

31 May 2024

The Immunisation Governance Secretariat

Sent via email to: [immsgovsec@health.govt.nz](mailto:immsgovsec@health.govt.nz)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Targeted consultation - Strategic approach to immunisation in New Zealand**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the above strategic approach.

The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand (Inc.) (the Guild) is a national membership organisation representing the majority of community pharmacy owners. We provide leadership on all issues affecting the sector and advocate for the business and professional interests of community pharmacy.

**Guiding Principles**

**Question 1: Are the principles we have identified the right ones to guide our actions in the immunisation system?**

The identified principles are comprehensive and well-aligned with the goals of creating an effective and equitable immunisation system for all people across the motu. Overall, these principles collectively cover critical key aspects that are necessary for a robust immunisation system that will enable whānau to achieve pae ora through immunisation. They address access, collaboration, quality, prevention, and accountability, along with continuous review of progress, which are all key to achieving comprehensive and effective healthcare.

**Question 2: Are there any others (principles) that should also be included?**

While the existing principles are robust, a few additional principles could enhance the framework:

**1. Innovation and creativity:**

- Description: Encourages the creation and adoption of new innovative technologies and methods to improve immunisation delivery, monitoring, and health outcomes.
- Rationale: The healthcare landscape is constantly evolving and embracing innovation and creative ways of delivery and access to immunisations can lead to more efficient and effective immunisation strategies.

**2. Sustainability:**

- Description: Focuses on creating immunisation programmes and a strong vaccinator workforce that are sustainable in the long term, both financially and environmentally.
- Rationale: Sustainable practices ensure that immunisation programs can continue to operate efficiently and effectively without exhausting resources, both in terms of workforce and supply chain.

### **3. Cultural competence:**

- Description: Ensures that immunisation services are culturally and socially sensitive and appropriate, respecting the diverse backgrounds of the population.
- Rationale: Cultural competence enhances trust and uptake of immunisation services, particularly in diverse communities.

### **4. Community engagement:**

- Description: Actively involve communities in the planning, co-creation, and implementation of immunisation programmes, especially in disadvantaged populations.
- Rationale: Engaging communities and traditional partners with shared responsibility and partnership can lead to better understanding, acceptance, and participation in immunisation efforts and overcome vaccine hesitancy and misinformation.

### **5. Resilience:**

- Description: Focuses on building systems that can withstand, are flexible and can adapt to public health emergencies and challenges.
- Rationale: Resilient systems are better equipped to manage unexpected outbreaks or disruptions, ensuring continuity of immunisation services.

Considering these additional principles, could help the immunisation system become more adaptive, sustainable, and inclusive, which will lead to improved coverage, better health outcomes and greater public trust.

## **Strategic Priority Areas**

### **Question 1: Do you think the strategic priorities identified will enable us to achieve our vision for the immunisation system?**

The strategic priorities identified seem well-aligned with achieving a comprehensive and effective immunisation system that will be equitable and meet the needs of all whanau throughout the motu.

#### **1. Access:**

- Impact: High, as accessibility to immunisations across the life course where and when a person needs it is a fundamental right to health and determinant of immunisation uptake.

#### **2. Trust & Confidence:**

- Impact: High, as trust influences a person's willingness to get themselves and other whanau vaccinated and reduces the potential of vaccine hesitancy and misinformation.

#### **3. Effective Delivery:**

- Impact: High, as tailored and equitable delivery methods that are flexible and adaptable can address specific community needs and preferences and will have the ability to rapidly respond to other pandemic situations.

#### 4. **System Capability:**

- Impact: High, as system capability that is fully integrated, resilient, and efficient underpins all other priorities.

### **Question 2: Do you see the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi expressed or enabled by these strategic priorities?**

Yes, the strategic priorities seem to reflect and enable the principles of the Treaty.

#### 1. **Partnership:**

- Enabled by: The priority of effective delivery, which promotes locally-led and whānau-centric approaches, aligns with the principle of partnership by involving Māori communities in the governance, co-design, delivery, and monitoring of immunisation services to achieve equitable immunisation outcomes for Māori.

#### 2. **Participation:**

- Enabled by: The priority of access ensures that all whānau can exercise self-determination and can access a full range of options so they can choose the immunisation service that best fits their needs. Effective delivery further supports participation by making services more accessible and relevant to Māori.

#### 3. **Active protection:**

- Enabled by: The priority of trust and confidence aims to ensure that information is accurate, easily accessible and communicated in a clear and culturally safe manner and enabling positive peer influence to protect the health of whānau by promoting confidence in a vaccination system. System capability ensures that the immunisation system is resilient, scalable and has high standards of oversight that can protect the health of the population.

#### 4. **Options:**

- Enabled by: The priority of effective delivery aims to ensure that delivery of context-specific immunisation services in ways that are practical for, and meet the needs of, whānau, are developed and anchored in te ao Māori and shaped by whanaugatanga to provide an equitable and successful immunisation system which recognises and supports the expression of hauora Māori models of care.

### **Question 3: Which areas will have the biggest impact on improving equity for you?**

The areas with the biggest impact on improving equity are:

#### 1. **Access:**

- By ensuring that all whānau can access readily available immunisation services across the life course, this priority directly addresses disparities in healthcare access. It removes barriers such as location, cost, transport, communication, and availability, which are often more pronounced in marginalised communities.

#### 2. **Effective Delivery:**

- A flexible, whānau-centric, and locally-led approach to immunisation delivery can significantly improve equity by tailoring services to meet the unique needs of diverse communities, including those traditionally underserved.

### **3. Trust & Confidence:**

- Building trust and confidence in vaccinations can help overcome vaccine hesitancy and misinformation, which is often higher in communities that have historically faced discrimination or poor healthcare experiences. This priority supports equity by fostering a sense of safety and reliability in the immunisation system and ensures there is enough time for whanaungatanga to address questions openly and honestly so that whānau have confidence in the immunisation processes.

**Question 4: What is already working well for you, your whānau and community that needs to continue or be supported or strengthened?**

#### **1. Community engagement initiatives:**

- Current success: Community engagement initiatives, including partnerships with local iwi, community leaders and local networks, have led to increases in immunisation uptake and addressing vaccine hesitancy.
- Support needed: Continued and increased support for these initiatives to build stronger community trust and tailored health messaging.

#### **2. Mobile immunisation clinics:**

- Current success: Mobile clinics that bring immunisation services directly to communities have improved access.
- Support needed: Expansion of these services, particularly in remote and underserved areas.

#### **3. Education and awareness campaigns:**

- Current success: Campaigns that have provided clear and culturally appropriate information about vaccines have assisted in the increase of vaccination uptake.
- Support needed: Ongoing and enhanced efforts to combat misinformation and educate the public about the benefits and safety of vaccines.

#### **4. Workforce capability and training:**

- Current success: The development of the Vaccinating Health Worker and opportunity for upskilling for vaccinators to provide a wider range of vaccines has enabled whanau to have timely access to vaccines where and when they choose to receive them.
- Support needed: Ongoing funding of workforce learning and development opportunities and expansion of the range of vaccines that various types of vaccinators can provide.

**Question 5: Does this help to address the low immunisation rates for priority populations?**

Yes, these strategic priorities have the potential to address low immunisation rates for priority populations ensuring they receive the necessary protection against preventable diseases.

The strategic approach to immunisation, as outlined by the guiding principles and strategic priority areas, is appropriate and well-suited to achieving a comprehensive, equitable, and effective immunisation system. The inclusion of community input and continuous monitoring further strengthens its potential for success.

Thank you for your consideration of our response. If you have any questions about our feedback, please contact our Senior Advisory Pharmacists, Martin Lowis ([martin@pgnz.org.nz](mailto:martin@pgnz.org.nz), 04 802 8218) or Cathy Martin ([cathy@pgnz.org.nz](mailto:cathy@pgnz.org.nz), 04 802 8214).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Rickman', with a stylized, flowing script.

**Nicole Rickman**

General Manager – Membership and Professional Services