

LATEST GUIDANCE ON COVID-19 TESTING FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR:

15 April – 26 May 2021

In line with the MoH regular review of COVID-19 Testing Guidance for the Health Sector there is now an updated version effective 15 April to 26 May 2021 (replacing the testing guidance that was in force from 4 March – 14 April 2021).

PLEASE CONSIDER THE UPDATED HIS CRITERIA and COVID-19 SYMPTOMS (including ATYPICAL SYMPTOMS), IN YOUR SCREENING/TRIAGE QUESTIONS

Key Points of COVID-19 Testing Guidance for 15 April-26 May

MEDINZ 26/04/2021 8:19 AM

Testing is recommended for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 (including atypical symptoms if the person meets the HIS criteria or is a contact of a confirmed or probable case). Exceptions can be made for:

- Elderly people (subject to clinical judgement with considerations to include the health status or frailty of the person)
- Symptomatic children aged 11 years and under (unless they meet HIS criteria, are very ill, are a contact of a case or by parental request).

Consider testing people from certain asymptomatic groups. Please refer to attachment (1).

A new group has been added to the [HIS criteria](#): those working in cold storage areas of facilities that receive imported chilled and frozen goods directly from an international air or maritime port.

Clarity is being sought from MoH and NRHCC CTAG regarding IPC expectations for children who are not swabbed and an update will be provided when available.

To distinguish COVID-19 symptoms from reactions to vaccines, anyone who presents with one or more of the following symptoms within 48hrs of receiving the first or second dose of **ANY** vaccine should be tested:

- Temporary loss of the sense of smell or taste;
- Respiratory symptoms (e.g. sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, sneezing/runny or blocked nose);
- Generalised muscle aches which are worsening with time; or
- Fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher.

It is also important to identify and GAS test those who are at higher risk for group A streptococcal throat infection and/or treat empirically as appropriate.


Please send feedback to Hsin-lun.partridge@waitematadhb.govt.nz

MANAGING PEOPLE IN THE 2 WEEKS AFTER THEIR MANAGED ISOLATION STAY

MEDINZ 26/04/2021 8:24AM

General Public MIQF leavers

For people in their first two weeks post MIQF release who require access to health care services, it is recommended that face to face consultations be deferred (use virtual where possible) unless they develop acute



illness/pain and need to be seen urgently in person. This applies for dental and medical care. If they do need to be seen in person, IPC precautions for HIS groups apply.

Healthcare workers post MIQF release

Aotearoa DHB Occupational Physician group has released a statement for DHBs on how to manage Healthcare Workers (HCW) returning to or starting work post MIQF release and is available on [HealthPathways](#). This may be relevant to primary care practices and other community providers who have hired a healthcare worker from overseas.

Please send feedback to Hsin-lun.partridge@waitematadhb.govt.nz.

HOW DOES TRANS-TASMAN QUARANTINE FREE TRAVEL AFFECT COVID-19 SCREENING QUESTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE SETTINGS?

MEDINZ 18/04/2021 5:41 PM

COVID-19 Screening questions for health care settings: what difference does Trans-Tasman Quarantine Free travel make?

The general population of Australia and NZ are now considered 'one big country' and recent arrivals from Australia are not considered to be part of the HIS group of 'international travel in the 14 days prior to their illness'(the same as people from the Cook Islands).

However, other HIS categories still apply: if a person is symptomatic and in the last 14 days meets one of the other HIS categories in Australia (e.g. they have worked in an MIQ facility / cleaned at an airport / worked in a cold store / exited a MIF) they should be managed in the same way as anyone in those HIS groups in NZ would be managed.

Re airline crew, as part of the arrangements for the Trans-Tasman Quarantine free travel, crew who fly the 'green' flights to and from Australia and domestic crew in either country, will not be flying any other international routes.

However, an off-duty crew member who has flown from Australia to somewhere else in the world in the last 14 days, could choose to come to NZ for a holiday, and would need to be identified in the HIS group 'worked on an international aircraft or shipping vessel' in the last 14 days.

If there are community outbreaks in Australia, there will be specific public health communications, but ARPHS have also compiled links to individual Australian state/territory "location of interest" websites – now available on a Quarantine-free Travel page via the ARPHS COVID-19 home page (see the Health Sectors tile) - <https://www.arphs.health.nz/public-health-topics/covid-19/quarantine-free-travel/>

Please send feedback to Lily.partridge@waitematadhb.govt.nz





UPDATED INFORMATION FOR N95 RESPIRATOR IMPLEMENTATION IN PRIMARY CARE

MEDINZ 26/04/2021 1:47 PM

Ministry of Health has issued updated advice (9 April 2021) on when use of N95/P2 respirators is recommended in general practice and urgent care. Recommended use is situation specific and it is important to be familiar with the detail of the [updated advice](#).

NRHCC has updated the [‘how to’ information](#) on HealthPathways for N95/P2 use that was initially produced to support implementation of the earlier Ministry of Health interim advice on N95/P2 use, with more information on ‘when to’, to reflect the updated Ministry of Health advice.

This advice is intended to answer the kind of questions PHO clinical leaders have received about the use of N95/P2 respirators in primary care.

Please send feedback to Hsin-lun.partridge@waitematadhb.govt.nz

COVID-19 Vaccine

More COVID-19 vaccination invites going out to older people in South Auckland

MEDINZ 29/04/2021 6:36 PM

The DHBs have started the process to invite South Auckland people that are aged 65 and over, or are Māori and Pacific people older than 55 years. Over 6000 invitations will be sent out this week by email or text from NMF Immunisation Bookings inviting them to book their COVID-19 vaccination, followed by several thousand more every few days.

