



**Northern Region Health  
Coordination Centre**  
Bledisloe House  
24 Wellesley Street West  
Auckland CBD, Auckland 1010

20 April 2022

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Re Request for Official Information – Vaccinations, Boosters and COVID-19 Hospitalisations**

I refer to your official information request received on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**For the sake of clarity this is an OIA request.**

**You have stated on 18 March in the media "Over the last month, only 11 percent of hospitalisations have been those who have had their booster."**

**Firstly, given that "vaccinations" are supposed to prevent poor outcomes why are you using the term "only"? Surely one hospitalisation in the boosted population is a failure of these "vaccinations" to do what they have been advertised by the state to do?**

**Secondly please provide data to support your claim. National data shows more than 20% of hospitalisations are in the boosted for the last month. Recent data shows boosted hospitalisation rates are over 33%. If Auckland statistics are 11% then boosted hospitalisations outside of Auckland must be much higher than 20% - highlighting many issues.**

**Please provide data for Covid hospitalisations for the period to which you have specified including:**

**The boundaries of the area to which your data are referring.**

**The data broken down between those hospitalised because of Covid and those hospitalised for other reasons and happen to have a positive Covid test.**

**Please specify data for those hospitalised who are "vaccine" free.**

**Please specify data for those hospitalised who are partially "vaccinated". Please specify the definition for partially "vaccinated" and if these data include those who are recently fully "vaccinated" please breakdown these data accordingly.**

**Please specify data for those hospitalised who are fully "vaccinated". Please specify the definition for fully "vaccinated" and if these data include those who are recently boosted please breakdown these data accordingly.**

**Please specify data for those hospitalised who are boosted. Please specify the definition for boosted and breakdown the time since the hospitalised were boosted eg less than 1 month, 1-2 months, 2+ months.**

**Response**

We asked on 6 April that you please advise whether or not you were happy with the clarification sought by Jonathan Tudor of the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC) on 1 April that the boundaries of the area to which your request was directed was the Northern Region. We are responding on the basis that it was.

I am responding on behalf of the NRHCC which is the COVID-19 response and vaccination team set up by the Northland, Waitematā, Auckland, and Counties Manukau District Health Boards (DHBs).

**1) Given that “vaccinations” are supposed to prevent poor outcomes why are you using the term “only”? Surely one hospitalisation in the boosted population is a failure of these “vaccinations” to do what they have been advertised by the state to do?**

Vaccinations (and boosters) reduce the risk of hospitalisations, they do not eliminate it. As such, hospitalisations in people who have been vaccinated (and boosted) are expected.

Being vaccinated means you are far less likely to get seriously ill and have to go to hospital after testing positive for COVID-19 than if you were unvaccinated. You are also less likely to pass COVID-19 on to other people.

The reason that more vaccinated people are hospitalised compared with unvaccinated people is due to the relative size of the vaccinated and unvaccinated populations

As of 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 95% of people over the age of 12 years have had two or more vaccine doses. While the risk of catching COVID or being hospitalised is lower for this large vaccinated population, the number of those who do get sick, or who are hospitalised, is larger than the number of unvaccinated people who have the same experience due to the sheer weight of numbers. This is entirely expected. Local data shows the risk of hospitalisation is about 2.5x greater for unvaccinated versus those who have received a booster vaccination.

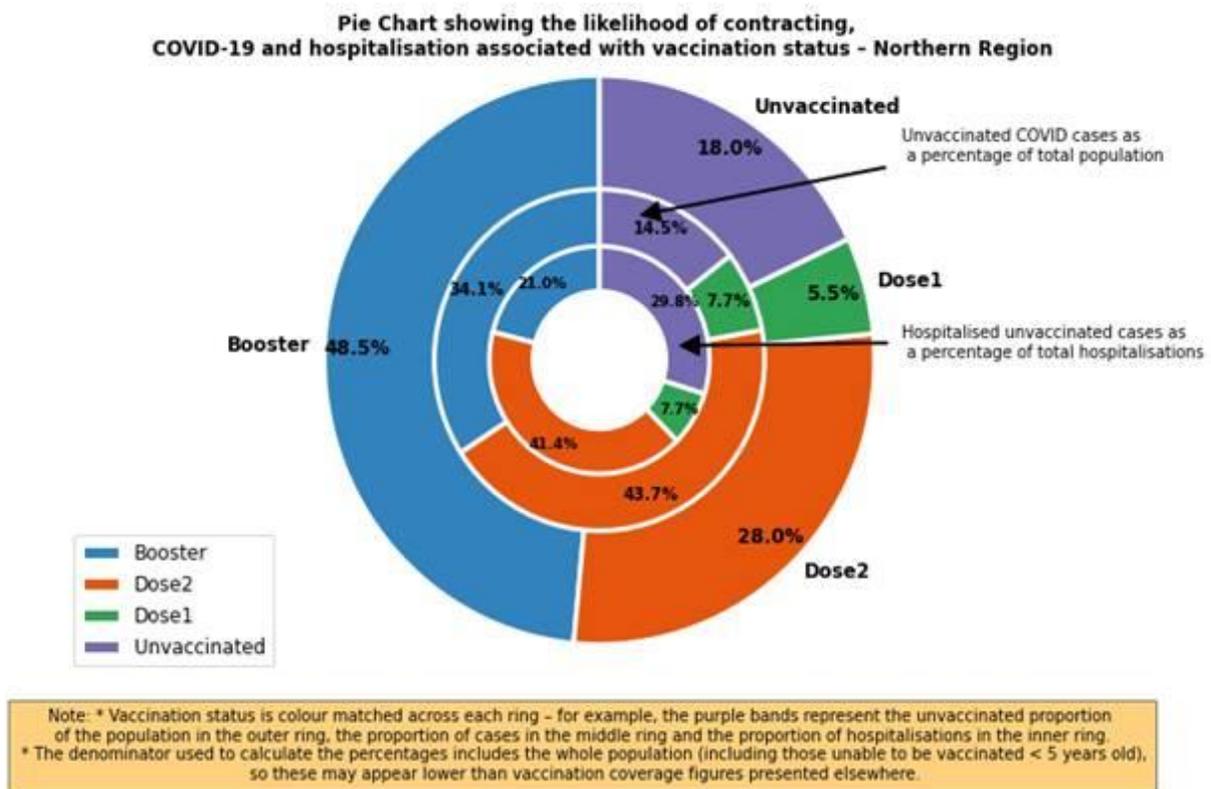
**2) Over the last month, only 11 per cent of hospitalisations have been those who have had their boosters.**

