



Page 2: Your information

Q1

Your details

First name	Arun
Surname	Natarajan
City/town	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]

Q2 **dentist or dental specialist**

Your submission is in the capacity as

Page 3: Name of company/organisation

Q3 **Respondent skipped this question**

Name of company/organisation

Page 4: Your Person ID number

Q4

Please add your Dental Council Person ID registration number

[REDACTED]

Page 5: Please provide your feedback by responding to the following question

Q5

No

Do you support the proposed Supplementary risk management principles for oral health during the COVID-19 pandemic? If you do not support the draft, please share your concerns, reasons for your view, and proposed alternatives if you have any.

Q6

Please share any comments you have below:

It is my view that the proposed stand down requirements create a barrier to accessing care for those tamariki with highest needs, further fuelling existing inequities and inequalities, in particular for tamariki under 12 years of age (0-12 years) who are currently not eligible for vaccination in Aotearoa New Zealand but whose oral health needs cannot be met within the Community Oral Health Services (COHS).

I would like the Council to consider the following.

1. Review and amend the stand down requirements for asymptomatic unvaccinated children under 12 years of age (0-12 years) whose oral health needs cannot be met within the COHS or multi chair clinics. A pragmatic way would be to consider treating all asymptomatic unvaccinated children under 12 years (0-12 years) through the low risk transmission pathway similar to the multi chair clinics proposal (page 9). This would also allow the proposed practice standard to be aligned within the current hospital framework when considering risk management for asymptomatic unvaccinated children under 12 years of age (0-12 years) in the planning up to preventable hospital dental admissions.
2. The current proposal requires oral health practitioners to know the vaccination status of patients for the oral health team to plan to effectively manage the risk of COVID-19 transmission. However the government has made it clear that people are not required to show their My Vaccine Pass as proof of vaccination at health and disability services². The proposal needs to be amended to provide clarity for oral health practitioners on this matter.
3. Children under 12 years of age (0-12 years) are accompanied by a support person or caregiver. The proposal for support people to be low risk would result in a barrier for certain groups of children where the only primary caregiver may not be vaccinated. I would like the Council to review the proposal through an equity and child centred lens so groups of children are not disadvantaged.
4. Each year thousands of children with high needs are treated using Relative Analgesia (RA) or Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen Inhalational sedation for their oral health needs either in the community or at the hospital. It would be helpful if the Council could provide advise on infection control/disinfection standards when using RA (especially the patient circuit hoses that deliver medical gases) during the COVID-19 pandemic to avoid any inconsistencies between practitioners and allow children to be treated in a safe manner in the community. Hospital IPC team recommend the use of patient circuit hoses that gets changed between patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note this is different to manufacturer recommendations where the patient circuit hoses (called as 'white tubes' in lay term) could be used for sessional use after using disinfectant wipes on the outside and the nasal hoods gets changed between patients. There are autoclavable patient circuit hoses available in the market that would be considered ideal for use however stock may be an issue.
5. I encourage the Council to engage early where possible with Specialist Paediatric Dentists when drafting matters that significantly affect provision of oral health for children.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the ongoing guidance, commitment and professional support being offered to the dental profession during the COVID-19 pandemic.
