

COVID-19 response – Changes to vaccinator training and vaccinator processes

As part of the New Zealand COVID-19 response it is essential that all immunisation vaccinations continue to be delivered with a particular need for influenza vaccinations to be provided as rapidly as possible. There are several vaccination processes that have been amended to enable vaccinations to proceed and be given as safely and efficiently as possible.

1. Influenza and Pandemic Response Vaccinator Training Course

- a. An Influenza, MMR and Pandemic Vaccinator Training Course has been developed for the administration of influenza, MMR and any potential COVID-19 vaccine. This will be a free course and will be available to any Health Care Professional (HPC) who has a current Annual Practising Certificate (APC) and appropriate health science students registered with a professional body eg, Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) nurses, Māori and Pacific health providers, school registered nurses, pharmacists not already vaccinating, enrolled nurses, retired health professionals, third year student nurses and fourth year student doctors.
- b. The course will consist of four hours online learning including an online assessment, plus a vaccine administration webinar followed by clinical peer review by an authorised vaccinator. It will be available on the IMAC website www.immune.org.nz and is planned to be available from approximately 9 April 2020.
- c. Priority will first be given to WCTO nurses, Māori and Pacific health providers, school registered nurses, pharmacists not already vaccinating and, enrolled nurses. Participants will be placed into groups and will undertake the webinar part of the course in these groups. There will be a registration process and participants will need access to broadband and a computer to undertake the course.

2. Vaccinators to be approved to vaccinate in any DHB

All current vaccinators and all newly trained vaccinators will be approved to vaccinate anywhere in New Zealand during the COVID-19 response. This will enable a more mobile workforce that can be readily assigned to the area of greatest need. IMAC will hold a register of all newly trained Influenza, MMR and Pandemic Vaccinator for 2 years or until a national register of all vaccinators is available. A national register is already in development by the Ministry as part of the COVID-19 response.

3. CPR certificate

- a. For current authorised vaccinators, pharmacist vaccinators and registered intern pharmacists whose CPR certificate has expired it would be presumed that under their scope of practice they are able to manage emergencies and are expected to complete an update CPR course as soon as practically possible. Current CPR certificates will not be required by Pharmaceutical Society/ Medicines Control or

Medical Officers of Health for this period. The previous expired CPR can be submitted.

- b. Any HCP who completing the Influenza, MMR and Pandemic Response Vaccinator course who has previously held a CPR a certificate at Public/Basic Level 3 CPR or above, and can produce a copy of this, can submit the expired certificate in support of authorisation, as it would be presumed that under their scope of practice they are able to manage emergencies and would complete an update CPR course when available.

4. Clinical Assessments

- a. Immunisation Coordinators (ICs) will focus on clinical assessments for pharmacists working as a solo pharmacist or in a pharmacy with no other pharmacist or intern pharmacist vaccinator who are waiting for assessment.
- b. All new vaccinators will complete a peer assessment by a current authorised vaccinator or experienced pharmacist vaccinator. Vaccinators who have undertaken a peer assessment only will be given a two-year provisional authorisation with requirement to have full assessment prior to expiry of the provisional authorisation. ICs will prioritise clinical assessments where peer review is not available. Completed peer assessment forms should be sent to IMAC who will issue a certificate of provisional authorisation, and to their local IC.

5. Cold Chain Accreditation (CCA) and Cold Chain Compliance (CCC)

- a. All new immunisation providers and current providers whose CCA/CCC have expired or will expire shortly will not be audited for the period of alert level 3 or 4.
- b. All Immunisation service providers will need to complete a self-assessment form and email this with a record of their last 3 months' refrigerator temperature recordings to their local IC. A CCC will be issued for up to a maximum of 1 year. The exception to this is vaccinating pharmacies whose cold chain is normally assessed through their annual Licence to Operate by Medicines Control.

6. National Standing Order

- a. Current immunisation providers DHBs, PHOs and GP practices have a standing order that covers student nurses working under an authorised vaccinator. The Ministry is developing a standing order template to enable all student nurses and student doctors who have completed an Influenza, MMR and Pandemic Response Vaccinator Course to administer these vaccinations without a prescription.
- b. A standing order template will provide consistency across all DHBs and will enable student vaccinators to work anywhere under a registered health professional (who is also an authorised vaccinator or experienced pharmacist vaccinator) to deliver influenza, MMR vaccinations and Pandemic COVID-19 vaccine, when it is available. More information on this will be circulated when available.

7. Removal of requirement for offsite vaccinators to carry oxygen

Advice on the need for use of oxygen to be taken when vaccinating offsite was sought from the Technical Advisory Group and it was agreed that oxygen was not needed but that adrenaline should always be carried. This decision was approved by the Director of Public Health. Oxygen is no longer required to be taken to community settings.

Refer: [Position statement regarding oxygen equipment](#)

8. Observation period post influenza vaccination – 13 years and above.

The requirement for 20 minute wait following influenza vaccination for people aged 13 years and older with no history of previous vaccine related anaphylaxis has been removed.

- a. The 20 minute waiting period is considered to be the best option when the waiting area is adequate and safe. For all other situations, providers review the 20 minute post vaccination wait for adolescent and adult vaccination during the 2020 influenza vaccination season, based on a risk assessment related their working environment.
- b. Adolescents and adults who meet ALL the following criteria may not need to wait for 20 minutes post vaccination:
 - 1) do not have a history of severe allergic reactions
 - 2) have been assessed for any immediate post vaccination adverse reactions (5 minutes)
 - 3) are aware of when they need to and how to seek post-vaccination advice
 - 4) will have another adolescent or adult with them for the first 20 minutes post vaccination
 - 5) have the ability to contact emergency services if required.

Refer: [Observation period post influenza vaccination 13 years and above](#)

9 April 2020