

Guidance statement

COVID-19 vaccine and your professional responsibility

Vaccination is a crucial part of the New Zealand public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Health practitioners can help to protect themselves, their patients, and the wider community by getting their COVID-19 vaccination.

The Dental and Medical Councils have an expectation that all dental and medical practitioners will take up the opportunity to be vaccinated—unless medically contraindicated.

You have an ethical and professional obligation to protect and promote the health of patients and the public, and to participate in broader based community health efforts. Vaccination will play a critical role in protecting the health of the New Zealand public by reducing the community risk of acquiring and further transmitting COVID-19.

Patients are entitled to information that a reasonable consumer, in that consumer's circumstances, would expect to receive (Right 6, Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights).

As a health practitioner, you have a role in providing evidence-based advice and information about the COVID-19 vaccination to others. You should be prepared to discuss evidence-based information about vaccination and its benefits to assist informed decision making. There is information on the [Ministry of Health \(MOH\) website](#) to support engagement with staff or colleagues and the public who may be hesitant about getting a vaccine.

As regulators we respect an individual's right to have their own opinions but it is our view that there is no place for anti-vaccination messages in professional health practice, nor any promotion of anti-vaccination claims including on social media and advertising by health practitioners.

More information:

- The latest government information on the COVID-19 vaccination programme can be found on the [MOH website](#).
- The [Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment \(MBIE\)](#) has guidance for employers and workers about the employment law implications for the COVID-19 vaccination programme.