

Vaccinator Update Course Standards

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This publication is intended to support education sessions provided at Vaccinator Education Courses and should be used in conjunction with other evidence-based immunisation publications.

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Introduction

The Vaccinator Update Course Standards set the minimum education requirements which underpin safe vaccination practice in New Zealand, ensuring equity and consistency in national course content and delivery. The principles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi underpin our kaupapa. We will continue to work with our partners including the Ministry of Health, Hāpai te Hauora and Moana Research to ensure that vaccinator course content and delivery reflect current New Zealand evidence and resources to support and achieve equity for New Zealanders.

Vaccinator update courses are designed to provide health professionals with current information in relation to changes in immunisation theory, practice and policy at a local, regional and national level to ensure they remain conversant with vaccination developments, and to display the appropriate competencies to vaccinate safely in accordance with their area of practice.

Facilitation of vaccinator courses will integrate best practice principles for adult learners. A range of opportunities for learning will be incorporated into each course. This will include identifying and supporting individual learning needs in order to meet the course learning outcomes.

The vaccinator update courses are aligned with:

- *Appendix 3 Immunisation standards for vaccinators and guidelines for organisations offering immunisation services,*
- *Appendix 4 Authorisation of vaccinators and criteria for pharmacist vaccinators,* current [Immunisation Handbook](#) (Ministry of Health - the Ministry), and
- *Whakamaua Māori Health Action Plan 2020-2025, to achieve whānau ora (healthy families) and pae ora (healthy futures)* (Ministry of Health).

Vaccinator status

- An update course must be completed by the health professional at least every two years to maintain their vaccinator status (either authorised vaccinator or pharmacist vaccinator)
- The process is outlined in the current Immunisation Handbook (Immunisation Handbook).
- Requirements for reauthorisation as a vaccinator (Medicine Regulations 1984 clause 44A) are obtained from the local public/population health unit, the medical officer of health or by agreement with the Director of Public Health or Director General of Health.
- The local immunisation coordinator or public health unit can provide guidance for the process and requirements for reauthorisation.
- Note: Vaccinators who are NOT prescribers, pharmacist vaccinators, or authorised vaccinators require a prescription or standing order to administer vaccines (see [Standing Order Guidelines](#), the Ministry).
- Maintaining competency of practice is the responsibility of the individual practitioner and their employer; issues should be addressed to the appropriate regulating body.

Vaccinator Update Courses

The course consists of a minimum of 3.5 hours theory, followed by an online assessment.

There are two learning options:

- An online course (there are several options, depending on the health professional's area of practice) and an online assessment
- A 3.5-hour tutorial, including time for group discussion and an online assessment.

Pre-reading material may be included as part of the update programme.

Course registration

Registration for all IMAC courses occurs through the Immunisation Advisory Centre learning management system <https://lms.immune.org.nz>.

Course dates and start times are set by each Regional Immunisation Advisor, based on local requirements and are published in the IMAC course flyer, usually in early December the year before.

Resources

- Health Promotion Agency and the Ministry - [Health Ed](#) resources
- IMAC [written resources](#) and [influenza resources](#)
- Ministry of Health [Immunisation resources](#) and [Immunisation handbook](#)
- [Ministry of Health](#) Māori Health Action Plan 2020-2025
- [Medsafe](#) vaccine data sheets
- [PHARMAC](#) website vaccine resources
- [CARM](#) reporting form - New Zealand Pharmacovigilance Centre
- [World Health Organization](#) vaccine and immunisation resources
- [World Health Organization](#) immunisation schedules by country
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) vaccine and immunization resources

Course objective

To provide participants with a review of current best practice and updated knowledge and information required to provide high quality, safe and effective delivery of New Zealand National Immunisation Schedule vaccines across the lifespan. Participants will understand the processes and systems which underpin vaccinator practice as outlined in the Immunisation Handbook and meet the minimum educational requirements for maintaining their status as a vaccinator.

Over learning outcome

At the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Access and utilise the Immunisation Handbook to convey information to whānau
- Locate and use resources to inform immunisation conversations
- Access and use the National Standards for Vaccine Storage and Transportation for Immunisation Providers 2017 (2nd Edition)
- Meet the requirements for vaccination practice as outlined in the “Immunisation standards for vaccinators and guidelines for organisations offering immunisation services (Appendix 3 of the Immunisation Handbook)
- Work with whānau to achieve whānau ora, alongside mauri ora.

