

# Briefing

## Cabinet paper lodgement: Update on the COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy and Programme

**Date due to MO:** 25 November 2020      **Action required by:** 25 November 2020

**Security level:** IN CONFIDENCE      **Health Report number:** 20202100

**To:** Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of COVID-19 Response  
 Hon Andrew Little, Minister of Health  
 Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall, Associate Minister of Health

**Copy to:** Hon Peeni Henare, Associate Minister of Health  
 Hon Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Health

### Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr Ashley Bloomfield	Director-General of Health	9(2)(a)
Maree Roberts	Deputy Director-General, System Strategy and Policy	9(2)(a)

### Minister's office to complete:

- |   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Approved             | <input type="checkbox"/> Decline   | <input type="checkbox"/> Noted               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs change         | <input type="checkbox"/> Seen      | <input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's Notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn |  |

Comment:



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**To:** Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of COVID-19 Response  
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## Purpose of report

1. This report seeks your agreement to lodge the attached final Cabinet paper *Update on COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy and Programme* by 10am on 26 November 2020 for the Cabinet Business Committee (CBC) meeting on 2 December 2020.

## Background

2. You have previously received draft versions of the Cabinet paper, most recently on 19 November 2020 to provide for Ministerial consultation [HR 20201926 and HR 20202049 refers].
3. The intention is for Cabinet to consider the attached Cabinet paper *Update on COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy and Programme* alongside the following two related Cabinet papers:
  - *COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy: Update on vaccine purchasing*, and
  - *Support for Pacific and Global Vaccine Access and Roll-out* (led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs).
4. All three Cabinet papers will be considered together because COVID-19 vaccine purchasing and the Immunisation Strategy and Programme are interconnected workstreams with shared priorities and draw upon funding from the same tagged contingency; while supporting Pacific access to a COVID-19 vaccine and Pacific immunisation efforts are key objectives of the Vaccine Strategy. Together, these papers represent officials' efforts in understanding, quantifying and responding appropriately to the variety of risks and benefits associated with accessing and distributing a safe, effective vaccine for COVID-19 as soon as possible.
5. The attached Cabinet paper outlines the progress on New Zealand's strategy for COVID-19 immunisation; and gives assurance that we can successfully deliver the largest immunisation programme in New Zealand to date, learning from previous immunisation experience.

## Cabinet paper: *Support for Pacific and Global Vaccine Access and Roll-out*

6. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) is currently preparing the Cabinet paper *Support for Pacific and Global Vaccine Access and Roll-out*. This paper seeks agreement for funding to support the Pacific (in particular our six Polynesian Health Corridors partners Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Sāmoa, Tonga and Tuvalu) with access and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine consistent with maintaining our regional partnerships and strong ties with Pacific communities.
7. The Ministry of Health supports the Cabinet paper prepared by MFAT and has provided feedback on it. As a result of the MFAT Cabinet paper, we have removed some content about immunisation in the Pacific from the *Update on COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy and Programme* Cabinet paper, and have added paragraphs 22, 59 and 61, to avoid content duplication and support alignment between with the two Cabinet papers.

### Other updates to attached Cabinet paper

8. We have also updated the attached Cabinet paper following Ministerial consultation, which include the following outlined below:

#### *Responding to Ministerial feedback*

- In response to feedback from the Office of Hon Dr Megan Woods, at Appendix Four, we have included paragraph 7 around managing public expectations on COVID-19 vaccine access through the communications and engagement strategy.
- In response to feedback from the Minister of Health, inclusion of recommendation 14, which clarifies that the current costings assume that COVID-19 immunisation would be free to the New Zealand population.

#### *Minor and technical changes*

- Incorporating further suggestions from the Ministry for Pacific Peoples on leveraging trusted community leaders and providing a diverse and culturally capable workforce to the risk mitigations for *Public perceptions of the vaccine and Workforce* at the table under paragraph 67.
- Updated the costings presented at the table *Estimated costs for the Vaccine Purchasing and Immunisation Programme* under paragraph 71 in the Financial Implications section to reflect the updated vaccine purchasing costings.
- Minor wording and editing changes to improve clarity.

### Next steps

9. If you authorise the attached final Cabinet paper for lodgement, we suggest the Office of Hon Andrew Little coordinates lodging before 10am on 26 November 2020. We will provide you a separate memorandum with suggested talking points to assist you at the CBC meeting. The table below summarises the next steps for the Cabinet paper:

Thursday 26 November (by 10am)	The Cabinet paper is lodged
Wednesday 2 December	CBC meeting
Monday 7 December	Cabinet

## Recommendations

We recommend you:

Hon Chris Hipkins	Hon Andrew Little	Hon Ayesha Verrall
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- a) **Agree** to authorise the lodgement of the attached final Cabinet paper on 26 November 2020 by 10am for consideration at the Cabinet Business Committee meeting on 2 December 2020.

<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
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- b) **Note** the Office of Hon Andrew Little will lodge the attached final Cabinet paper on behalf of all Health Ministers.

<b>Noted</b>	<b>Noted</b>	<b>Noted</b>
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Dr Ashley Bloomfield  
**Director-General of Health**

Date: 24/11/2020

Hon Chris Hipkins  
**Minister for COVID-19 Response**

Date:

Hon Andrew Little  
**Minister of Health**

Date:

  
Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall  
**Associate Minister of Health**

Date: