

To: **DHB CEs**
CC: **DHB SROs**

03 May 2021

Tēnā koe,

COVID-19 Vaccination rollout and Sequencing Framework Guidelines.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts with the COVID-19 vaccination campaign, and your dedication to protecting everyone in Aotearoa. I would like to acknowledge all of the hard work that you and your teams have carried out over these last months with the vaccination rollout and on an ongoing basis.

This letter is to provide you with further guidance on the COVID-19 Immunisation Sequencing Framework and outline information about the Ministry's expectations and the support available to you.

Sequencing Guidelines for DHBs

The purpose of the Sequencing Framework is to ensure the equitable rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine across New Zealand in a whānau-centred approach and guide the use of our current supply of vaccine.

An updated sequencing framework for Group 1 to 3 is attached as an Appendix. We have included updates to Group 1 and 2 where there is additional information or definitions that you need to be aware of.

While there is limited supply of the vaccine, we need to focus on firstly protecting those at greatest risk of exposure to COVID-19 and those at greatest risk of serious illness.

- The top priority continues to be protecting our Group 1 border workers (including **new** border workers) and their household contacts who are at the highest risk of exposure to potential COVID-19 cases.
- The second priority group (Group 2) is to protect people at the highest risk of transmission (frontline workers) and severe health outcomes (at-risk people living in high risk settings). Frontline workers that are both public and **private** should be prioritised in this group. It is important that vaccination is easily available to those workers in a community setting.
- For Group 3 the focus is to protect those who are most at risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19 including older people and those with underlying health conditions and disabilities.
- We must also continue to reinforce our commitment to upholding and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and focus on vaccine equity, with a particular focus on Māori, Pacific and disabled people. The Ministry expects DHBs to work **in partnership** with their respective Māori and Pacific health providers, to ensure providers are well supported and included in the planning, delivery and monitoring of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The Ministry's advice to DHBs and providers is that the Sequencing Framework should act as a guide and **should not be used** at the expense of delivery timeframes, vaccine wastage or strict adherence to groups. We expect that all DHBs and providers have the flexibility to respond to the needs of your local community and to take a whānau-centred approach to the vaccination rollout. You have **discretion** to apply your best judgement to how your community is best served while delivering vaccination to Group 1 to 3.

The Ministry recommends that in context you consider risk, location, age, and ethnicity of the person or the community you are working with to help ensure we build our equitable whānau-centred approach and protect those most vulnerable and at-risk.

The Ministry is preparing advice and tools to assist DHBs in planning the capacity for the COVID-19 Vaccination for the period from July. This will involve understanding the DHBs planned capacity, including sites and workforce. This advice will be released to DHBs later this week.

Advice on Supply Management

Please manage your vaccination rollout within the maximum numbers as per your DHB plans. The purpose is to manage supply and demand within the existing supply in conjunction with your demand planning.

If you have any questions, please speak to your DHB Regional Leads and/or Regional Account Managers.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Gibbs', written in a cursive style.

Joanne Gibbs
National Director, COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunisation Programme
Ministry of Health