



Proactive Release

The following documents have been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of Minister for COVID-19 Response, Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall:

COVID-19 Response Weekly Reports - August 2022

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 5 August 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 12 August 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 18 August 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 26 August 2022

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes:

- Section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of natural persons;
- Section 9(2)(f)(iv), to maintain the confidentiality of advice tendered by or to Ministers and officials; and
- Section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.

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MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI



DEPARTMENT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA



Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
MANATŪ AORERE



BORDER EXECUTIVE BOARD

COVID-19 Response Weekly Report



18 August 2022

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1. Status Summary – Amber and Red Updates

Key		
Symbol	Colour	Meaning
	Amber	Slow progression, some delays, some roadblocks present
	Red	Not progressing, on hold, significant delays

Border Workstreams

	Agency	Last Week	→ This Week	Agency Comment
Border Reopening and International Connections	BEB			<p>Maritime border programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The maritime border programme status is amber due to remaining legislative decisions required for implementation of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration for this year's cruise season, other areas of the programme work plan are on track with no significant delays anticipated. Advice is due to the Border Executive Board by end of August 2022.
	MFAT			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There continues to be little evidence of widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in Niue. As of 11 August NZT, Niue had 9 active cases of COVID-19, with eight of these cases considered "community cases". MFAT understands all these cases are the result of transmission within already isolating households. An island-wide testing campaign on 8 August (testing 78% of the population) did not detect any further community cases of COVID-19. The Republic of the Marshall Islands have reported their first community cases of COVID-19. There are 127 confirmed cases in Majuro, the densely populated capital, although the number is likely far higher. Tonga may be seeing the start of a second COVID-19 wave, with an increase in cases reported and an up-tick in test positivity rates. For the first time, positive cases have been confirmed across all four island groups. The 7-day rolling average of daily cases has increased to 125.1 from the prior week (34.1).

Other Workstreams

All the other workstreams, including the other Border workstreams, Isolation and Quarantine, Community Protection, Vaccination, and System Readiness & Planning are on track with no significant delays anticipated.

2. Ministry of Health

2.1 Programme Update

2.1.1 Donation of COVID-19 Therapeutics to Polynesia

This item updates you on planning for donation of two oral COVID-19 antiviral medications (Paxlovid via Pfizer, Lageviro via Merck Sharp and Dohme, MSD) to six Polynesian countries.

Pacific countries continue to experience COVID-19 outbreaks, with access to COVID-19 therapeutics, specifically antiviral medications comprising an important part of their response.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has enabled a global donation mechanism for COVID-19 antivirals. However, Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands are not eligible due to their high income-classification as part of the Realm of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Aotearoa New Zealand has sufficient supply of antivirals to meet the forecast needs of Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands.

The Polynesian Health Corridors (PHC) programme is working with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and Pharmac to meet requests for antiviral donations to Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands. Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu may also be considered if WHO cannot meet their needs and sufficient supply is available in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Next steps

A joint paper to Vaccine Ministers is being developed by Manatū Hauora and MFAT with input from Pharmac. This will seek agreement for Aotearoa New Zealand to donate from its domestic supply and provide information on technical support and next steps.

Should Pfizer require indemnity cover for the antivirals, Pharmac and MFAT will submit a subsequent business case to the Minister of Finance, which was the case for COVID-19 vaccine donations.

2.1.2 Technical Advisory Group: Update

COVID-19 TAG

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group (COVID-19 TAG) met on 12 August 2022 and discussed the future of TAG, an outbreak strategy, infection/seroprevalence surveys, and mortality review.

The next COVID-19 TAG meeting is scheduled for 9 September 2022.

