necessary to protect the privacy of these individuals under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. In doing so, we have considered the public interest in making the information available and have determined that it does not outweigh the need to protect the privacy of these persons.

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 or by phoning 0800 802 602.

COVID-19 vaccine related treatment injury claims

The data below was extracted on 9 February 2022 for treatment injury claims lodged with ACC between 18 February 2021 (when New Zealand began COVID-19 vaccinations) and 5 February 2022, where the treatment event was *vaccination or injection/medications, adverse reaction/medication error* and where the medication type was recorded as *vaccine*.

However, as these fields are only completed when cover for the claim is decided, the figures provided have been supplemented by a text search of the claim forms received by ACC which mention *Comirnaty* (the name of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine), or included the terms *covid* or *Pfizer* together with *vacc* or *injection*. This text search allows us to identify claims that have been lodged but where cover has not been decided. Free text search methods are not reliable data extraction methods and can result in anomalies in the data; so claims identified by this method above have been manually reviewed and some false positive matches removed.

Ethnicity

The ethnicity data provided below is based on ACC's 'prioritised ethnicity' data field. This method reduces the six ethnic responses to a single response by a system of "prioritisation" where: Māori regardless of other ethnicities listed is classified as Māori; Pacific peoples with any other response other than Māori is classified as Pacific; Asian peoples with any other response other than Māori and Pacific are classified as Asian; Other ethnicity regardless of any other response other than Māori, Asian or Pacific is classified as Other. Those that listed European and did not list Māori, Pacific, Asian or Other are classified as European.

ACC reports ethnicity using a different method to Statistics New Zealand. Care must be taken when comparing ACC's ethnicity data with other Government agencies or census data.

Data

The treatment injury data provided below was extracted on 9 February 2022 and includes claims lodged between 18 February 2021, when New Zealand began Covid vaccinations, and 5 February 2022.

During this period ACC has received 1,996 claims for injuries relating to the Covid vaccination. 729 claims have been accepted, 724 have been declined and 543 are yet to be decided. The following tables break down these numbers by the sex, age and ethnicity of the claimants.

Comirnaty had until very recently been the only Covid vaccine that has been used as part of New Zealand's vaccination response but more recently the Astra Zeneca Covid-19 vaccine has also been used. The specific vaccine used is not always identified on the claim so identifying the vaccine used cannot be reliably determined. Given the vaccination policy, the vast majority of the claims reported below relate to the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty vaccine.

Sex

Sex	Accepted	Declined	Pending Decision	Total
Female	522	485	336	1,343
Male	207	239	207	653
Total	729	724	543	1,996

The table above shows that females are far more likely than males to have lodged a claim for a Covid vaccination treatment injury. Claims for female clients represent 67% of claims lodged. This compares to 51% of the population with at least one Covid vaccination.¹

Age Band

Age Band	Accepted	Declined	Pending Decision	Total
5-17	32	24	23	79
18-24	56	59	42	157
25-29	52	54	39	145
30-34	69	64	61	194
35-39	67	72	57	196
40-44	74	82	50	206
45-49	97	79	60	236
50-54	61	73	60	194
55-59	67	68	48	183
60-64	50	58	38	146
65-69	45	27	30	102
70-74	23	31	19	73
75-79	14	--	--	35
80-84	14	14	7	35
85 plus	8	<4	--	15
Total	729	724	543	1,996

As of 5 February 2022 only 11 claims had been lodged for people aged 5 to 11. To protect the privacy of these individuals these claims have been collated with the 12 to 17 age band.

¹ Source: https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/covid_vaccinations_08_02_2022-v2.xlsx

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Accepted	Declined	Pending Decision	Total
Maori	65	60	45	170
Pacific Peoples	27	30	22	79
Asian	64	71	36	171
European	522	498	391	1,411
Other/Unknown	51	65	49	165
Total	729	724	543	1,996

71% of claims lodged with ACC for Covid vaccination injuries have been for clients with European ethnicity with 72% accepted for cover. Māori comprise 9% of claims lodged with ACC for Covid vaccination injuries and 9% of the claims accepted.

Dose

ACC has asked lodging providers to indicate whether the vaccination leading to the claim was a first, second or third/booster dose. Whilst over 40% have provided this information it has been provided as free text and nearly 60% of claims do not clarify which dose was involved. The table below categorises the claims received based on whether the claim was for the first, second or third primary/booster dose or whether this wasn't clear from the description given.

Dose	Accepted	Declined	Pending Decision	Total
First	107	143	72	322
Second	213	199	120	532
Third/Booster	18	12	39	69
Unspecified	391	370	312	1,073
Total	729	724	543	1,996

Accepted Injuries

Treatment injuries are confirmed and recorded when a claim is decided. The following table shows the primary injury recorded for the accepted Covid vaccination claims decided by 9 February 2022.

