

February 22, 2022

Shelly D Hipson
RR3
Shelburne, B0T 1W0

Sent via Email: shellyhipson@gmail.com

Dear Shelly Hipson:

Re: We cannot grant your request – 2022-00110-HEA

The Department of Health and Wellness received your application for access to information under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the Act) on January 21, 2022.

In your application, you requested a copy of the following records:

<https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20211029007>

In this op-ed (link above) on October 29, 2021, by Dr. Robert Strang, Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health, and Dr. Shelley Deeks, Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health

They state:

Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine is one of the single most important steps you can take to protect yourself and others from this virus. The science is clear: the benefits far outweigh any risk associated with COVID-19 vaccines.

1.) I would like to request all records, the evidence, the proof that what Dr. Robert Strang and Dr. Shelley Deeks is saying is true: "That the COVID-19 vaccine is one of the single most important steps you can take to protect yourself and others from this virus." (What proof do they have that the vaccine is protecting people and others?)

2. I would like to receive a copy of "the science" that they reference in this statement as being clear - that shows that "the benefits (of the vaccines) far outweigh any risk associated with COVID-19 vaccines. Please provide the risk-benefit analysis that they are referring too. (Date Range for Record Search: From 09/30/2021 To 10/31/2021)

We are refusing access to the records for the following reason pursuant to subsection 4(2) of the Act:

- The Act does not apply to the following kinds of information in the custody or control of a public body:
 - published information, material available for purchase and material that is a matter of public record.

Nova Scotia's Covid -19 response actions have been based on national and international guidance from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). As the leading agencies for pandemic response nationally and internationally, both PHAC and WHO are continuously reviewing the evolving scientific evidence regarding COVID-19 and the effectiveness of various measures. These reviews are used to form their guidance, position statements, and other documents all of which are in the public domain.

The Government of Canada's resources, including COVID-19 guidance documents, are available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

The WHO's resources, including COVID-19 technical guidance, are available at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

The Department of Health and Wellness Public Health Branch continues to be in ongoing contact with PHAC and WHO as evidence has evolved throughout the pandemic. This includes as a participant in federal/provincial/territorial conversations, including committees and networks. This has enabled recommendations on public health measures to be informed by the most up to date evidence.

You have the right to ask for a review of this decision by the Information Access and Privacy Commissioner (formerly the Review Officer). You have 60 days from the date of this letter to exercise this right. If you wish to ask for a review, you may do so on Form 7, a copy of which is attached. Send the completed form to the Information Access and Privacy Commissioner, P.O. Box 181, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2M4.

Please be advised that a de-identified copy of this disclosure letter and the attached response to your FOIPOP application will be made public after 14 days. The package will be posted online at <https://openinformation.novascotia.ca/>. The letter will not include your name, address, or any other personal information that you have supplied while making your application under FOIPOP.

Please contact Melinda Frelick at 902-424-6920 or by e-mail at melinda.frelick@novascotia.ca, if you need further assistance regarding this application.

Sincerely,



Craig Beaton
Associate Deputy Minister