

Media Release

COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Update

5 May 2021

The Secretary of Health – Bob Williams – has confirmed that Te Marae Ora staff are holding internal briefings in readiness for the border opening on Mon 17 May (NZT) and the vaccination roll-out to commence this month. Finishing touches to the plan to vaccinate all Cook Islands eligible residents over the age of 16 are complete.

“The vaccine will be free, and it is the Pfizer vaccine being made available by New Zealand ‘The Pfizer vaccine has been shown to be around 95% effective at preventing you from getting seriously ill if you catch COVID-19, once you’ve received both doses of the vaccine.’.” At 5 May, a total of 217,603 people in New Zealand have received a Pfizer vaccine, with over 87,000 people having fully completed their vaccination with a second dose..

“Once again we owe thanks to our New Zealand friends not just for this life saving vaccine, but for the help and protection we have been afforded by the actions taken by New Zealand to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in New Zealand; and therefore providing a buffer for us too.”

As part of the Cook Islands vaccine deployment plan, from May 10 most of the TMO puna clinics will close for about 10 weeks, through until the end of June, to allow nurses and puna staff to be mobilised to help facilitate the vaccine roll out and maintain normal services up at the main hospital and at the Tupapa Out Patient as well as Public Health services.

The two puna clinics that will remain open to the public are:

- I. Tupapa Clinic for dressings only; and
- II. Nikao Clinic – normal clinic services

However, people who require medical attention are encouraged to go to the Tupapa Out Patient and Emergency Department (Tupapa OPED) from Monday 10 May 2021 until further notice if you’re ill and need medical attention. Anyone with cold, flu or COVID-19 symptoms, is encouraged to call 20065 or 20066 for medical advice before going to Tupapa OPED.

Te Marae Ora will provide a further update on the vaccination roll-out program for the whole of the Cook Islands once both Governments have made a public announcement in the next week or so on when the Cook Islands will receive the vaccine from New Zealand.

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For up to date information visit www.health.gov.ck or www.covid19.gov.ck