Primary Injury	All Accepted Claims
Allergic Reaction	161
Sprain	82
Contusion	81
Adverse Drug Reaction	73
Anaphylactic Reaction	72
Infection	45
Cellulitis	39
Cardiac injury	33
Nerve Damage	13
Bursitis	9
Other	121
Total	729

Severity of Injuries

Measuring the impact of an injury on a person is challenging. ACC and others use the overall cost of a treatment injury claim as an indicator of the severity of the injury because more costly claims are likely to indicate claims where there has been a more severe impact on the person injured. While not always directly related, overall cost is one measure of severity and impact.

The following table shows the number of accepted claims grouped by the total payments made per claim to 9 February 2022.

Payments to 9 February 2021	Number of Accepted Claims
No payment to date	184
Up to \$100	234
Over \$100 to \$500	226
Over \$500 to \$1,000	23
Over \$1,000 to \$5,000	34
Over \$5,000 to \$10,000	12
Over \$10,000 to \$50,000	16
Total	729

85 out of 729 accepted claims had resulted in payments of over \$500 by 9 February 2022. 184 accepted claims had yet to receive a payment by 9 February 2022.

Total payments made by ACC by 9 February 2022 on these 729 accepted claims was \$550,614.

To date, fewer than 4 claims have been lodged with ACC, which have related to a fatal injury. All have been accepted.

Claims by Month

The following table shows the number of Covid vaccination injury claims received by ACC by month. This is grouped by the recorded accident date ('Number of Claimed Vaccinations' column in table below) and by the date on which the claim was lodged with ACC ('Number Lodged' column in table below). ACC records treatment injury accident dates as the date on which the client first sought treatment for the injury. This may not necessarily be the date on which the event leading to the injury occurred although for the purpose of the analysis this date is used as a proxy for the date of vaccination.

Few vaccinations and consequently vaccination claims were lodged in the month of February 2021, so February and March have been grouped together to avoid reporting small numbers. Likewise as this extract was taken early in February 2022 few claims had been lodged for February 2022 so these claims have been grouped with January 2022.

Month	Number of Claimed Vaccinations	Number Lodged
February - March 2021	12	5
April 2021	63	21
May 2021	96	61
June 2021	85	68
July 2021	111	51
August 2021	277	123
September 2021	384	262
October 2021	417	312
November 2021	250	412
December 2021	182	368
January - February 2022 ¹	119	313

¹February 2022 is partial month to 5 February 2022.

1,667 (84%) of the Covid vaccination injury claims received to date have been received since the beginning of September, many are in the process of being assessed and do not yet have a decision. At this stage, it is difficult to provide meaningful data on the persistency of any injuries sustained.

DHB

The DHB has been provided below based on the DHB of Treatment where this has been identified and by the DHB of Residence of the client.

Given that the number of claims received from some DHBs is quite small only the total number of claims lodged has been shown in the table below.

District Health Board Region	DHB of Treatment	DHB of Residence
Auckland	151	152
Bay of Plenty	43	100
Canterbury	58	203
Capital & Coast	59	123
Counties Manukau	17	166
Hawkes Bay	27	66
Hutt Valley	27	60
Lakes	12	37
Mid Central	35	74
Nelson Marlborough	34	76
Northland	32	60
South Canterbury	10	15
Southern	67	195
Tairāwhiti	--	17
Taranaki	45	90
Waikato	105	232
Wairarapa	7	18
Waitemata	43	238
West Coast	4	--
Whanganui	25	59
Overseas	<4	0
Unknown	1,190	<4
Total	1,996	1,996

The DHB of Treatment is often not confirmed until the claim is decided hence the large number of claims recorded with no known DHB of Treatment.

Declined Reason

The table below shows the number of declined claims, broken down by declined reasons, which relate to the treatment injury assessment criteria.

Declined Reason	Number of Declined Claims
No Injury	569
No Causal Link	66
Withdrawn	36
Ordinary Consequence of Treatment	11
Lack of Information	10
Other	32
Total	724

Time to Lodgement

Some vaccination injuries are immediately apparent whereas other injuries may take some time to become apparent. The table below shows the time between the accident date (assumed to be the date of vaccination in most cases) and the date when the claim is lodged with ACC.

Delay	Number of Claims	Delay	Number of Claims
0 days	94	20 days	25
1 days	120	21 days	30
2 days	98	22 days	22
3 days	102	23 days	15
4 days	79	24 days	25
5 days	76	25 days	16
6 days	61	26 days	10
7 days	57	27 days	17
8 days	45	4 weeks	127
9 days	30	5 weeks	79
10 days	37	6 weeks	72
11 days	28	7 weeks	74
12 days	30	8 weeks	58
13 days	26	9 weeks	54
14 days	25	10 weeks	46
15 days	23	11 weeks	44
16 days	24	12 weeks	36
17 days	21	3 months	120
18 days	21	4 months +	96
19 days	21		

The table above is illustrated in the chart below.

