

Authorised Vaccinators in the Canterbury, South Canterbury & West Coast Region

(Reference: Appendices 3 & 4, Immunisation Handbook, MoH, 2017)

1. Who can vaccinate?

Vaccines are prescription medicines. They can only be administered by:

- A medical practitioner
- A designated prescriber (includes nurses who meet prescribing criteria, i.e. Nurse Practitioner)
- A person authorised to administer the medicine in accordance with a standing order

AND

- An Authorised Vaccinator

2. Can an RN who has completed the Vaccinator Training Course & Written Test give vaccines on the National Schedule?

- Only with a written medical practitioner's prescription

OR

- Under a Standing Order

3. What is an Authorised Vaccinator?

Under the Medicines Regulations 1984, a Medical Officer of Health can authorise a person to administer vaccinations from an Approved Immunisation Programme, without the need for a medical prescription or standing order, or the presence of a Medical Practitioner. This usually applies to registered nurses.

4. What is an Approved Immunisation Programme?

An Approved Immunisation Programme means:

- any vaccines from the New Zealand National Immunisation Schedule (see <http://immunisation.book.health.govt.nz/>), and/or
- any other vaccines from a Medical Officer of Health Approved Immunisation Programme (e.g. influenza or Hepatitis B vaccination of workplace staff).

This *does not* include travel vaccines – these must be prescribed by a doctor.

An individual programme approval is required for any situation where vaccinations are to be given off site (i.e. away from a Medical Practice). Only authorised vaccinators can give vaccines under an off-site programme. See paragraph 16 for further information about this.

5. What is expected of an Authorised Vaccinator?

By accepting your authorisation you agree to follow the Immunisation Standards (Appendix 3 Immunisation Handbook, 2017) and work within your scope of practice as determined and monitored by the Nursing Council, i.e. competencies for the 'Registered Nurse' scope of practice require that all nurses have appropriate competencies for their practice and can access and use emergency equipment.

Vaccinators should hold professional indemnity insurance eg. NZNO. Employers may provide cover, but this should be checked by applicants.

6. What should I do in the event of anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a severe adverse event of rapid onset, characterised by circulatory collapse. Vaccinators must be able to recognise all of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. Early administration of adrenaline is essential, and appropriate emergency equipment must be immediately on hand whenever immunisations are given. It is expected, as an authorised vaccinator, that you will manage anaphylaxis through the appropriate administration of adrenaline and oxygen as outlined in the New Zealand Immunisation Handbook 2017 (refer p77), and your authorisation permits you to do this.

7. How do I apply to be an Authorised Vaccinator and what information do I need to supply?

You need to apply to the local Medical Officer of Health responsible for the area(s) you practice in. For the Canterbury, South Canterbury and West Coast regions you should complete the application form and provide the following documentation. Please allow up to four weeks for processing of your application.

Initial Authorisation (first application only)

Current Nursing Council of NZ Practising Certificate
Current CPR Certificate (<2 years)
Completion of Vaccinator Training Course Certificate
Assessment of Clinical Practice for Vaccinators (IMAC Form)
Evidence of Indemnity Insurance (optional)

Authorisation is valid for a period of 2 years from training course or last update.

8. What will I receive after application?

Once the Medical Officer of Health has reviewed your application and is satisfied you meet the requirements for authorisation, you will receive an authorisation letter. Where applicable, this will state the route of administration you are authorised for (i.e. those who are vaccinating adults only and are assessed for this, will be authorised to administer "deltoid vaccinations only". Full authorisation includes vastis lateralis as well as deltoid).

9. What happens if my authorisation expires?

You can only give vaccines on the National Immunisation Schedule with a doctor's written prescription or under standing orders until you are re-authorised.

10. How do I renew my Authorisation?

You will receive a reminder letter close to the expiry date to apply for re-authorisation. You will need to complete the renewal application form and provide the following documentation. Please allow up to four weeks for processing of your application.

Re-Authorisation (application every 2 years)

Current Nursing Council of NZ Practising Certificate
Current CPR Certificate (<2 years)
Completion of Update for Trained Vaccinators Course Certificate and other vaccine specific education (minimum 4 hours)
Evidence of Indemnity Insurance (optional)

11. What is the Peer Review Clinical Competency?

As part of your re-authorisation process you are expected to organise a peer review of your immunisation practice. Appendix 1 has the assessment form used for this process. Note – the peer reviewer must be an Authorised Vaccinator (i.e. be on the Community & Public Health list of current Authorised Vaccinators or provide proof of their authorisation if authorised in another DHB).

12. What if I have not renewed a previous authorisation?

Your authorisation automatically lapses if no paperwork (or communication regarding why paperwork might be delayed) has been received at the end of the 2 year authorisation period. Requirements for re-authorisation depend on the length of time elapsed since last authorised:

- If less than 6mths has expired since your authorisation lapsed, applying for re-authorisation is all that is necessary.
- If less than 5 years but more than 6mths has elapsed, you will need to attend the first available Vaccinator Update Course and provide evidence that you have attended specific vaccination education sessions of minimum 4 hours duration each 2 years. Clinical assessment may be required at the discretion of the Medical Officer of Health.
- If more than 5 years has elapsed since completion of initial Vaccinator Training Course then the Vaccinator Training Course must be repeated i.e. apply for an initial authorisation.

13. What if I have completed the vaccinator training but never applied to become an Authorised Vaccinator?

Your authorisation is at the discretion of the Medical Officer of Health and dependent on vaccinator updates attended, number of vaccinations given, and clinical assessment. If more than 5 years has elapsed since completion of initial Vaccinator Training Course then the Vaccinator Training Course must be repeated i.e. apply for an initial authorisation.

14. What if I am currently authorised in another DHB region?

Apply to Community and Public Health by completing the Initial Authorisation Application Form. The only documentation required in this case is a copy of your authorisation from the other region, a copy of your current practising certificate, and copy of your current CPR certificate (<2 years). Your new authorisation letter will cover the same period as your previous authorisation.

15. What if I change jobs during the 2 year authorisation period or wish to administer vaccines I am not currently authorised for?

You will need to contact Community and Public Health and notify us of the changes so we can amend your authorisation. If additional vaccines are requested then you should discuss with your immunisation coordinator as a further clinical assessment may be required.

16. When do I need to apply for a programme authorisation?

The Medical Officer of Health can designate a specific immunisation programme as an "Approved Immunisation Programme". Approval is required for all situations where a vaccine is to be given off-site, i.e. away from a medical practice. Only authorised vaccinators can give vaccines under an off-site programme. The person intending to manage the programme is required to submit an application form to the Medical Officer of Health that includes:

- the vaccine(s) to be given
- location(s) where they will be given,
- documentation that will be used
- equipment that will be carried and
- a list of authorised vaccinators who will be giving the vaccines.

Programmes are approved for a 12 month period so, for ongoing programmes, applications need to be re-submitted annually.

Further information, forms, and contact details can be found on Community and Public Health website: <https://www.cph.co.nz/health-professionals/vaccinators/>.