

On Wednesday, February 24th, 2021 at 10:15 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Health Ministers,

I am writing to you on advice from the Australian Department of Health (the Department) to seek clarification on information requested in a Freedom of Information (FOI) request that was sent to the Department.

The Department's initial response on 24th August 2020 (attached: "Initial FOI 1937 Response"), stated: "To obtain the information you are seeking please direct your request to the various State and territory Departments of Health".

After further correspondence between the FOI author and the Department, a more formal response was given (attached: "FOI 1937"), yet the outcome remained the same.

I am therefore writing to you to on initial advice by the Department of Health to confirm whether you do hold the information requested in the original request to the Department, as shown in attachment "FOI 1937" and pasted again below:

*"All records in the possession, custody or control of The Department of Health describing the isolation of a SARS-COV-2 virus, directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka vero cells; lung cells from a lung cancer patient). Please note that I am using "isolation" in the every-day sense of the word: the act of separating a thing(s) from everything else. I am not requesting records where "isolation of SARS-COV-2" refers instead to:*

- the culturing of something,*
- or the performance of an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test),*
- or the sequencing of something.*

*Please also note that my request is not limited to records that were authored by The Department of Health or that pertain to work done by The Department of Health. My request includes any sort of record, for example (but not limited to) any published peer reviewed study that The Department of Health has downloaded or printed."*

I look forward to your response.

[REDACTED]

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**Fw: Letter from CEO, Canberra Health Services - Pathology (SARS-COV-2 virus)**

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Thu, Jul 15, 2021 at 12:00 AM

To: Christine Massey <cmssyo@gmail.com>, "Christine.Massey@protonmail.com" <Christine.Massey@protonmail.com>

Sent with ProtonMail Secure Email.

----- Original Message -----

On Friday, March 19th, 2021 at 9:16 AM, CEOHealth <CEOHealth@act.gov.au> wrote:

**OFFICIAL**

Good morning

Please find attached a letter from the CEO, Canberra Health Services.

Kind regards

Nicole

**Nicole Stevenson** | Director

Office of the Chief Executive Officer | Canberra Health Services | ACT Government

T: 02 5124 4702 | M: 0411 154 648 | E: [nicole.stevenson@act.gov.au](mailto:nicole.stevenson@act.gov.au)

Building 28, Level 2, Canberra Hospital, Yamba Drive Garran ACT 2606

**RELIABLE | PROGRESSIVE | RESPECTFUL | KIND**

*CHS has flexible work practices, and I may be working at unusual times. If you receive my emails out of standard work hours, please know that I have no expectation that you will respond at that time.*

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 Letter from CEO Canberra Health Services - Pathology.pdf



**ACT**  
Government

**Canberra Health  
Services**

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Request to Commonwealth Department of Health**

Thank you for your email of 24 February 2021 to Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Minister for Health about your Freedom of Information request to the Commonwealth Department of Health, and seeking records describing isolation of a SARS-COV-2 virus directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient. Minister Stephen-Smith has asked me to reply on her behalf.

I am advised that ACT Pathology does not have the ability to isolate the virus from patient samples. Accordingly, I do not believe that the ACT Government holds any records relevant to your request.

Thank you for writing to the Minister about this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernadette McDonald'.

Bernadette McDonald  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
Canberra Health Services

19 March 2021