

Swab supplies for COVID-19 testing

In this period of increased demand for swabs for COVID-19 testing, there may be a requirement to substitute the swabs that are currently supplied. The attached document outlines the swabs that may be supplied to medical practices when an order is placed with Labtests.

[200813LabUpdateCovidSwab.pdf](#) [98.3 KB]

Please send feedback to virginia.bishop@labtests.co.nz

PPE advice

The Ministry of Health has updated its PPE page with an Alert Level 3 risk assessment and corresponding advice. It highlights that:

- anyone with an undiagnosed acute respiratory illness (who fits the clinical criteria for COVID-19) - 'may have COVID-19' and should be masked
- the person interacting with them should be masked if 2 metre distancing cannot be maintained, and
- if the patient needs care, clinical assessment or a procedure within 2 metres, 'full PPE' is required – including contact and droplet precautions.

There is also advice on the Ministry of Health [website](#) about PPE for interacting with those who are close contacts with someone unwell with respiratory symptoms or who meets the HIS criteria.

Screening and triage

With community cases ARPHS would like to remind all health providers that it is important to screen and triage at the point of contact, ensuring patients are put on the appropriate treatment pathway to keep infections separate (red-green streams). To be sustainable, where possible, this practice can be carried out through “red/green staff rosters” with clear processes in place so patients adjust and understand its importance. Please follow this link to see [risk matrix](#) which may be helpful when making decisions about practice policies concerning staff.

Please also follow appropriate PPE and IPC processes when seeing respiratory patients to ensure that facility closure/swabbing/quarantine does not need to happen. If ARPHS identifies a case that had attended a CTC, general practice, urgent care centre or pharmacy, and they have concerns about inadequate PPE/IPC, then they will be taking an extra cautious approach and (potentially) advising closure for 48 hours, swabbing of staff members and patients, +/- 14 days quarantine if they were deemed close contacts

Additional resources

For further advice and support concerning Covid-19 management please visit the [Auckland Regional Health Pathways](#) COVID-19 suite of resources.

To send feedback, please email Stuart.Jenkins@waitematadhb.govt.nz

COVID-19 Update - Labtests Collection centre operations

Please see attached update for important information on patient testing and collection centres.

[200814CCupdate.pdf](#) [381.6 KB]

To send feedback, please email gary.mcauliffe@labtests.co.nz

National Screening Unit COVID-19

Cancer screening programmes are continuing to operate, with appropriate safeguards in place to keep participants and staff safe. It is recommended that people over 70, or with pre-existing medical conditions, check with their health professional as to whether it is safe to attend appointments.

- Cervical and breast screening will continue for most women. The decision to screen those with existing medical conditions will be made on a case-by-case basis
- More information on cervical screening can be found at www.timetoscreen.nz

We have refreshed the guidance issued earlier in the year, to reflect the possibility of regions moving between Government COVID-19 Alert Levels.

The key change is to make it clearer that this guidance will inform provider decisions on screening, alongside your local context.

If the country or parts of the country move to National Alert Level 4 we will update this messaging.

IMPORTANT: Additional Community Testing Centres

Please find below the new Community Testing Centres (CTCs) that are additional since the 13th August:

- Northcare Accident and Medical, Rosedale
- Auckland Netball Centre, St Johns

Also please note that the Whanau Ora Wiri CTC will be open 2pm to 8pm on Sundays going forward.

Please see the attached for revised opening hours information and addresses. Please note change in operation hours.

[Metro Auckland Community Testing Centres 15 August 1730.pdf](#)

Please note an updated list will be coming out via Medinz and as always will be on the Auckland Regional Healthpathways Home page "Health System news"

Please send feedback to Ryan.Stangroom@middlemore.co.nz

Under all COVID-19 response levels Community Pharmacies remain open and operational

Please consider setting expectations with patients around dispensing and collection timeframes when prescribing. Some pharmacies are already experiencing very high demand.

There may not be an immediate need for the patient to collect. For example, if the patient has 2+ weeks of supply left, it would be advisable for GPs and practice nurses to ask them to wait before requesting their script be filled.

Practices may consider posting a message on their website or their answerphone to ensure patients are not requesting prescriptions unnecessarily.

To send feedback, please email Daniel.Tsai@waitematadhb.govt.nz

Accessing Health Services During Alert Level 3

Please see attached information on **Accessing Health Services During Alert Level 3**.

How to wear a face mask poster

Please find attached poster on how to wear a face mask. Please let Priscilla (priscilla@aucklandpho.co.nz) know if you would like to have a laminated copy of this poster.

New Covid-19 Information Sheets

Please find attached updated information sheets; one for people who do not have Covid-19 symptoms and another information sheet for symptomatic people who are being tested for Covid-19. These information sheets have been updated to ensure that those presenting for testing are provided with adequate information about the implications of a positive test, in the current environment. We have reordered the information to ensure any isolation requirements are prioritised.

