

# Key messages + Q&A – disability support announcement – transport and contact centre

6 October 2021

The document contains key messages and reactive Q&As regarding a dedicated team/hotline to support the disability community to get vaccinated. This is due to be announced at today's 1 pm stand-up.

## Key messages

- A 30-strong team has been established as part of the COVID Vaccination Healthline to support disabled people to get their COVID-19 vaccines.
- The support can be accessed by calling the COVID Vaccination Healthline on 0800 28 29 26 for free 8 am – 8 pm Monday to Friday and push '2'.
- Disabled people and their carers can receive tailored advice and support for booking their vaccination appointments, including assistance with coordinating transport to and from the vaccination site and arranging the necessary support/accommodations during the appointment.
- Whakarongorau Aotearoa who run the COVID Vaccination Healthline has employed team members who are either disabled people themselves or who are allies to the disability community across Aotearoa.
- Since the team was established last week, the team have facilitated transport access for over 440 people.
- The team can support people with a range of disabilities including:
  - Blind, Deafblind and low vision
  - Deaf and hard of hearing
  - Physical impairments
  - Intellectual impairments
  - Neuro diverse
  - Long term health conditions
- The team support each service user to identify and arrange transport to and from vaccination sites. This is a personalised service which caters specifically to individual needs of the service user.

## Additional messages

- The team can identify suitable vaccination sites or liaise with sites to ensure that needs can be met including mobility assistance, sign language interpreters or low sensory environments.
- The team can work on a case-by-case basis identify and arrange transport to and from vaccination sites.

- Transport options will focus on existing District Health Board services and non-government providers. Where transport cannot be provided through existing services, the team can arrange transport through pre-approved providers across New Zealand.
- Examples of support over the last week include putting in place have mobility assistance at a site, arrange sign language interpreters, rearranging transport options after initial transport options became unavailable, arranging 1737 phone counsellors to support people with needle anxiety.
- We recognise this service is just a start and will continue to evolve in the coming weeks. We've got a big job to do and we look forward to the community's feedback.
- A toolkit is available for people supporting disabled peoples with key messages, digital assets for social media channels, newsletters and website, frequently asked questions, and links to further information and resources  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lz2unsntfe7p9mj/AACmiDwn5LFGUYkFK-olfYlaa?dl=0>

## Reactive Q&As

### When was this set up?

The team has been supporting disabled people since 22 September.

### How will we know we've reached everyone we need to get vaccinated?

Disabled people are represented across all sectors of the population and anyone who self-identifies as disabled can use this service. We constantly work with the disabled people's representatives to learn how effective our reach into their communities has been.

### Will these people do call outs (to people and carers) to ensure people have the info they need or will they be receiving calls only?

This service is available to anyone who self-identifies as disabled, so we don't currently have enough information about these people to enable us to make outbound calls. However, we are encouraging wide use of the phone line via our connections into disabled communities. We regularly meet with community leaders and are providing information about the phone line in accessible formats to ensure the community is well-aware.

### Is there or will there be any door knocking/outreach clinics to ensure disabled people have access to the vaccine?

DHBs and local providers are working with disabled people to ensure they can access the vaccine in a way that meets their needs in their local area. The 0800 number is a key tool to support that.

### When will accessible formats of this information be available?

Information about the support team will be available in the following formats within the next week:

- Large print and audio file
- Easy Read
- NZ Sign Language – video

### Why has it taken so long to reach the disabled communities who have been eligible for many months now (Group 3)?

We've been working with community groups to get disabled people vaccinated. This is the latest tool to make things easier and respond to feedback we've received from this community.

**Who is the provider?**

This service is a collaboration between Capital and Coast DHB, Workbridge, and Whakarongorau Aotearoa – National Telehealth Service. It is part of the COVID Vaccination Healthline.

**Do people have to pay for the transport?**

No, transport costs arranged through the service are fully subsidised.

**How many disabled people are still left to be vaccinated?**

We don't have exact figures for this. Disabled people are represented across all sectors of the population.

**Who qualifies to use this service?**

Anyone who self-identifies as disabled can use this service.

**How much is costing?**

The service is integrated as part of the COVID Vaccination Healthline supported by some additional funding to cover the costs of transport to vaccination centres.