

# COVID-19: Alert Level 4 – Guidance for Well Child Tamariki Ora providers

18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

New Zealand has returned to COVID-19 Alert Level 4. This advice for Well Child Tamariki Ora providers is immediately active, and will be updated with any further alert level adjustment or prolongation.

The objectives of this updated guidance are to:

- Refresh advice for WCTO service delivery in Alert Level 4
- Minimise possibility of community spread of COVID-19 to protect whānau
- Maintain the safety of the clinical workforce.

Main points

1. WCTO Services are expected to continue universal early non-face-to-face contacts (phone, telehealth) for all whānau with new babies. **Face-to-face WCTO visits are delayed during Alert Level 4.**
2. Prioritise ongoing contacts by phone or other alternative non-face-to-face communications, based on the following criteria for whānau with infants aged between birth and 3 months who are:
  - Māori and/or Pacific
  - first time parents
  - living in areas of high deprivation
  - any whānau where the LMC or WCTO nurse has assessed high long-term need or risk to child health and wellbeing outcomes.
3. When a whānau is concerned about the wellbeing of their infant, they should be supported to access:
  - PlunketLine on 0800 933 922
  - Healthline 0800 611 116
  - local medical clinic or,
  - local hospital emergency care department to arrange timely clinical review even during Alert Level 4 (eg concern about a respiratory infection, or weight gain), and be encouraged to not delay unnecessarily.
4. Clinical examination of the infant remains as an essential clinical service for newborns after birth (LMCs).
5. Whānau should be supported to liaise with their local medical clinic regarding timing of the six-week immunisation and baby check. Other clinical in person assessments are deferred during alert level 4 period.
6. Timely completion of tamariki immunisations is a priority. This is particularly important for any already late, and also if the lockdown at level 4 is prolonged beyond a week. LMCs and WCTO providers are responsible for encouraging whānau to attend general practice for all scheduled immunisations. Immunisation rates, particularly for pēpi Māori, have been negatively affected during

the COVID-19 period. Whānau may require support through navigation (navigator, kaiāwhina or WCTO nurse as facilitator) to enable them to attend for immunisation.

7. Before School Checks (B4SCs) and Vision Hearing Test (VHT) screening should be deferred during Level 4 Covid-19.
8. SUDI prevention and the distribution of infant safe sleep beds remains a priority. If whānau require a safe sleep bed or you need further information, please contact your local SUDI Coordinator or Hāpai te Hauora 027 601 3997.

## Key contacts and related website advice

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Unite against COVID-19 website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/alert-level-4/>