2.1.3 Communications Issues and Activities

As at 16 August 2022

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
TBC (imminent)	Announcement on which proposed COVID-19 research projects will be funded by the Manatū Hauora /National Immunisation Programme.	Manatū Hauora	Media release/reactive Q and A	TBC
TBC for week commencing 20 August	Release of COVID-19 Research Response Report.	MBIE	Media release (MBIE)	N/A
TBC	Proactive release of 11 COVID-19 reports, commissioned from Manatū Hauora Behaviour and Insights team into various aspects of the pandemic (such as compliance with requirement for border workers to undergo regular testing, and attitudes/behaviours to COVID-19 protection measures).	Manatū Hauora	Web content /reactive Q and A	N/A

3. Te Whatu Ora

3.1 Items to Note/Updates

3.1.1 COVID-19 Vaccination Insights

The table below shows second COVID-19 booster uptake as at 11.59pm 16 August.

Second booster uptake by age band and ethnicity

Age Group	Māori	Uptake %	Pacific Peoples	Uptake %	Non-Māori / Non-Pacific	Uptake %	Total	Total uptake % ¹
12 to 17 ²	s9(2)(a)							
18 to 24	419		269		4,556		5,244	
35 to 49	1,248		876		12,326		14,450	
50 to 64	11,436	19.8%	5,358	18.1%	88,758	18.1%	105,552	18.2%
65+	15,088	37.2%	5,829	30.5%	287,720	47.9%	308,637	46.7%
Grand total	28,193		12,332		393,363		433,888	35.0%

25.6 percent of all eligible Māori and Pacific aged 50 years and over have now received a second booster, a 24.9 percent increase on the previous week, and 47.9 percent of non-Māori non-Pacific aged 65 years and over have received a second booster, a 46 percent increase.

Aged Residential Care Facilities

The next update on second booster roll-out to Aged Residential Care (ARC) facilities will be provided by the Te Whatu Ora Health Districts on Friday 19 August. The Programme has received some out-of-cycle updates, lifting the total facilities visited nationally to 424 out of 676 (63 percent).

Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Nelson Marlborough and West Coast Districts are on track to complete their second booster visits this coming week.

All Districts are on track to complete initial second booster visits by late August, with follow-up visits for residents who have had COVID-19 scheduled to be completed by September / October. The completion date will be dependent on whether there are further COVID-19 infections in ARC facilities.

Communications and Engagement

- A campaign to encourage New Zealanders to be up to date with their vaccinations is now live, with advertising currently on mainstream and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) radio stations, print publications and digital platforms.
- A suite of new content including an animated video which will be used on TV and in other channels is in development and anticipated next week, beginning 22 August. Additional versions are being created by Māori and Pacific creative teams. The animation theme will feature on flyers, posters and online assets and includes campaigns designed specifically for Māori and Pacific audiences.
- Recently-completed market research has highlighted three key opportunities:
 - There are people that can be nudged towards getting boosted, as there is a reasonable amount of latent intention, especially for second boosters;
 - There is a need to alleviate misunderstanding and confusion surrounding the eligibility and need for booster doses; and
 - There is a need for clear and empowering messages around the role of the booster dose in the current context.

¹ Uptake percentage has not been captured for those under 50, as it is not possible to determine who in those age groups are immunocompromised, and/or healthcare workers as these eligibility criteria are not able to be captured in our reporting systems.

² At times, an authorised prescriber considers the use of vaccine as a first or second booster for a 12-to-17-year-old at high risk of severe health outcomes from COVID-19. This is 'off-label' prescribing of a COVID-19 vaccine under section 25 of the Medicines Act 1981. It requires individual-level risk-benefit decision between the individual, their caregiver, and their authorised prescriber, with documentation of informed consent recommended and a prescription required to access the vaccine.

- Two new videos featuring virologist Dr Natalie Netzler and Tongan immunologist Chris Puliueva explaining 'why get a booster' will go live this week.
- The 'Back to the Islands' campaign is in its second week. Branding is being distributed to Māori and Pacific providers this week. Feedback from attendees was that most heard of the event via church/community leaders, followed by radio advertising (particularly Radio Samoa), and by seeing the event while driving past.
- Letters have been added to the automated reminders for people eligible for second boosters. Around 16,000 letters from Dr Nick Chamberlain, Te Whatu Ora National Director, National Public Health Service, were lodged on Friday 12 August. This activity will continue.
- Proactive communication to people who started a course of AstraZeneca continues ahead of the 4 September retirement of this vaccine. Approximately 70 percent of affected people have now been notified of this change.

