

## Changes to consent

The Director-General of Health, Dr Ashley Bloomfield, has now given the green light for verbal, rather than written, consent. This means that vaccinators and administrators no longer need to scan and upload consent forms to the COVID-19 Immunisation Register.

What this means for ARC facilities is that while the Ministry of Health no longer requires written consent, should you choose to ask for written consent from your residents or their EPOAs, you may use the consent form provided by the NZACA (found [here](#)) and store it in the resident's medical file.

## COVID-19 vaccine rollout

More than 135,000 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered to date. Over 30,000 people have received their second dose and are now fully vaccinated. Further data can be found on the Ministry's [COVID-19 Vaccine Data page](#).

The total number of vaccinators who have completed the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccination training through the DHB is currently 2225.

People interested in being a vaccinator should register their interest through the [surge workforce database](#). The current number of potential vaccinators who have registered their interest is close to 6000, and DHBs are actively sourcing from this register.

## NZACA in the news

Chief Executive Simon Wallace commended the Nelson Marlborough DHB's vaccine rollout, but called for more certainty on delivery dates from other DHBs. [Stuff - Top of the south 'setting benchmark' for Covid vaccinations in rest homes \(14 April 2021\)](#).

## Publicity campaign

A national vaccine campaign will commence the week of 19th April. The campaign will roll out over the following fortnight across radio, digital, television, and press. The campaign supports all of Aotearoa, encouraging the uptake of the vaccine.

## Influenza programme

The annual influenza immunisation programme is going ahead, however **COVID-19 vaccinations are the priority** - people should have their COVID-19 vaccination first if they have an appointment booked for it.

There remains a public health risk of influenza even with the current border settings and it is important the programme continues, to ensure background immunity is maintained and our most vulnerable are protected.

The programme began as scheduled on 14 April for those aged 65 and over. Vaccines for people aged under 65 will be available from 17 May 2021 (these can be ordered from 27 April). Please go to [influenza.org.nz](#) for further information about the vaccines for this season.

Please note that while a two-week gap between influenza and COVID vaccines is recommended, the MOH has advised that there are no clinical safety concerns should the gap between vaccines be less than two weeks.

## New IMAC website

IMAC has developed a new COVID-19 website ([covid.immune.org.nz](#)) and this is live now. This resource replaces all previous COVID-19 content on the immune.org.nz website.

IMAC also has two webinars coming up:

- [AEFI – recognising and understanding anaphylaxis and reporting process](#)
- [Engaging with vaccine hesitation](#)

There is also the regular IMAC weekly drop-in Q&A session, 12pm Thursdays. Register [here](#).

## Adverse events

Medsafe has published its second summary of Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) with COVID-19 vaccines - [Safety Report #2 - 13 March 2021](#).

The adverse events were reported through the CIR and reports from Healthcare professionals and consumers directly to the Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring

(CARM). Most reports received via the CIR have occurred during the observation period and appear to be either hypersensitivity reactions or anxiety related (e.g. fainting, dizziness).

In the past couple of weeks there has been more reports of symptoms occurring in the days/hours following vaccination which have generally been flu like symptoms (e.g. fatigue/tiredness, headache and fever); where these symptoms have been more severe it has generally been following the 2nd dose which is expected from what has been seen in the clinical trials that the second dose is more reactogenic. All events described are what we would expect with the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) vaccine.

### Online safety

Government cyber security agency CERT NZ has published guidance on how to protect your organisation when communicating about the vaccine on [CERT NZ's website](#). NZACA reminds members that if you are sending an email out to all family members of your residents, use the "Bcc" (blind copy) line in the address box at the top of the email. This will stop anyone replying to all email recipients with unsolicited/spam emails.

### Āwhina app

The app Āwhina lets 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](#).

### Clinical and general resources

- 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](#).
- The Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) offers answers to key questions on vaccinator training and vaccine delivery [here](#).
- The MOH [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources](#) page is full of useful information, frequently asked questions and also fact sheets in multiple languages.
- [Unite Against COVID-19](#) contains a multitude of resources on the COVID-19 vaccine.

## MOH Vaccine information

### COVID-19 vaccine updates for the health sector

#### VISIT PAGE

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-updates-health-sector>

### Getting a vaccine

- *Who can get a vaccine*
- *When you'll get a vaccine*
- *What vaccines are available*
- *How vaccines work*
- *Impact of the vaccine on our borders*

#### VISIT PAGE

[\[https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-getting-vaccine\]](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-getting-vaccine)

### Vaccine safety and approval

- *Making sure the vaccines are safe*
- *Provisional approval of vaccines*
- *How the vaccines were created so fast*
- *Side effects from the vaccines*
- *Effectiveness of the vaccines*
- *Streamlining the approval process*
- *If the vaccines contain new organisms*

#### VISIT PAGE

[\[https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-safety-and-approval\]](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-safety-and-approval)

### COVID-19: Vaccine resources

Visit this page to download useful resources and information sheets on COVID-19 vaccine and the roll-out programme. These are available in multiple languages.

#### VISIT PAGE

[\[https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-resources\]](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-resources)

### Vaccines

An extensive list of vaccine resources.

#### VISIT PAGE

[\[https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines\]](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines)

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Any queries relating to the COVID-19 vaccine can be directed to

**Kathryn Maloney**  
Principal Policy Analyst  
kathryn@nzaca.org.nz  
04 473 3159

