

# COVID-19: Alert Level 2 - Guidance for Well Child Tamariki Ora services

19 August 2020

This guidance is designed to support safe Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) care delivery during the period of COVID-19 Alert level 2 restrictions.

The objectives are to:

- provide clear messages to guide care delivery
- provide clear messages as a basis for providers to develop communications with whānau.

WCTO staff may be interested to download the **Awhina app** to easily access the most up to date information for health care workers.

## Care delivery

Health care services are expected to operate as normally as possible under alert level 2. See **NZ Government Covid-19 alert levels**. We expect that:

1. WCTO services are essential. WCTO staff continue to provide usual care for their caseload.
2. Any WCTO staff member who has **symptoms of COVID-19** must not be at work. They should seek health advice and if required to, take a COVID-19 test.
3. WCTO services must implement a pre-contact screening process to identify any risk of COVID-19 transmission before WCTO staff have contact with whānau.

**NB:** Raised risk of transmitting COVID-19 includes where there is any person in the whānau or WCTO staff household who:

- reports any signs of COVID-19 or flu-like illness; or
- is showing any signs of COVID-19 or flu like illness; or
- is in self isolation and/or reports being in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19; or
- is an essential worker who comes in and out of the household 'bubble'; or
- works at the border or in any managed isolation or quarantine facility; or
- is immune-compromised or has heightened vulnerability.

4. In any case where WCTO nurses are away from work, for illness or re-deployment for COVID-19 response, the provider is responsible for ensuring the caseload is managed by delegation to another WCTO nurse in the same provider or working with another provider to arrange cover.

5. WCTO services will be delivered through a mix of virtual (telephone or video call) and in-person contacts.
6. There is ongoing priority for whānau:
  - with pēpi aged between birth and 3 months
  - of Māori and/or Pacific ethnicity
  - that are first time parents
  - are identified by the LMC as having greater needs at referral into the WCTO service.AND for all whānau where:
  - the WCTO nurse or LMC has identified high need
  - whānau have older tamariki where the WCTO nurse has assessed high long-term health need or risk to their health and wellbeing.
7. Some WCTO assessment activities, including history taking and some screening and universal surveillance enquiry, usually undertaken in a core contact, may be undertaken by telephone or video call.
8. The physical assessment and observations required in a core contact will be undertaken in an in-person contact.
9. Standard precautions and infection prevention and control practices should be followed at both individual and service level, including hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, maintaining physical distance of 2 metres, cleaning of high touch areas, equipment and surfaces. Stay home if you are sick and contact your health provider or Healthline for advice. Toys, books and magazines should be removed from waiting rooms and seating arranged to facilitate physical distancing.
10. WCTO staff and whānau must use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in accordance with **current Ministry of Health guidelines and Ministry of Health information about masks**.
11. Primary care-giver and pēpi only attend in-person (with one support person permitted only when a primary caregiver requires physical help to carry or handle the pēpi).
12. DHBs are responsible for ensuring WCTO providers can access face masks. Services can contact the DHB Portfolio Manager for advice on accessing supplies of masks.

## In addition

13. In-person additional contacts are likely to be more suitable for those whānau with high long term need and particularly for any whānau where access to technology is difficult. Virtual contacts may be offered, based on the nurse's judgement, to provide ongoing additional contacts for whānau with high short term need for support, or to monitor the progress of a care plan.
14. Decisions about the way contacts are provided will be made in partnership with whānau. Whānau must be provided with options for WCTO contacts that include:
  - in-person in home, clinic or marae
  - virtual contact with in-person contact planned at a time to suit the whānau needs
  - virtual contact only (does not apply for the physical assessments and observations required in core contacts including B4SC).

15. Required pre-contact screening for COVID-19 risk provides an opportunity to provide information and advise whānau of the actions they can take if they or anyone in their household is worried they may have COVID-19. Refer whānau to the **Ministry of Health COVID-19 information page**.

## Messages for whānau

The following messages are suggestions for sharing with whānau through your service communications channels for example social media, newsletters or other means.

1. At Level 2 we can visit you and your whānau at home or you can come to the clinic for pēpi and tamariki checks. We can also support you through a video or phone call.
2. It's ok if you are feeling worried about contact with health services, your WCTO nurse will work with you to find the best way to connect.
3. We understand you want to keep your whānau safe. Our nurses are well prepared to prevent the spread of any infection.
4. To keep you, your pēpi and your whānau safe our service is:
  - calling to check with you before we visit your home
  - asking every whānau if there is any chance they or anyone in their household is sick or has been in contact with anyone with COVID-19 (screening)
  - making sure staff do not come to work if they have any cold or flu like symptoms
  - our staff may be wearing a face mask when you see them. They may ask you and any other adult at the appointment to wear a face mask too
  - providing all our staff and our clinics with hand sanitiser to be used by everyone who uses our services
  - providing cleaning products so that the nurse can clean the scales, measuring table and other surfaces after every use
  - changing the layout of our clinics and waiting rooms so there is a two metre space between seating
  - making sure we have a way to trace anyone who has used our services (contact tracing).
5. You can talk to the nurse about the things that are worrying you. They can help you find the right place to get the support you need to keep you and your whānau healthy and well.
6. You might feel worried about having a lot of people visiting your home. It is ok to tell your whānau you would rather they didn't visit if they have a cough, runny nose or any other signs they are not well. You are protecting your pēpi by doing this.

## Key contacts

Justine Mecchia, Manager Well Child Tamariki Ora, [justine.mecchia@health.govt.nz](mailto:justine.mecchia@health.govt.nz)

Dr Timothy Jelleyman, Chief Advisor Child and Youth, [timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz](mailto:timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz)