

**Prescribing during Covid**

The MCNZ have confirmed that prescriptions do not need to be signed if a prescription has: -

- has an NZePS barcode; AND
- is downloaded at the pharmacy; AND
- is for non-Controlled Drugs; AND
- is generated by systems authorised for Signature Exempt Prescriptions by the Ministry of Health.

You should not feel pressured by patients to prescribe COVID-19 therapies which are unproven or lacking in evidence. Medications may be in short supply, and such prescribing risks patients in need for legitimate indications missing out.

If you're on **Medtech 32/Evolution or MyPractice** AND you're on **NZePS**, you will be able to do signatureless prescribing for all non-Controlled Drugs and send these directly to the pharmacy from today. You can expect a communique tomorrow. Profile for Mac is still working through integration with the NZePS but they're fast tracking this. You may have already been contacted by your vendors with guidance on how to do this, as well as well as how to work remotely from any location (for those not on cloud-based systems).

If you're not on NZePS, or are prescribing Controlled Drugs, you will need to print, sign and scan/email or fax the script to the pharmacy. You will need to then post/courier the physically signed original to the pharmacy (within 7 days for nonCDs, 2 days for CDs).

If you are not on NZePS and wish to sign up to take advantage of signatureless prescribing, get them to contact [onlinehelpdesk@health.govt.nz](mailto:onlinehelpdesk@health.govt.nz) and they will get you onboarded quickly. We understand that all PMS vendors have waived the charge for this.

**MoH information -**

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/digital-health/other-digital-health-initiatives/emedicines/new-zealand-eprescription-service/signature-exempt-prescriptions-and-remote-prescribing>

**Swab Requirements for COVID testing**

As per the Medinz Message today: International supply chains continue to experience disruption, so it is critical that resources are preserved to ensure sustainability of response. **It is critical that only a single swab is taken for COVID-19 testing.**

- Preferential sample is a single nasopharyngeal swab (NPS) in UTM **OR**
- If NPS is not available a single oropharyngeal swab (OPS) in UTM is acceptable.
- Please avoid using dry swabs

**Update Criteria for Swabbing for COVID**

Criteria for COVID-19 testing at CBACs and General Practice Effective from 26 March 2020 - Any of:
Symptoms AND recent travel
Symptoms AND contact with suspected or confirmed case
Symptoms AND a healthcare worker
Justifiable clinical judgement
Symptoms = any of fever, cough, sore throat, SOB Travel = overseas within the last 14 days Healthcare worker = a person who is currently active in delivering healthcare services
<b>Lab order form MUST INCLUDE details of travel and/or case contact as well as clinical symptoms. If clinical judgement is being applied details must be included.</b> <b>Failure to include ALL relevant details risks the test not being processed in a timely manner.</b>
<b>PPE</b>
DHBs have been put on notice to get PPE out to general practice. If you are in short supply, please contact Suzie on <b>021 430 188.</b>

**Need Help?**

All Auckland PHO staff members are here to help. If you need ID cards for travel etc, please email [Priscilla@aucklandpho.co.nz](mailto:Priscilla@aucklandpho.co.nz)