Māori Update

Māori health providers continue to run hauora events, where collective aspects of whānau hauora and wellbeing are the focus, of which vaccination is one part. These events provide on-site entertainment, and support in the form of kai vouchers, movie vouchers and winter wellness packs.

Events in the last week include:

- Turuki Health Care, in collaboration with Te Whatu Ora – Te toka Tumai Auckland ran the 'Ōtara Whānau winter wellness day' at the Ōtara rugby league club, and a whānau wellness day at the Mangere town centre on 13 August. All COVID-19, and flu vaccinations were offered.
- Māori health providers ran drive through clinics in Flaxmere, Hawkes Bay on 13 August. All COVID-19, flu and MMR vaccinations were offered. 64 COVID-19 vaccinations were administered, including 53 to Māori and Pacific peoples.
- Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngā Mokopuna, Wellington held a vaccination clinic over the weekend of 12 to 13 August, with all COVID-19, flu and MMR vaccinations available. In total 27 vaccinations were delivered, including 13 COVID-19 vaccinations, 13 flu vaccinations and one MMR vaccination.

Te Oranganui Trust is offering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations at a range of locations across Whanganui this week. They will also be offering free home vaccination visits on Friday 19 August.

Mā te Kōrero Ka Eke Strategy

This week, a hui will be held with all Kura Kaupapa Māori Tumua in Whanganui to progress the Mā te Kōrero Ka Eke strategy to increase vaccination uptake and support wider aspects of Hauora for tamariki and whānau in Māori education settings.

Pacific Update

Two Pacific health providers held community led-vaccination events in south and West Auckland over weekend between 12 to 14 August where 440 vaccinations were administered.

- The Tongan Health Society administered 235 vaccinations, 135 COVID-19 vaccinations, and 100 influenza vaccinations, on 13 August.
- Pasefika Family Health Group administered 205 vaccinations, 157 COVID-19 vaccinations, and 48 influenza vaccinations, across two events in Manurewa and Weymouth on 12 and 13 August.

Booster doses of COVID-19 vaccinations remain the most popular vaccination administered at Pacific vaccination events, accounting for 80 percent of COVID-19 vaccinations administered.

Engagement


The programme has been working with Pacific Health and Community service providers to discuss opportunities to include vaccination services at a number of upcoming Pacific cultural events across the motu, with many of these events focusing on wellbeing.

Several Pacific Language week events are planned from September through to the end of October. These may present opportunities to embed vaccination services.

Disability Update

The programme is currently working with the Mental Health and addictions directorate within the Ministry of Health to progress the second round of applications for the COVID-19 vaccine and Immunisation Peer Support fund. A particular focus of this round is to increase the number of Peer Support organisations funded across the Te Manawa Taki region, as the region had the lowest number of organisations funded in the previous funding round. Applications are expected to open in late August, with a panel assessment of application to be held in September.

s9(2)(f)(iv)



4. Managed Isolation and Quarantine Weekly Report

4.1 Operational Update

4.1.1 Invoicing

The table below shows the number of invoices issued as at 15 August 2022.

Invoices have various repayment terms depending on whether they are a sports group (10 days), critical worker (30 days) or standard returnee/maritime crew/aircrew (90 days).

Please note that for all arrivals from the 20th of August 2021, all invoicing had payment terms of 30 days except for sports groups under Crown Service Agreements who have 10 days.

