

Waikato District Health Board

COVID-19 VACCINATION UPDATE

30 March 2021

**“Amohia ake te ora o te iwi, ka puta ki te wheiao”
“To protect the wellbeing of our people is paramount”**

Kiingi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero Te Tuawhitu

COVID-19 vaccines will play a critical role in protecting New Zealanders' health and wellbeing. Over time, this will be a big step back to normality. They're free and everyone in New Zealand is eligible.

Welcome to the latest pānui for the Waikato DHB COVID-19 vaccination programme. We will be providing regular updates for our staff, partners and community. Please share within your organisation.

Latest vaccination news

As of 30 March in Waikato, around 4,300 people have received at least their first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

Meanwhile, more than 60,000 doses of the vaccine have been administered nationally as at 30 March.

Vaccinations have begun for Waikato Hospital staff who are part of the frontline healthcare workforce (Group 2 of the roll-out) – firstly those in settings where potential COVID-19 cases will seek care and there is no ability to screen first.

A new Vaccination Centre has been set up at the hospital in addition to the current Te Rapa site. Vaccinations for community provider staff in Group 2 will continue at the Te Rapa site by appointment. See the list below for those who are included.

A mixture of fixed, temporary and mobile Vaccinations Centres are being set up around the DHB area and are expected to be ready after Easter. More details of these sites are to follow.

Waikato Hospital COVID-19 vaccination centre opened

A blessing was held on Monday morning to mark the opening of our new Vaccination Centre at Waikato Hospital as we begin offering immunisation to our frontline healthcare staff (Group 2).

102 staff received their first dose on Monday.

The centre is located on Level 1 Meade Clinical Centre near the Pharmacy on Meade and operates by appointment only.

Rural hospital sites will be up and running after Easter with dates to be confirmed shortly.

Around 7,000 DHB staff are eligible to be vaccinated as part of Group 2 with this phase expected take place over April and May.

One month of the COVID-19 Vaccination Centre

A small gathering was held at the COVID-19 Vaccination Centre in Te Rapa on Friday to mark a month since it opened.

More than 3000 people have gone through the centre since it opened, starting with the team of vaccinators, followed by household contacts of border and Managed Isolation Facility workers.

Staff having a go at a rākau game

The team took part in a fun exercise of tī rākau, a traditional stick game and shared in some kai.

DHB Tikanga Director Ikimoke Tamaki-Takarei said it was important to take the time to acknowledge the staff and reflect on the mahi that had gone into setting up the vaccination centre quickly.

Acting Executive Director Strategy Investment and Transformation Marc ter Beek said the progress that's been made in a short amount of time was a major achievement and feedback from those receiving the vaccination has been overwhelmingly positive.

Getting an urgent COVID-19 vaccination

The Government has added more detail to the two categories created for people to receive their course of the vaccine early.

Applications can be made to travel overseas on compassionate grounds, which includes providing critical care and protection to a dependant, accessing critical medical care unavailable in New Zealand, or visiting an immediate family member who is dying.

Those wanting to visit a dying relative must have a letter from a medical practitioner confirming their condition is terminal and an indication of their life expectancy. Travel will need to take place before 31 August 2021 otherwise applicants will be asked to wait for their turn to be vaccinated.

A second category of 'national significance' includes those involved in protecting safety and security of New Zealand's sovereignty, Government-approved humanitarian efforts, participation in major international events to represent New Zealand, and nationally significant trade negotiations.

Reasons for travel do not include reuniting with family, attending a funeral or memorial service or attending school or university.

Number of people vaccinated in the Waikato

30 March

4,338

4% of people vaccinated
identified as Pacific

15% of people vaccinated
identified as Māori

2,975

have received their first dose

724

have received their second dose

Partnering for vaccine delivery in our Waikato localities

We will be going out to the whole of Waikato to deliver the vaccine

Keeping iwi updated

We are exploring possible locations for vaccination sites in our rural communities. For larger towns this could be community vaccination sites, but for smaller areas may for example be at a community hall or aged residential care facility.

