

## Media release

20 August 2021

### **Covid-19 vaccinations under Level 4 conditions – what you need to know**

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Wairarapa people wanting Covid-19 vaccinations are going to need to be a bit forgiving for a short time, while we reduce our booked appointments by half in order to meet Alert Level 4 physical distancing requirements.

On Tuesday, we were celebrating being at the top of New Zealand's vaccination ladder, with 54% of our target population having had at least one dose. Now, we are having to defer people in order to maintain 2m distances, which is a hard pill to swallow but a really necessary one.

Vaccination is one of our best lines of defence against the virus but, at the same time, so is staying in our bubble. We want to do all we can to vaccinate Wairarapa as soon as we can, but we will do it safely. And, for now, that means cutting our numbers right back.

The booking system nationally has been overwhelmed and for whatever reason, some calls to New Zealand's national 0800 booking line has resulted in Wairarapa people being booked into Wellington clinics. It's important for our community to know they will be vaccinated here, and not to try to travel elsewhere to be vaccinated.

The best way to book vaccinations right now is online at [www.BookMyVaccine.nz](http://www.BookMyVaccine.nz)

People are walking in to the Masterton and Featherston vaccination clinics without appointments, or to honour their previous booking that may have been deferred to allow for Level 4 distancing, and that's OK – as long as they are prepared for a wait.

Our vaccination staff will do all they can to vaccinate everyone. That is our absolute goal. However, people need to understand we will be vigilant with Level 4 requirements. We have to space people out and that means less people in the building at any one time.

We will work as fast as we can, but waits are inevitable. The big thing we are doing right now is looking at alternative ways to deliver vaccination to increase our capacity, and we will get that information out as soon as we can.

In the meantime, please – in the words of our Prime Minister, be kind. Our staff are doing a great job. They deserve thanks and accolades, and not aggression and abuse.

ENDS

#### **For more information:**

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