



## BACKGROUND

1. This document outlines the policy of Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) regarding vaccinator authorisation in the Auckland region.
2. There are three mechanisms to legally administer vaccines:
  - a. A prescription for an individual written by an authorised or designated prescriber.
  - b. A standing order that authorises specified people to administer specified vaccines written by an authorised prescriber.
  - c. An authorised vaccinator who is authorised to independently administer vaccines that are part of an approved immunisation programme without a prescription.
3. Vaccinator authorisation is administered in accordance with the Medicines Regulations 1984, reg 44A. In summary:
  - a. The Medical Officer of Health (or the Director-General of Health) can authorise an individual to give vaccination without a prescription.
  - b. The vaccination must be for the purposes of an approved immunisation programme (defined as the National Immunisation Schedule or a programme approved by the Director-General or Medical Officer of Health).
  - c. Authorisation is based on a written application with documented evidence that the applicant:
    - i. Can carry out basic emergency techniques, including resuscitation and treatment of anaphylaxis
    - ii. Has knowledge of safe and effective handling of immunisation products and equipment
    - iii. Can demonstrate clinical interpersonal skills
    - iv. Has sufficient knowledge of the diseases and vaccines to ensure informed consent

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

4. The following health professionals are eligible to become authorised vaccinators in the Auckland region:
  - a. Registered nurses and nurse practitioners with a current annual practising certificate with the Nursing Council of New Zealand
  - b. Enrolled nurses with a current annual practising certificate with the Nursing Council of New Zealand
  - c. Registered midwives with a current annual practising certificate from the Midwifery Council of New Zealand
  - d. Registered paramedics with a current annual practicing certificate from the Paramedic Council of New Zealand

- e. Registered pharmacists with a current annual practising certificate with the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand
  - i. Note: Pharmacists can administer a specified group of vaccines (mostly for adults, plus MMR and COVID vaccination for children), as part of their scope of practice, set out in Appendix 4 of the *Immunisation Handbook*. Vaccinator training required is similar to Authorised Vaccinators. This process is not managed by Public Health Units.
5. Other health professionals may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

6. The following documentation may be required as part of vaccinator authorisation applications in the Auckland region:
  - a. Annual practising certificate (APC)
  - b. Cardiopulmonary (CPR) certificate
  - c. Vaccinator foundation course (VFC)
  - d. Vaccinator update course
  - e. Clinical assessment
  - f. Peer-reviewed self-assessment
7. Annual practicing certificates issued by the relevant registration authority (e.g. the Nursing Council of New Zealand) must be current.
8. Cardiopulmonary certificates must be completed within the last 2 years. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their resuscitation skills comply with the “Resuscitation requirements for all authorised vaccinators” stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*.
9. Vaccinator foundation courses must comply with the requirements stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*.
10. Vaccinator update course must comply with the requirements stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*.
11. Clinical assessments must comply with the requirements stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*. In the Auckland region, each clinical assessor must be approved by the ARPHS Medical Officer of Health, which is based on an endorsement from IMAC.
12. Peer reviewed self-assessments are required when applying to renew authorisation in the Auckland region. The assessment must be completed using the ARPHS peer reviewed self-assessment form. The peer reviewer must be a currently authorised vaccinator who has observed the applicant providing vaccinations within the last 2 years. This assessment replaces the requirement for applicants to submit a summary of their immunisation practice over the last 12 months as stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*.

## APPLICANT CATEGORIES

13. The following applicant categories are used for administrative purposes in the Auckland region:
  - a. Initial applicants
  - b. Delayed applicants
  - c. Renewal applicants
  - d. Lapsed applicants
  - e. Transfer applicants

14. Initial applicants have never been previously authorised and completed a VFC less than 12 months prior to application. They must submit a completed ARPHS application form with the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); VFC certificate; and clinical assessment (within 12 months of VFC).
15. Delayed applicants have never been previously authorised and completed a VFC more than 12 months prior to application. If delayed applicants completed their VFC *between 12 months and 5 years* prior to application, they must submit a completed ARPHS application form with the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); VFC certificate; repeat clinical assessment (within last 3 months); and all vaccinator update course certificates since VFC.
16. If delayed applicants completed their VFC *more than 5 years* prior to application, they must submit a completed ARPHS application form with the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); repeat VFC certificate; and repeat clinical assessment (within 12 months of VFC). Note: these are the same requirements as for initial applicants.
17. Renewal applicants are *currently* authorised in the Auckland region and are reapplying to continue their authorisation. They must submit a completed ARPHS application form with the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); vaccinator update course certificate (within last 2 years); and completed ARPHS peer reviewed self-assessment form. Important note: renewal applicants must apply at least 4 weeks prior to their current authorisation expiry date to ensure continuity of authorisation.
18. Lapsed applicants were previously authorised in the Auckland region but their authorisation expired. If lapsed applicants had previous authorisation that expired *less than 6 months* prior to application, they must submit a completed ARPHS application form and the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); vaccinator update course certificate (within last 2 years); and completed ARPHS peer reviewed self-assessment form. Note: these are the same requirements as for renewal applicants.
19. If lapsed applicants had previous authorisation that expired *between 6 months and 5 years* prior to application, they must submit a completed ARPHS application form and the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); all VFC and vaccinator update course certificates since last authorisation; and repeat clinical assessment (within last 3 months).
20. If lapsed applicants had previous authorisation that expired *more than 5 years* prior to application, they must submit a completed ARPHS application form and the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); repeat VFC certificate; and repeat clinical assessment (within 12 months of VFC). Note: these are the same requirements as for initial applicants.
21. Transfer applicants are currently authorised or were previously authorised in another region in New Zealand and are now applying for authorisation in the Auckland region. They must submit a completed ARPHS application form and the following documentation: current APC; CPR certificate (within last 2 years); last authorisation certificate for other region; all available previous VFC and vaccinator update course certificates; and last available clinical assessment.

22. The ARPHS Medical Officer of Health may request additional evidence, training or assessment from any applicant as considered necessary.

## TYPES OF AUTHORISATION

23. The following types of authorisation are granted in the Auckland region:
- a. General authorisation
  - b. Age-restricted (3 years and older) authorisation
  - c. Limited vaccine authorisation
24. General authorisation allows vaccinators to independently administer vaccines to all age groups as part of an approved immunisation programme. Important note: general authorisation is only granted to applicants who have completed a clinical assessment with at least one infant aged under 2 years.
25. Age-restricted authorisation allows vaccinators to independently administer vaccines to individuals aged 3 years or older as part of an approved immunisation programme.
26. Limited vaccine authorisation allows vaccinators to independently administer specified vaccines as part of an approved immunisation programme.
27. The type of authorisation is stated on the ARPHS vaccinator authorisation certificate.
28. Authorised vaccinators who wish to change their authorisation type may apply to the Medical Officer of Health for consideration.

## DURATION OF AUTHORISATION

29. Vaccinator authorisation is valid for a maximum period of 2 years.
30. The expiry date is stated on the ARPHS vaccinator authorisation certificate and is calculated 2 years from the date of the most recent VFC or vaccinator update course attended.
31. For successful transfer applicants, the expiry date will either be the same as their existing authorisation for the other region, or 2 years from the date of the most recent VFC or vaccinator update course attended.

## APPROVED IMMUNISATION PROGRAMMES

32. Authorised vaccinators can only independently administer vaccines that are part of an approved immunisation programme.
33. Approved immunisation programmes can either be national immunisation programmes delivered throughout New Zealand, approved by the Ministry of Health, or local immunisation programmes delivered in a specific region, approved by the local Medical Officer of Health.
34. All publically funded vaccines in the National Immunisation Schedule are part of an approved national immunisation programme.
35. Local immunisation programmes delivered in the Auckland region must have prior approval from the ARPHS Medical Officer of Health. Local immunisation programme approval can be obtained by submitting a completed ARPHS application form with supplementary documentation.
36. Travel vaccines cannot be included in any local immunisation programmes.

## CONDITIONS OF VACCINATOR AUTHORISATION

37. Authorised vaccinators must comply with the “Immunisation standards for vaccinators” stated in the Ministry of Health *Immunisation Handbook*.
38. Authorisation is limited to the type of authorisation stated on the certificate issued (i.e. general authorisation, age-restricted authorisation, or limited vaccine authorisation).

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

39. Vaccinator authorisation applications that are complete and do not require additional communication with the applicant will be processed within 4 weeks.
40. Vaccinator authorisation is not transferable.
41. Vaccinator authorisation may be withdrawn at any time before its expiry if the specified conditions are not met.
42. Authorised vaccinators must renew their authorisation before the expiry date on the certificate issued if they intend to continuously practice as an authorised vaccinator.
43. Vaccinator authorisation does not override a health practitioner's responsibility to adhere to the requirements of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, particularly with regard to the requirement to practise within his or her scope of practice.
44. Administration of vaccines without vaccinator authorisation, prescription, standing order or other statutory permission is a breach of the Medicines Act 1981.

## CONTACT

45. Applications can be submitted to ARPHS using the following methods:
  - a. Email [vaccinator@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:vaccinator@adhb.govt.nz)
  - b. Post  
Vaccinator Authorisation  
Auckland Regional Public Health Service  
Private Bag 92 605  
Auckland 1149
46. All queries should be directed to [vaccinator@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:vaccinator@adhb.govt.nz) or (09) 623 4600 ext. 27091.