This has been a result of building on our very productive stakeholder engagements by holding regular weekly meetings with iwi, PHOs, aged residential care, and other providers.

We also have meetings planned with key groups in the rural areas within our rohe to talk about the best way to deliver the vaccination programme in their communities and how they can be involved in the roll-out.

In Group 2, there are around 25,000 people in the frontline health workforce and residents in aged residential care who will need to be vaccinated.

Around 4000 Māori and Pacific whānau aged 70 and older are also in Group 2. We will be working with Māori and Pacific providers to make sure getting access to the vaccination is an easy and simple process.

What is an RNA vaccine?

The Pfizer vaccine is what is known as mRNA or RNA vaccine. Don't know what that is? The Ministry of Health's Chief Science Advisor Dr Ian Town explains in the video below how the vaccine teaches your body to recognise and defend against COVID-19.



Dr Ian Town explains how the mRNA vaccine works | Ministry of Health

Vaccine timeline

Four main groups have been defined nationally:

Group 1 (February - March 2021)

Border and Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) workers, and their household contacts

Group 2 (February - May 2021)

Frontline healthcare workforces who are most likely to contract and/or spread COVID-19 through their interaction with patients. This includes, but is not limited to: ambulance services, accident and emergency department frontline staff, urgent care clinic front line workforces, emergency response diagnostics (e.g. radiology) and support staff (e.g. orderlies, security, receptionists) who are interacting with patients, community midwives and WCTO workers in people's homes, general practice frontline workforce including GPs, nurses and receptionists, pharmacy frontline workforce, NGOs (including Whānau Ora), healthcare providers providing treatment to people in MIQ facilities and services which receive MIQ patient referrals and some contact tracing personnel.

Any person who usually lives in a long-term residential care where residents are at risk of

severe outcomes from COVID-19

All people working in long-term residential environments where people are at risk of getting very sick or dying from COVID-19

Older Māori and Pacific people cared for by whānau (and the people they live with and their carers)

Any person aged 65+ or has a relevant underlying health condition or disability living in the Counties Manukau DHB area

Group 3 (May 2021 onward)

People in New Zealand aged 65+, people with relevant underlying health conditions, and disabled people

Adults in custodial settings

Group 4 (second half of 2021)

The remainder of the population over 16-years-old

Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine

The Pfizer vaccine is currently the only vaccine approved for use in New Zealand.

This vaccine has been shown to be 95% effective against symptomatic COVID-19, seven days after a person's second dose.

It is approved for people 16 years or older. Those under the age of 16 are currently not included in the vaccination programme. Limited data is available for this age group because they were not part of clinical trials for the vaccine.

Two doses of the vaccine are needed, with at least 21 days between each dose. It's very important to get the second dose to provide the best protection against catching the virus.

The Ministry of Health has [provided resources](#) on how this vaccine works, its efficacy, possible side effects and more.

Before any vaccine is approved for use in New Zealand, it must meet

international standards and local requirements for quality, safety and efficacy. Detailed information on the approval process is available on the Government's [COVID-19 pages](#).

COVID-19 vaccination update newsletter

If you or someone you know might be interested in subscribing to the COVID-19 vaccination update, [click here or share this link](#).

Links

COVID-19 Website

For the latest updates on the COVID-19 vaccines
www.covid19.govt.nz

Ministry of Health

Latest news on vaccine information, including the details of the COVID-19 vaccine planning and delivery groups
www.health.govt.nz/covid-vaccine

Medsafe

Medsafe has a section on its website explaining our processes around assessing the quality, efficacy and safety of vaccines and treatments for COVID-19
www.medsafe.govt.nz

Waikato DHB Website

Updated information about the programme for rolling out vaccinations in the Waikato
www.waikatodhb.health.nz/covid19vaccination