

25 July 2022

██████████
Via email: ██████████

Dear ██████████

Official Information Act request – Money spent on free items to encourage COVID vaccination – Our ref: 20220630-1260

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 30 June 2022, which has been transferred to us also by Waitematā and Counties Manukau, requesting the following information:

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic [March 2020] to date, how much money has Auckland, Waitemata and Counties Manukau spent on giving free items to the public to encourage them to get vaccinated.

This includes food, coffee, gift cards, prizes such as local and overseas trips, mobile phones, fuel vouchers, Christmas hams and any other such prizes to entice people to get vaccinated.

Response

I am responding on behalf of the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC), the COVID-19 response and vaccination team set up by the Northland, Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau DHBs.

The below response applies only to the three Te Whatu Ora Metro Auckland Districts (formerly DHBs), that is Waitematā, Auckland and Counties Manukau.

To date the NRHCC's vaccination programme has provided two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to well over our goal of 90% of the eligible population in Auckland metropolitan area. In addition to this, over 70% of the eligible population have received their first booster vaccination, and the second booster programme is well underway.

During this time, we have stood up over a dozen community vaccination centres and supported over 300 primary care (GP and pharmacy) sites to provide vaccinations. We have also partnered with Māori and Pacific health providers to reach communities of people that historically have been disengaged with the health system.

The NRHCC has employed a number of strategies to engage with those communities where vaccination rates had not achieved equitable levels, compared with the national averages. Māori and Pacific led vaccination centres have provided experiences where a more holistic and cultural based model of care is offered. This has helped build relationships with those communities and enabled our community partners to have a foundation on which to build stronger relationships.

Pacific provider led events have proved extremely successful by using leaders and language to promote and distinguish these events, and outreach services have meant that certain communities have had easier access to vaccines.

All these strategies have contributed to an overall successful vaccination programme. However, to reach further into communities the NRHCC worked with all three Metro-Auckland Districts, the Well Foundation, Auckland Health Foundation and Middlemore Foundation to develop initiatives to encourage people to get vaccinated while aligning with the community support objectives of the Foundations. This approach also reflected the NRHCC’s manaaki approach to focus on vulnerable communities who are most in need.

The total cost of these vaccination initiatives for the period of time between March 2020 and end of May 2022 was \$1,545,569.93. During this same period, 2,735,119 vaccination doses were delivered to metro-Auckland domiciled people.

The table below summarises the specific area of cost covered by these initiatives related to: patient transport, vouchers, giveaways, entertainment, catering and hospitality, and manaaki and Fanau packages.

Te Whatu Ora Metro Auckland District Expenditure

	Total Metro Auckland
Patient Transport	14,122
Vouchers	660,192
Giveaways	38,841
Entertainment	82,883
Catering and Hospitality	322,032
Direct Costs Incurred	1,118,070
Manaaki / Fanau Package	427,500
TOTAL SPEND	1,545,570

Please note:

- Costs incurred as presented above are based on cash payments (excl of GST, where applicable) up to 31 May 2022.
- The table excludes the 'unclaimed' portion of contracts for Manaaki and Fanau packages and this information cannot be provided under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act (OIA) on the basis that this information does not exist.
- Likewise, we cannot include any costs that may have been incurred by external providers but have not yet been submitted for reimbursement under section 18(e) of the OIA on the basis that this information does not exist.
- We are declining to provide any further detail in relation to subsets of costs above on the basis that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation (section 18(f) of the OIA) involving the analysis of multiple individual invoices.
- The table excludes the value of vouchers donated to the vaccination programme in order to promote vaccination uptake as these are not deemed to be a cost.

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the OIA. 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 DHB website.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Michael Shepherd

Interim District Director

Te Toka Tumai Auckland