INVOICES ISSUED 56,401	INVOICES PAID 44,341 (78% of invoices issued)	INVOICES ISSUED - NOT YET DUE 123 (0.1% of invoices issued)	INVOICES OVERDUE 8,986 (15% of invoices issued)	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF 2,951 invoices (5%)
TOTAL VALUE OF INVOICES ISSUED \$215M	PAID (BY VALUE) \$182M (84%)	ISSUED - NOT YET DUE (BY VALUE) \$373K (0.1%)	INVOICES OVERDUE (BY VALUE) \$21M (10%)	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF (BY VALUE) \$10.5M (4.8%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 13,942 unmatched records in the database that need to have their liability determined before invoicing. A project team has been established to investigate the most effective way to invoice the unmatched data. Data analytic approaches are underway and manual matching trials have been successfully completed. 			<p>90+ days overdue</p> <p>5,530 invoices \$16.3M (by value) 7% (by value of all invoices issued)</p>	

4.1.2 Debt Recovery

The debt recovery percentage remains at 85 percent, which is against our nominal target recovery of 90 percent.

As of 15 August, 15,135 invoices worth \$45.6m have been passed to our debt partner. In addition:

- \$17.8m has now been paid (an increase of \$452k).
- A further \$527k of debt is under instalment and is expected to be converted to payments over coming weeks.
- There are 471 active fee waiver requests, while applications are processed, they are recorded as outstanding debt.

4.2 Ombudsman Complaints

As at 15 August there are 10 active investigations

- one is on policy advice;
- four are on emergency allocations;
- two are on exemptions from managed isolation;
- one is a declined undue financial hardship fee waiver application;
- one is about facilities; and
- one is the Chief Ombudsman's self-initiated investigation.

To date, 247 investigations have been closed, with the Chief Ombudsman issuing 116 opinions in MBIE's favour and eight final opinions against MBIE.

There are 76 preliminary enquiries. Preliminary enquiries are cases where the Ombudsman requests the file to assess the complaint and determine next steps.

MBIE has received advice from Crown Law in relation to a provisional opinion from the Chief Ombudsman about whether the Mandela Rules applied to MIQ and whether the requirements to isolate if symptomatic in a facility was a breach of NZBORA. MBIE is concerned about the possible implications if the Chief Ombudsman finalises his view. The Attorney-General has agreed to a limited waiver of privilege to allow the Crown Law advice to be provided to the Chief Ombudsman. The Deputy Secretary has also offered to meet with the Chief Ombudsman to discuss his provisional opinion and MBIE concerns.



5. Border Executive Board Report

This update is provided to you as the responsible Minister for the Border Executive Board.

5.1 Items to Note/Update

5.1.1 Border Executive Board Meeting

The Board met on 17 August 2022, receiving an update on the interconnection of human and animal diseases with discussion on surveillance in Biosecurity system.

There are no issues requiring your attention.

5.1.2 Maritime Border Programme Update

The first cruise ship in over two years arrived in Auckland on Friday 12 August, with the Prime Minister and Mayor of Auckland attending the event. Processing by border agencies went according to plan. Immigration staff facilitated the boarding in Sydney; vaccination status of a small sample of passengers was checked en-route by comparing with the pre-arrival information sent by the cruise ship; and around 170 passengers were also asked for their vaccination documents on arrival. All were compliant. Border agencies used the arrival to test and re-learn a number of processes and several minor improvements have been identified, particularly for plans for larger numbers of cruise passengers arriving from October.

The maritime border programme status is amber due to remaining legislative decisions required for implementation of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration for this year's cruise season. It will take at least 4-8 weeks after a legal vehicle is in place for the maritime solution to be implemented, particularly to communicate with travellers and cruise companies and allowing for those who have boarded the vessels several weeks before arriving in New Zealand. This means NZTD is unlikely to be in place in time for the first cruise passengers who are due to arrive in New Zealand from the second week of October (some of them are due to board in mid-September).

6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report

6.1 Items to Note/Updates


6.1.1 New Zealand Traveller Declaration

The New Zealand Traveller Declaration system issued its one millionth Traveller Pass on 12 August 2022. This is a significant milestone for the programme which demonstrates the ongoing successful cross-agency collaboration between Customs, the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Primary Industries.



7. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

s9(2)(f)(iv)



Proactively Released