



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 - September 2022

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 2 September 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 9 September 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 16 September 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 23 September 2022

Title of paper: COVID-19 Response Weekly Report 30 September 2022

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Key to redaction codes:

- Section 6(a), to protect the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand;
- Section 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals;
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- Section 9(2)(g)(i), to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinion.



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




16 September 2022

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1. Status Summary – Amber and Red Updates

Key		
Symbol	Colour	Meaning
	Green	On track, no roadblocks, no significant delays anticipated
	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 programme has moved to green status due to the Cabinet decision to move to a post-winter strategy for domestic and border health settings that were announced on Monday 12 September 2022.
Pacific Travel MFAT			<ul style="list-style-type: none">There are five active cases of COVID-19 in Niue, following the arrival of the most recent passenger flight from Auckland. There continues to be no evidence of community transmission. Niue remains at Alert Level Yellow and is encouraging visitors and residents to wear masks and social distance.The status remains amber due to the COVID-19 border restrictions in some of the Pacific Islands.

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Community Protection

Agency	Last Week	This Week	Agency Comment
Surveillance and Testing Te Whatu Ora	●	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Te Whatu Ora closely monitors the Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) process for positive PCR samples across the border, hospitals and community settings. • With current numbers of arrivals, a sample of 300 provides a 95% assurance of picking up at least one copy of a variant, assuming a prevalence of 1% for that variant. The larger the sample size, the earlier a variant can be detected with greater accuracy. • As previously reported, positive case numbers are trending down across the country, leading to less samples available for sequencing. The amber status reflects the impact of the decreasing case numbers and PCR samples available for WGS as targets for community case targets cannot be met. We anticipate, that with the shift of post-arrival testing no longer being mandatory, there will be some impact on the number of border cases available for sequencing. ESR will continue to sequence all border cases available, however it is expected there will be a natural decrease in samples available. We will monitor PCR testing and will work with ESR to understand the impact this may have on WGS. • Since the week ending 24 July 2022, the total PCR cases reported have been declining steadily each week from around 4,000 COVID-19 cases reported per week with a positive PCR test, to 1,317 in the week ending 6 September 2022. Manatū Hauora have proposed shifting to a new community sequencing target to meet surveillance purposes of 500 samples per week. A paper was provided to your office on WGS Reporting on 2 September proposing this change. • In the week ending 9 September, ESR requested 687 samples with 450 (66%) sequenced. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 194 (28%) imported cases; - 59 (9%) hospital cases; - 197 (29%) community cases; and - 237 (34%) samples that were not sequenced by the reporting period. • As previously reported, to improve the samples available, several steps have been taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proportion of samples needed to provide assurance of capturing new variants has been reviewed (as above). - The threshold for referral of samples to ESR was increased from a CT value of 25 to 30, which has increased the samples available for sequencing by approximately 15%. - Where possible, CT values are now visible in Éclair for ESR to request, where this is not possible, a manual process of recording CT value is in place. - Every individual imported/border case sample meeting the CT value is requested by ESR. - ESR daily reconciling samples sent, with samples received. Contact is made with individual labs to explain discrepancies.

Other Workstreams

All the other workstreams, including Isolation and Quarantine, Vaccination, and System Readiness & Planning are green.

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2. Ministry of Health

2.1 Programme Update

2.1.1 Technical Advisory Group update

COVID-19 TAG

The COVID-19 Technical Advisory Group (COVID-19 TAG) met on 9 September 2022 and discussed the following items:

- CPF adaption update;
- Infection/seroprevalence surveys;
- Science updates;
- Trends and insights report;
- Mortality report findings; and
- Future of COVID-19 TAG and incoming chair.

The next COVID-19 TAG meeting is scheduled for 7 October 2022.

2.1.2 Communications Issues and Activities

As at 14 September 2022

Date	Activity	Lead agency	Comms material	Ministerial Involvement
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
TBC – most likely later this month	Air New Zealand loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) test pilot ends – press release	MBIE	Full communications plan	Minister Verrall
s9(2)(f)(iv)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

2.1.3 Upcoming Publications

Title	Date	Context	ELT contact
The National Ethics Advisory Committee (NEAC) consultation on its draft publication on pandemic ethics	26 July – 20 September 2022	NEAC has drafted a publication on pandemic ethics for New Zealand. This publication was previously called <i>Getting Through Together</i> and has been renamed <i>Ethical Guidance for a Pandemic</i> . NEAC will consult with the public on their proposed ethical principles and approach.	Clare Perry, Deputy Director-General, Regulatory Services s9(2)(a)

3. Te Whatu Ora

3.1 Items to Note/Updates

3.1.1 COVID-19 Vaccination Insights

As at 11.59pm 12 September, 541,986 second booster doses have been administered, with 19,660 administered in the last seven days. A further 5,667 doses are booked in BookMyVaccine.

29.5% of all eligible Māori and Pacific people aged 50 years and older have received a second booster, an increase from 28.6% the previous week. For non-Māori non-Pacific aged 65 years and older, the rate is 54%, an increase from 52.9% the previous week.

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 34	653		404		6,223		7,280	
35 to 49	1,815		1,262		16,444		19,521	
50 to 64	16,685	23.1%	7,842	21.3%	115,420	19.8%	139,947	20.3%
65 and over	19,340	42.9%	7,855	36.5%	348,038	54%	375,233	52.8%
Grand total	38,495		17363		486,128		541,986	

For the week 5 September to 11 September, 67 national phone campaigns were undertaken to support population uptake on first and second booster as well as flu vaccinations, with a focus on those aged 50 and over, and prioritising eligible Māori and Pacific populations.

In total, 53,006 eligible people were called with 26.3% (13,954) answering these calls. Of those that answered, 1.1% (153) went on to book an appointment while 36.9% (5,160) advised they do not require assistance as they will attend a walk-in or manage this through their primary health provider.

International Pharmaceutical Federation World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

The 80th International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) World Congress of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences is taking place in Seville, Spain from 18 to 22 September 2022. Three abstracts outlining the COVID-19 vaccines enhanced safety monitoring tools and the role of pharmacy were accepted in the campaign and are being presented as posters at the congress. The three abstracts being presented are:

- The community and hospital pharmacy role in Aotearoa New Zealand’s COVID-19 vaccination programme.
- Enhanced Post-Marketing Surveillance of the COVID-19 vaccines in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Active Safety Monitoring of the mRNA Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) Vaccine using a Recipient Survey: A New Zealand first.

Given the public attention around the novel COVID-19 vaccines and the scale of the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation programme (CVIP), systems have needed to be continually reviewed and enhanced where possible, including vaccine safety monitoring systems and vaccine delivery options. This work was essential

¹ Uptake percentage has not been captured for those under 50, as it is unable to be determined who in those age groups are immunocompromised, and/or healthcare workers as this eligibility criteria is 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.

for achieving high vaccination coverage. Ensuring effective dissemination of the work undertaken during the CVIP is key to communicating findings and sharing experiences and learnings on the global stage.

Aged Residential Care facilities

In the week starting 19 September, districts will provide a full update on progress of the second booster rollout to Aged Residential Care (ARC) facilities. The Programme has received some out-of-cycle updates, lifting facilities visited to 582 out of 668 (87%). The Programme continues to work with Districts to reconfirm their roll out end dates as ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks at facilities continue to disrupt outreach plans. Districts are undertaking repeat visits to ensure residents are vaccinated as they become eligible post infection.

Second Boosters

Alongside their fixed clinic operations, Health Districts with support from local Māori and Pacific Providers, continue to bring vaccinations to their most vulnerable communities. Highlights this week include pop-up clinics at Te Huinga Whetū and Angitu kapa haka competitions in the Nelson Marlborough and Canterbury Districts. While the focus of these clinics is reaching Māori tamariki with COVID-19 vaccinations, education is provided on the importance of other immunisations where appropriate. COVID-19 boosters will also be available to parents attending.

Communications and Engagement

Print collateral was updated to incorporate Medsafe's announcement of additional rare side effects of Nuvaxovid, with new material distributed for use in vaccination clinics and other health settings.

Communicating changes to COVID-19 vaccine mandate settings in the health sector has been completed, rolled out to the sector, trade unions, employers and workers and published online.

A small range of print and web material in Te Reo Māori has been shared with partners and health providers. New Pacific-targeted booster print collateral is also now available in English, Samoan, and Tongan, and is being shared with partners and health providers.

While the overall level of booster advertisements in mainstream media is now dropping, promotions are continuing to encourage people to get up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations, including if they have recently had COVID-19.

The programme continues to use data and research to inform communications. Results from the August Horizon Māori Omnibus survey show that 80% of Māori who have had their first booster are likely to have a second booster if/when they become eligible. However, 51% of Māori who have had two primary doses but not yet received a first booster say they are unlikely to get one. The feedback also highlighted a preference for direct communication. This will be considered for the next phase of communications.

Direct marketing via SMS, email and posted letters continues weekly to inform people as they become eligible for a second booster, including a targeted communication to immunocompromised people.

3.2 Equity

Māori Update

Māori health providers across the motu continue to run hauora events, where collective aspects of whānau hauora and wellbeing, including vaccination, are the focus.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket

Hauora o Toi is collaborating with Whānau Āwhina Plunket to target approximately 500 tamariki who are overdue for their childhood immunisations in the Eastern and Western Bay of Plenty. Bookings began on 5 September and vaccination clinics commence from 19 September.

Mā te kōrero ka eke

The Programme is working with 23 Kōhanga Reo across Te Waipounamu to plan and deliver 'Ora' initiatives. This will include vaccination services.

Pacific Update

Over the weekend of 10 to 11 September, 297 vaccinations (including COVID-19, influenza, MMR, and HPV vaccinations) were administered across Pacific vaccination events in Tāmaki Makaurau.