We have also tried to ensure peoples' concerns about testing are more fully addressed in these revised sheets.

[InformationForPeopleWhoDoNotHaveCOVID19Symptoms_v4_160820.pdf](#) [323.8 KB]

[InformationForSymptomaticPeopleWhoAreBeingTestedForCOVIDTM2_v6_160820.pdf](#) [322.6 KB]

Please send feedback to Stuart.Jenkins@waitematadhb.govt.nz

Where to send patients for Diagnostics while on Level 3

DHBs have announced that **Diagnostic services including Radiology and Endoscopy services will be provided to urgent, high priority and time sensitive patients only.**

Please be reminded that you are able to send patients to community radiology providers using your Access to Diagnostics (ATD) budget accessible via ProExtra. This budget is available for ADHB and CMDHB domiciled patients who are:

- Unable to access urgent hospital services or procedures
- Unable to self-fund either personally or through health insurance

We encourage practices to use this budget especially for Māori, Pacific and Q5 patients. One of the benefits of referring via ATD (via ProExtra) is the shorter wait-time for procedures in the community – with the average time of between 3-6 days from request to completion of the procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Jazel Asuncion on +64212221406 or email RhommaA@procare.co.nz

Translations for COVID-19 Updates and Resources

The MoH has a link to a range of languages that can be added to websites

<https://covid19.govt.nz/updates-and-resources/translations/>

Covid-19 – Alert Level Orange - resources and update

Please see the Auckland Regional HealthPathways [Covid-19 suite](#) of Pathways pages to support your work flow; Medinz communications will be coming through regularly and any updated information can be found on the HealthPathways platform. Please also make sure that each of your staff members has access and has signed up to receive direct Medinz communications. Please contact Rhonda Dames (info@medinz.co.nz) if you need any help to register with Medinz.

We encourage your practices to particularly review the [COVID-19 Primary Care Alert Response Framework](#) pathway, which has been localised especially for the Auckland environment from the MOH Escalation Strategy Framework. *Until further notice, primary care across Auckland is moving to the Practice Alert Level **orange**.*

A practice “check-list” will be circulated next week to help support your practice to implement this framework.

[COVID-19 Priority of Clinical Services in Primary Care by Practice Alert Level](#) also provides information on how to manage various processes and procedures, for example; immunisations, spirometry, screening, WINZ forms etc. at each alert level.

SURV code and asymptomatic swabbing clarification

As you know, the Ministry of Health is not recommending to the public that they seek a test unless they:

- are symptomatic OR are being tested because they meet the HIS criteria
- have been specifically directed to be swabbed as part of investigating a COVID-19 case or cluster.

However, as we know some people who are asymptomatic and don't meet those criteria may present; you can proceed with a swab, but these people are the lowest priority (SURV-GEN required on lab form and e-Notification).

Please enter the SURV code (if one is required) on the lab form AND in the notes field of the e-Notification form

Patients with HIS criteria (symptomatic or asymptomatic) – SURV-HIS (This is required for funding purposes)

- Higher Index of suspicion (HIS) criteria
 - Either, in the 14 days before illness onset the patient has:
 - Had contact with a confirmed or probable case.
 - Travelled overseas
 - Had a direct contact with a person who has travelled overseas (e.g. Customs and Immigration staff, staff at quarantine facilities)
 - Worked on an international aircraft or shipping vessel
 - Cleaned at an international airport or maritime port in areas or conveniences visited by international arrivals.
 - Or the person meets any other criteria requested by the local Medical Officer of Health
- Patients with symptoms but no HIS criteria – no SURV code needed
- Asymptomatic people requesting swabbing (and are non-HIS)– SURV GEN (note this is different from previous Medinz message)
- Anyone connected with the current South Auckland cluster (symptomatic or asymptomatic) but don't have voucher - SURV - TM2
- Border and Managed Isolation Facility (MIF) staff (SURV code list attached)
- Some patients may present for testing with a voucher. This will have a SURV code on it, and will need to be entered on the e-Notification Form.

[Testing Criteria and SURV codes 14th August 2020](#)

DHB Services within Auckland Region at Alert Level Yellow

Auckland region DHB Hospitals and DHB Radiology providers are currently at National Alert Level 2 (YELLOW).

This means that DHB services will be limiting Planned Care services in accordance with the national guidance in the following ways:

- All Auckland metro DHBs will defer some Planned Care services from 0700 hours Monday 17 August 2020 – 0700 hours Monday 24 August 2020
- Outpatient clinic services will be delivered through telehealth modalities except where the condition of the patient requires a clinical assessment face to face that cannot be deferred
- Diagnostic services including Radiology and Endoscopy services will be provided to urgent, high priority and time sensitive patients only.
- Surgical services will be provided to acute, urgent and non deferrable, time sensitive surgery only

Please send feedback to Stuart.Jenkins@waitematadhb.govt.nz