

July 2018 BCG Vaccine Reintroduction Fact Sheet

To: DHB BCG vaccination clinics, Public Health Services, Lead Maternity Carers, DHB midwives, general practitioners and practice nurses

This fact sheet sets out what you need to know about the reintroduction of BCG vaccine in July 2018 after a longstanding global shortage. More information about the vaccine can be found in chapter 20 of the *Immunisation Handbook*: www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/immshandbook-20-tuberculosis-mar18-v2.pdf.

BCG vaccine now available to order

From 24 July 2018, BCG vaccine can be ordered by DHB BCG vaccination clinics from www.fundedvaccines.co.nz. The vaccine comes in multi-dose vials containing 10 doses. Please minimise wastage by planning vaccination clinics accordingly.

Babies or children less than five years of age are eligible for BCG vaccination if they meet the following criteria:

- they will be living in a house or family/whānau with a person with either current TB or a history of TB
- they have one or both parents or household members or carers who, within the last 5 years, lived for a period of 6 months or longer in countries with a TB rate ≥ 40 per 100,000 (list available online at www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/immshandbook-a8-high-incidence-tb-countries-mar18.pdf)
- during their first 5 years they will be living for 3 months or longer in a country with a TB rate ≥ 40 per 100,000.

Midwives should resume screening babies for referral to DHB BCG vaccination clinics. However, we do not recommend a catch-up programme for older children who met the criteria over the period the vaccine was unavailable. Parents or caregivers may request BCG vaccination for such children. These requests should be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure they meet the above criteria, and children under the age of one year should be prioritised. If the child is aged 6 months or older they should have a pre-vaccination tuberculin skin test to detect whether they have already been infected, with vaccination only being given if the child is uninfected.

BCG Vaccinator Endorsement

As you will be aware BCG vaccinator endorsement was introduced from 4 January 2017, and those delivering BCG vaccine must meet these requirements:

- new BCG vaccinators are required to become authorised vaccinators and then seek endorsement as a BCG vaccinator from their local Medical Officer of Health
- all existing BCG vaccinators were given national BCG vaccinator endorsement by the Ministry of Health for two years up until 4 January 2019, after which they are required to seek regional BCG vaccinator endorsement by their local Medical Officer of Health.

For more information about BCG endorsement and renewal please refer to the Ministry's website: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/immunisation/immunisation-programme-decisions/bacillus-calmette-guerin-bcg-vaccinator-endorsement.

BCG online vaccination course

The Ministry recommends all new and existing gazetted BCG vaccinators complete the Tuberculosis BCG vaccination online course.

The course takes 8 hours to complete and there is a clinical assessment component for new BCG vaccinators.

The course is available through the Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) at <http://www.immune.org.nz/health-professionals/education-training>

You can register for the course by choosing 'Update for Trained Vaccinator (UPD) Online' under '**View Courses**'.

As with other IMAC online courses there will be a small charge to access the course. Payment is by credit card. If you have a bulk booking and require an invoice for your organisation, please email imacetadmin@auckland.ac.nz

Supporting resources

BCG parent and health professional information resources are available and can be ordered from www.healthed.govt.nz - search for "BCG".

Chapter 20 of the *Immunisation Handbook* available online at www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/immshandbook-20-tuberculosis-mar18-v2.pdf

The data sheet for the vaccine is online at <http://www.medsafe.govt.nz/profs/datasheet/b/BCGCSLinj.pdf>

The Ministry will shortly be publishing a technical document on the administration of Mantoux tuberculin skin testing as part of the updated TB Guidelines. When available, this document can be accessed at www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/immunisation/immunisation-programme-decisions/bacillus-calmette-guerin-bcg-vaccinator-endorsement.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Ministry's Immunisation Team at immunisation@moh.govt.nz