Over the previous two weekends, Tangata Atumotu Health held several youth-focused vaccination events and home mobile vaccination services in Christchurch.

Over the weekend of 3 to 4 September, the provider visited three homes and delivered 18 vaccinations. This consisted of 14 COVID-19 adult vaccines, three influenza vaccines and one MMR vaccine.

Over the weekend of 10 to 11 September, the provider visited 13 homes, and delivered 21 vaccinations: 16 Adult and three paediatric COVID-19, one influenza and one MMR.

Four further home visit clinics will be held across the rest of September.

Disability Update

COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Among Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Service Users

As of 11 September, 86% of mental health and AOD service users aged 12 years and over had completed their primary course of the COVID-19 vaccine. Fifty-nine percent of this cohort who are eligible for a booster have received one.

When looking at COVID-19 vaccine uptake among those who solely use mental health services, compared with those who solely use AOD services, uptake is slightly higher for the mental health users, with 87% having completed their primary course of the COVID-19 vaccine compared with 82% of the AOD users.

COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Peer Support Fund

24 applications for funding were received for the second round of the COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Peer Support Fund. A panel was convened on Wednesday 14 September to assess the applications.

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 11 September 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 20 August 2021, all invoicing had payment terms of 30 days except for sports groups under Crown Service Agreements who have 10 days.

INVOICES ISSUED	INVOICES PAID	INVOICES ISSUED - NOT YET DUE	INVOICES OVERDUE	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF
55,950	44,728 (80% of invoices issued)	79 (0.1% of invoices issued)	8,192 (15% of invoices issued)	2,951 invoices (5%)
TOTAL VALUE OF INVOICES ISSUED \$214M	PAID (BY VALUE) \$184M 86%	ISSUED - NOT YET DUE (BY VALUE) \$282K 0.1%	INVOICES OVERDUE (BY VALUE) \$19M 10%	INVOICES WRITTEN OFF (BY VALUE) \$10.5M 4.8%
MBIE has now completed work on manually matching the 6,697 unmatched records after 25 March 2021. Of these 6,696 records, liability could only be established for 49 records (0.73 %). This represents an estimated \$150,000 in invoicing revenue. The remainder of records were found not to be liable or to have already paid under consolidated invoicing (usually aircrew or maritime arrivals).			90+ days overdue 6,588 invoices \$18M (by value) 8% (by value of all invoices issued)	

4.1.2 Debt Recovery

The debt recovery percentage remains at 86%, which is against our nominal target recovery of 90%.

As of 11 September, 15,179 invoices worth \$45.8m have been passed to our debt partner. In addition:

- \$19.3m has now been paid (an increase of \$308k).
- A further \$383k of debt is under instalment and is expected to be converted to payments over coming weeks.
- There are 197 active fee waiver requests, while applications are processed, they are recorded as outstanding debt.

4.2 Ombudsman Complaints

As at 7 September there are seven active investigations:

- one is on policy advice;
- two are on emergency allocations;
- one is 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, 258 investigations have been closed, with the Chief Ombudsman issuing 123 opinions in MBIE's favour and eight final opinions against MBIE.

There are 93 preliminary enquiries. Preliminary enquiries are cases where the Ombudsman requests the file to assess the complaint and determine next steps.



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 are next due to meet on 21 September 2022 and will discuss the progress of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration and will receive updates on Border forecasts and scenarios and the Maritime Border Programme.

5.2 Maritime Border Programme

The significant implications of the decision to move to a Post-Winter Strategy for the maritime border include:

- The revocation of the Maritime Border Order (MBO) as of 11.59pm Monday 12 September 2022
 - Vessel categories 1 and 2 (as were defined in the MBO) cease to exist with the associated entry processes and requirements including vaccination and testing removed.
 - Operational processes and vessel management for all vessel categories return to business-as-usual agency functions.
- COVID-19 positive cases will be required to self-isolate for seven days however close-contact isolation requirements cease to apply. Testing will be encouraged, and RATs will be made available for cruise passengers by Customs.
- No contact tracing requirements are in place at the maritime border.
- The New Zealand Traveller Declaration (NZTD) maritime solution will not be implemented for cruise season 2022/2023. This means travellers arriving to New Zealand by sea will not have to complete a NZTD until the Tranche 3 rollout ^{s9(2)(f)(iv)}
- Director General Notice on Pratique remains in place continuing the direction that COVID-19 presence onboard vessels is not a reason to withhold pratique.
- Operational border agencies have confirmed there are no significant issues to report as processes at the maritime border return to BAU.

6. New Zealand Customs Service Weekly Report




6.1 New Zealand Traveller Declaration

Following the removal of the COVID-19 Protection Framework, Customs undertook a range of activities to ensure travellers, airlines and multi-agency border operational staff were informed about the changes to requirements to enter New Zealand by air. The required changes to New Zealand Traveller Declaration were made without incident.

7. Upcoming Cabinet Papers

s9(2)(f)(iv)



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