Prerequisites

- Current Annual Practising Certificate
- Current involvement in immunisation service delivery
- Knowledge and familiarity with the current Immunisation Handbook in particular the following sections:
 - Introduction
 - General immunisation principles
 - Processes for safe immunisation
 - Appendices
 - Immunisation standards for vaccinators and guidelines for organisations offering immunisation services
 - Authorisation of vaccinators and criteria for pharmacist vaccinators.

Course assessment procedures

Participants complete an online assessment made up of multiple choice questions which assesses the learning and recall of concepts. A pass mark of 80% is required. Participants can download a certificate following successful completion of the assessment.

Course revision

The IMAC Education Quality Review Group, along with appropriate experts as needed (eg, Medical Advisors), annually review the online courses, tutorial PowerPoints, teaching materials and resources, and the assessment questions.

Unit timing guide

Unit	Topic	Recommended minimum timings
1	Vaccine safety	45 minutes
2	Current issues and developments in vaccination theory and practice	100 minutes
3	Improving immunisation coverage	45 minutes
	Course assessment online	30 minutes

Order of presentation will depend on speaker availability and facilitator preference.

Unit 1: Vaccine safety

Purpose

To update vaccinators knowledge of safe vaccination practice.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Review vaccine safety, regulation and licensure
- Outline strategies to minimise the risk of adverse events following immunisation (AEFIs) including pre-vaccination screening assessment
- Identify and review knowledge of the management of AEFIs particularly anaphylaxis
- Outline the process of reporting AEFIs including all medication errors

Recommended content

- Vaccine development and surveillance regulations
- Regulation and licensure for new and current vaccines
- Current research into vaccine safety and effectiveness
- Essential components of a pre-vaccination screening to reduce the risk of an AEFI
- World Health Organization classification of AEFIs
- Strategies for error prevention and resources to prevent AEFIs
- Identification and management of anaphylaxis (including adrenaline administration) highlighting changes and essential equipment
- Identification, management and documentation of medication errors and AEFIs, and reporting to CARM

Unit 2: Current issues and developments in vaccination theory and practice

Purpose

To update the participants' knowledge of disease outbreaks, legislation, policy recommendations and evidence-based practice for the safe delivery of vaccines within the New Zealand context so they can contribute to achieving pae ora – healthy futures.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Discuss current and/or recent disease outbreaks in New Zealand
- Identify changes in policy, legislation or best practice recommendations to improve the delivery of immunisation including the administration of vaccines
- Describe changes in the National Immunisation Schedule including vaccines for special groups and the rationale for these
- Demonstrate an awareness of non-schedule vaccines available for purchase across the lifespan
- Identify resources to support vaccination, in particular New Zealand based resources and information to improve immunisation services
- Identify strategies to prevent and manage cold chain breaches
- Outline the process for maintaining appropriate qualifications as a vaccinator

Recommended content

- Review local or national disease outbreaks including management practices
- Changes to the National Immunisation Schedule, including new vaccines, reclassified vaccines, those for special groups and available for purchase
- Legislative changes for vaccinators' authorisation, payment claims and medicines handling
- Revised national policies for vaccine administration, storage, handling and documentation
- Resources to support vaccination service delivery

Unit 3: Improving immunisation coverage

Purpose

To provide an overview of current evidence-based strategies for immunisation communication to increase and sustain immunisation coverage. To ensure that vaccinators are aware of strategies that work toward mana tangata in immunisation coverage and contribute to pae ora – healthy futures.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Identify strategies to achieve immunisation mana tangata, timeliness and high coverage for population health
- Outline targeted strategies to increase immunisation coverage for specific programmes, tangata whenua and Pasifika peoples
- Identify information to provide support to whānau making immunisation decisions, including appropriate health information for those declining immunisation
- Review catch-up immunisation and other variations to the standard immunisation schedule

Recommended content

- Update of coverage data relevant to area of practice
- Consideration of provider systems and targeted strategies to improve coverage, timeliness and capture accurate immunisation data
- Strategies to improve coverage, reduce barriers for all whānau accessing vaccination programmes
- Outline of future risks with vaccine hesitant populations/people
- Strategies that enhance partnership in immunisation conversations with whānau, eg, engagement, active listening, trust, transparency
- Models of immunisation communication, eg, risk communication, motivational interviewing, shared decision making
- Planning and implementing catch-up schedules
- Content will reflect the Ministry of Health direction to improve health outcomes and reduce inequities through Whakamaua Māori Health Action Plan 2020-2025