The data used for this statement was taken from sources that had been developed at a point in time but were not complete and therefore understated the true figure. At the time the statement was made, it was not known that the data was incomplete.

The complete data is presented in the pie chart below (for the time period between 26th February and 21st March 2022) – see Figure 1.0. This shows that 21% of hospitalisations have been for those who have received boosters. This shows that unvaccinated people are approximately two and a half times over-represented in our hospitalisations figures.

The reference population for this analysis is the total population of the Northern Region of 1,820,000 people. This comprises those who have had one vaccination, two vaccinations, a booster and unvaccinated people. The unvaccinated population also includes those who are 0-5 years old (see pie chart footnote).

**Figure: 1.0 – unvaccinated, dose 1, dose 2 and booster proportions week ending 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022.**



The responses to your requests below relates to the Northern Region Healthcare Coordination Centre (NRHCC) geographical jurisdiction defined as the area covered by the three Auckland Metro DHBs, Auckland DHB, Waitematā DHB and Counties Manukau DHB, and Northland DHB.

**3) The data broken down between those hospitalised because of Covid and those hospitalised for other reasons and happen to have a positive Covid test.**

There has been a lot of discussion about people admitted to hospital for COVID, as distinct from people who are admitted for other reasons and have COVID as a secondary finding.

As we've mentioned in our recent media stand-ups, it's very difficult to differentiate without reviewing individual clinical notes, which is not routinely completed until after a patient is discharged. As a result, any data related to this is retrospective and does not accurately report a situation at any point in time.

A recent case review of 400 admissions found that about one third had COVID clearly as their reason for admission. A further third appeared to have COVID as a secondary finding, while a quarter were diagnosed with COVID during their admission and the contribution at the time of review was unclear. The remaining 8% was made up of people for whom more information was needed, highlighting how challenging it can be to differentiate the contribution of COVID to any individual admission.

- 4) **Please specify data for those hospitalised who are “vaccine” free**
- 5) **Please specify data for those hospitalised who are partially “vaccinated”**

Figure 1.0, the Pie Chart above, provides proportions of those hospitalised who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated. The specific data related to these two cohorts are as follows:

- Hospitalised and unvaccinated – 2330 people
- Hospitalised and partially vaccinated (only one vaccination) – 621 people

- 6) **Please specify the definition for partially “vaccinated” and if these data include those who are recently fully “vaccinated” please breakdown these data accordingly.**
- 7) **Please specify the definition for fully “vaccinated” and if these data include those who are recently boosted please breakdown these data accordingly.**

People who have only received one vaccination are partially vaccinated. The Ministry of Health categorises those who have received two vaccinations as “fully vaccinated”, with the booster, or being boosted, considered separately.

Please see further background to this:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-vaccine-data#location>

- 8) **Please specify data for those hospitalised who are fully “vaccinated” and please specify data for those hospitalised who are boosted.**

This can be answered by the inner circle shown in Figure 1.0, where:

- 41.4% of those hospitalised are fully vaccinated (red) – 4,101 people
- 23.4% of those hospitalised are boosted (blue) – 1,968 people

- 9) **Please specify the definition for boosted and breakdown the time since the hospitalised were boosted eg: less than 1 month, 1-2 months, 2+ months.**

In response to this question, the key time period to consider is two weeks, as the booster is more effective after this time period. As a result, we split the data by those who have received their booster under two weeks ago, and those who have received it more than two weeks ago.

For the time period of week beginning 3 January 2022 to week ending 3 April 2022, 21% (542 admissions) had had a booster more than two weeks prior to their admission date.

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](http://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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ailsa Claire".

Ailsa Claire, OBE

**Lead Chief Executive of Northern Region Health Coordination Centre (NRHCC)**  
**Chief Executive of Te Toka Tumai (Auckland District Health Board)**