Those that receive the invite can then make a booking at a vaccination centre of their choice, and at a date and time to suit them.

We appreciate your support as we realise you may get questions from your patients. Can you please advise your staff of this in case of patient enquiries regarding the validity of the email and text. They may also get enquiries from people wanting an invitation. Please assure your patients that if they fit the criteria, their invitations are on the way over the next few weeks.

If your patients need further help to book their vaccination appointments, they can call the Vaccination Helpline on 0800 282926.

We appreciate your support as we ramp up the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

To send feedback, please email Leanne.Kirton@waitematadhb.govt.nz

Finding COVID-19 vaccine information

MEDINZ 27/04/2021 9:23 AM

NRHCC have had a number of questions from primary care practitioners about the COVID-19 vaccine roll out. They are developing an FAQ document which is currently undergoing clinical review. In the interim, there is a range of information available to primary care providers and practitioners;

The following resources and links will take you to several sources of helpful information.





1. COVID-19 vaccination information available on HealthPathways

[Auckland COVID-19 Vaccination Information](#) contains up to date information and resources on COVID-19 vaccination. This includes: the Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) vaccinator training link for general practitioners, the updated advice from IMAC for vaccination in pregnancy and breast-feeding, a link to the Ministry of Health website for those applying for an early vaccine for travel, and an interactive tool to indicate when someone will be vaccinated.

Also included are links to the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) website for allergy and immunodeficiency-related advice, the Haematology Society position statement and the COVID-19 vaccination rollout for [Northland and Auckland information page](#).

2. Medsafe's [website](#) has COVID-19 vaccine approval information and vaccine reports.
3. Medsafe also publishes [data sheets and consumer medicine information](#) for approved COVID-19 vaccines.
4. For information on vaccine advice to those with health complications, complex medications or post cancer care, please see the [Medsafe data sheet](#). Te Aho o Te Kahu, the Cancer Control Agency, has recently released advice for clinicians on COVID-19 vaccines and cancer. People with cancer are at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19 and are more likely to develop a serious infection. The advice supports people with cancer receiving the COVID-19 vaccine and provides guidance around optimal timing to administer the vaccine for those receiving active treatment.
5. For information about who is getting the vaccine and when, please see the [MoH sequencing](#).
6. A fortnightly health sector focussed newsletter developed by the MoH provides regular updates on the programme of work. You can subscribe to this [here](#).
7. The Immunisation Handbook 2020 provides clinical guidelines for health professionals on the safest and most effective use of vaccines in their practice. A chapter on the COVID-19 vaccine can be found [here](#).
8. The Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) has a new [website dedicated to COVID-19](#) and offers answers to key questions on vaccinator training and vaccine delivery.
9. The app Āwhina enables you access information from the Ministry of Health and other trusted sources on your mobile device, and sends out notifications on key COVID-19 vaccine announcements. You can download Āwhina [here](#).
10. The MoH [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources page](#) is full of useful information, frequently asked questions and also fact sheets in multiple languages.


If you can't find an answer you are looking for in the above resources, please don't hesitate to contact Leanne.kirton@adhb.govt.nz.


Information about the gap between MMR and COVID-19 vaccines

The MoH have refined the advice below around administering the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine and the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

Gap between MMR and COVID-19 vaccines

Please continue to allow a four-week gap when giving the MMR vaccine **before** the COVID-19 vaccine where possible. However, the gap can be reduced to two weeks when giving the MMR vaccine **after** the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.





Please continue to allow a two-week gap between the COVID-19 vaccine and influenza vaccine where possible, regardless of the order they're given.

Why we leave a gap between COVID-19 and MMR/flu vaccines

Having a gap between the different types of vaccinations makes it easier to judge which vaccine may be responsible for any side effects. Note that there are no clinical safety concerns should the gap between vaccines be less than the recommendations above. Do not delay vaccination if such a gap is not possible.

The MMR and influenza vaccines can be given at the same time.

The MoH will be updating their material for the general public to reflect this.

Thank you

Thank you for continuing to take opportunities to protect people from flu and measles as the COVID-19 vaccine programme rolls out. This [flowchart](#) may help you when doing this.

For further information, please email Fleur.Goddard@health.govt.nz

Vaccine Card

2021 Vaccination Dates			
Influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations must be given at least 2 weeks apart.			
Please show this card to your vaccinator when receiving your vaccination to ensure your vaccinations are spaced correctly.			
This is not an official record of receiving the vaccination.			
COVID-19 Vaccine Dose 1	COVID-19 Vaccine Dose 2	2021 Influenza Vaccine	Other vaccines <small>(e.g. MMR, Zostervax)</small>
Date given:	Date given:	Date given:	Vaccine name:
			Date given:
Patient name: _____			

The team at Auckland PHO has put together this 2021 Vaccination Card in wallet size for patients as a self-management tool to ensure influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations are spaced correctly.

If you would like to order these vaccination cards, please email priscilla@aucklandpho.co.nz with numbers required or call 379 4022 and we will get them delivered promptly.

SURV Codes

A list of SURV Codes can be found on Auckland Regional Healthpathways.

A new SURV code was added for a New-border-related Covid-19 Case – TM17 (on Tuesday 20th April). They work at Auckland Airport.

Please find below relevant SURV codes:
Close and casual contacts SURV-TM17CC





Locations of Interests

The Ministry of Health update new settings of interest as applicable on the [Locations of Interest](#) page.

Locations for Testing

Locations for community testing centres including pop-up CTCs are available at www.arphs.health.nz/covid19test. NRHCC and ARPHS continue to review testing capacity closely.

