

## Education and support for the NZ COVID immunisation programme

Dear DHB colleague

New Zealand is preparing to deliver a COVID immunisation programme (the Programme). Central to the success of the Programme is the ability to acquire enough vaccine, store it effectively and have a knowledgeable health workforce ready to immunise.

The Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) has been contracted by the Ministry of Health to provide a complete education programme that will prepare vaccinators and other health professionals for the work ahead plus a support programme to vaccinators/DHBs for the delivery of the COVID vaccine.

Community confidence is essential for effective delivery of the Programme. Workforce education is necessary to ensure healthcare providers across the sector can build that confidence. They will need to be knowledgeable and supportive of COVID vaccines and the Programme. Our education programme will upskill and expand the vaccinator and wider workforces to rapidly meet demand for the Programme.

We are very aware of how busy and challenging the immunisation environment has been over the last two years. During this time DHB/PHO immunisation workforces have been stretched to the limits of their capacity. In light of this, IMAC will employ additional staff to work regionally and with local DHBs to support the roll out of the COVID immunisation programme. These staff will help provide:

- Education programmes for vaccinators and non-vaccinators
- Support for the rapid growth of the immunisation workforce with clinical assessments
- Support during large-scale vaccination clinics

The education programme will be developed by working together with the Ministry of Health, Māori and Pacific partner organisations, and health providers. It is being designed to adjust to sector needs and adapt to unknown factors such as vaccine availability and prioritisation.

The 0800 IMMUNE phoneline will be extended with additional staff and longer hours. Communications resources including vaccine preparation instructions and vaccine FAQs will be developed.

Once position descriptions are finalised we will ask for expressions of interest from those wishing to work within this project. There is the potential for staff to be seconded to work on the project for an 18 to 24-month period. We will continue to provide relevant updates to all DHBs as the planning for the education programme continues.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email as below.

Best wishes



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