

# Memorandum

## COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy – Pfizer Delivery Schedule Update 24 August

**Date due to MO:** 24 August 2021 **Action required by:** 24 August 2021

**Security level:** ~~Commercially Sensitive~~ **Health Report number:** HR20211923

**To:** Vaccine Ministers

### Contact for telephone discussion

| Name            | Position  | Telephone |
|-----------------|---|-----------|
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### Action for Private Secretaries

N/A

**Date dispatched to MO:**

# COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy – Pfizer Delivery Schedule Update 24 August

## Purpose

1. This memo provides Vaccine Ministers with:
  - a. an update on the Pfizer vaccine supply situation in September
  - b. an overview of advice Cabinet will receive on 30 August s 9(2)(b)(ii)
  - c. an update on New Zealand's progress to secure additional vaccine supplies in 2022.

## Background and context

2. New Zealand has purchased 10.1 million doses (enough for 5.05 million courses) of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine. All 10.1 million doses are s 9(2)(b)(ii) to support the aim of offering all eligible people an opportunity to be vaccinated by the end of 2021.

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

3. New Zealand's delivery schedule was agreed under the terms of the advance purchase agreement (APA) with Pfizer. Pfizer has taken a global equitable allocation approach to distributing its vaccines.
4. As of 23 August 2021, New Zealand has taken receipt of 3.9 million doses of Pfizer's vaccine and administered 2.8 million doses. A total of 25,800 doses have also been donated to the Realm countries to support their immunisation programmes.

## Our vaccine supply for September includes delivery of s 9(2)(b)(ii)

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

6. Based on this expected delivery schedule, and incorporating the approach of maintaining 350,000 doses in reserve to protect against a supply shock, it is projected that the COVID-19 Vaccine Immunisation Programme (CVIP) can administer up to s 9(2)(b)(ii) sustainably through to the end of September.

## Our vaccine supply needs to support capitalising on the public interest to be vaccinated in the current climate

7. From a supply perspective, it would be possible to administer a greater number of doses, but this would start to reduce the size of the 350,000 dose reserve. From a supply perspective, it would be possible to administer s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(g)(i) but the reserve would be depleted by the end of September.
8. To date, the maximum daily recorded number of vaccines given is 57,000, and the highest number of doses administered in one week is 300,000. The programme has not yet come close to s 9(2)(b)(ii) week, though public interest in vaccination is high.
9. Even with the increased incentive to get vaccinated with the current outbreak, it is unlikely that the number of vaccines administered will s 9(2)(b)(ii), s 9(2)(g)(i), based on capacity data and assessment of international demand.
10. As a contingency, and as part of our overall portfolio approach, officials are pursuing three options to increase supply in September.
- a. s 9(2)(b)(ii)
  - b. We are also **actively seeking out options for an alternative supply of the Pfizer vaccine**. This could be through another country that has a surplus to its expected demands. However, we would need to ensure that the product was manufactured at a Medsafe approved site, and that all regulatory requirements could be met as well as timing of access and expiry of product.
  - c. s 9(2)(b)(ii)
- s 9(2)(b)(ii)
11. s 9(2)(b)(ii) There is a risk that this could result in reduced access to the Pfizer vaccine in early 2022 and it could create unnecessary wastage of vaccine.
12. Due to the relatively short shelf life of the Pfizer vaccine (typically three to four months on arrival), s 9(2)(b)(ii)
13. s 9(2)(b)(ii) to align with DHB service provider capacity and delivery plans would extend the overall shelf life of our vaccine supplies s 9(2)(b)(ii). This longer shelf life could

support ongoing uptake in the population and potentially enabling access to additional eligibility groups (such as 5-11 year olds).

14. Advice will be provided to Cabinet on 30 August providing options s 9(2)(b)(ii)
15. It is also not expected that all 10.1 million Pfizer vaccine doses will be administered in 2021, due to the current eligible population size of 4.2 million (including approximately 265,000 12-15 year-olds) and other factors that may limit overall uptake.
16. Cabinet will also receive advice on 30 August outlining options for determining the total number of doses to be received in 2021. These options will factor in the risk of vaccine wastage, donation, and enabling access, s 9(2)(b)(ii)

## Cabinet will receive advice on future vaccine purchases on 30 August

17. New Zealand's COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy, which resulted in a portfolio approach to purchasing COVID-19 vaccines, has successfully enabled the rollout of the CVIP, and supported immunisation in the Pacific.
18. We expect that there will be a need for vaccine supply in 2022 to support ongoing uptake, but it is not yet certain if booster doses will be required, or updated vaccines to protect against variants of concern.
19. Advice from the COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG) is that there is currently no evidence to support the need for booster doses in the general population, however, preliminary studies have indicated a third dose of the Pfizer vaccine may be required for solid organ transplant patients to mount a robust immune response.
20. Medsafe approval would be required before any COVID-19 vaccine could be used in New Zealand as a booster, and this approval would require evidence around the safety and effectiveness of a third dose.
21. Officials will provide advice in a Cabinet paper on 30 August 2021 on our proposed approach to future purchases, which includes ensuring access to boosters are available should evidence emerge that they are needed.
22. s 9(2)(b)(ii)
23. At the conclusion of negotiations, expected in early to mid-September, officials will seek a decision from Vaccine Ministers regarding the potential purchase of additional Pfizer vaccines in 2022 and 2023.

## Next steps

24. A Cabinet paper providing advice on profiling deliveries s 9(2)(b)(ii), and on future vaccine purchasing will be lodged for consideration at the 30 August 2021 Cabinet meeting.

25. If Cabinet supports the approach to future vaccine purchasing, a decision will be sought from Vaccine Ministers on the potential purchase of additional Pfizer vaccines, following the conclusion of negotiations.

PROACTIVELY RELEASED