

May/Mei 2021

Public Health Bulletin

Public Health Operations Update

Kia ora koutou

Due to the current Waikato DHB IT systems issue we have been unable to create our standard Public Health Bulletin for the month of Mei/May or produce our usual notifiable diseases chart.

We would like you to know that despite the current challenges we are continuing to respond to business as usual, however some of the standard notification pathways are not operating at this time.

Our phones are working:

During office hours

Public Health Unit MOoH/HPO: (07) 838 2569

Notifications

07 838 2569 ext. 22041 or 22020

From outside Hamilton/Kirikiroa: 0800 800 977

After hours

On call MOoH: 021 359 650

On Call HPO: 021 999 521

Notifications normally made through your primary care operating systems (eg:BPAC) are still being received. This includes lead notifications, poisoning from chemical contamination of the environment and hazardous substances, injuries or disease. These notifications will reach us via the usual surveillance system notification process.

The lab continues to notify us directly of any positive results (communicable disease and lead levels) that require health protection follow up.

The public facing Waikato DHB website waikatodhb.health.nz is still operational. Management pathways, flowcharts and notification forms for a number of notifiable and communicable diseases are still available here.

However our **fax** and **generic notifiable diseases email** notifiablediseases@waikatodhb.health.nz are **not** operational at this time.

Please liaise directly with the on call MOoH to find out the best way to transmit the relevant notification information (eg: scan/photo, other email address) until further notice.

COVID-19 testing for Port and other border workers

All border workers continue to be tested routinely for COVID-19 as part of Aotearoa New Zealand's COVID-19 surveillance programme and our Keep it Out response. Please remember that COVID-19 testing for all port and border workers is free as part of routine mandatory surveillance. We are aware of some instances where border workers have presented for routine testing outside of their usual place of residence/work and have been told there is a fee for testing.

It is really important that we continue to support all of our border workers who are coming forward for their regular tests as required. Testing for these workers **is free** even when they are asymptomatic.

Managing COVID-19 misinformation and scams

Getting the right information matters. Please be aware of misinformation that is circulating on social media and in other formats from unofficial sources.

The best sources of accurate and reliable COVID-19 information include:

- [Ministry of Health](http://www.health.govt.nz)
- [Unite against COVID-19](http://www.uniteagainstcovid19.org.nz)
- [Immunisation Advisory Centre](http://www.immunisation.govt.nz)

The World Health Organisation also provides a comprehensive list of COVID-19 information including resources that can help to address common misconceptions and misinformation. This can be found on the WHO website under **COVID-19 advice for the public: [Mythbusters](#)**.

If you see something about COVID-19 or the vaccine that is not correct you can report it. If it's on social media – report it to the platform. Everything else you can report to [CERT NZ](#).

- CERT NZ Email: covid@ops.cert.govt.nz
- CERT NZ Phone: 0800 237 869

COVID-19 Scams

Scams and frauds exploiting COVID-19 may also appear by email, text message, phone call or social media. Please note that in New Zealand people will never be asked to pay for their vaccine or be asked to pay to secure their place in the queue. They will never be asked to provide any financial information or to provide personal

information by email or text message. If this occurs it is a scam and should be reported to [CERT NZ](#).

For email scams forward the original email to CERT NZ including any attachments. For phone scams include the telephone number the call came from (if possible), the telephone number of the person who received the call (this will be treated in confidence), the date and time of the call and a brief explanation of what the caller said

- CERT NZ Email: covid@ops.cert.govt.nz
- CERT NZ Phone: 0800 237 869

You can find out more about COVID-19 scams and misinformation at [Unite Against COVID-19](#)

Medical Officers of Health: Felicity Dumble – Richard Wall – Richard Vipond – Richard Hoskins – Geoff Cramp (COVID-19 support)

After hours:

MOoH: 021 359 650

HPO: 021 999 521

If there is no answer, please contact Waikato Hospital's switchboard 07 839 8899 and ask for the on-call MOoH.

During office hours:

Public Health (MOoH or HPO): (07) 838 2569 **Notifications:** 07 838 2569 ext. 22041 or 22020
Notifications outside Hamilton: 0800 800 977 **Fax:** 07 838 2382 **Email:**
notifiablediseases@waikatodhb.health.nz

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