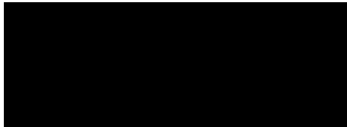





133 Molesworth Street
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
T+64 4 496 2000

11 May 2023



Ref: H2023022120

Tēnā koe 

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request to Manatū Hauora (the Ministry of Health) on 17 March 2023, following up from your previous request (H2023020435 refers). You requested:


1. *all emails from or between members of CV TAG on 12 August 2021 (as referred to in their memo dated 13 August).*
2. *the CV TAG memorandum dated 13 August 2021.*

Manatū Hauora has identified two documents within scope of your request. Both documents are itemised in Appendix 1 and copies of the documents are enclosed. Where information is withheld under section 9 of the Act, I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests.

Nāku noa, nā



Louise Karageorge
Group Manager, Intelligence, Surveillance and Knowledge
Public Health Agency | Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui

Appendix 1: List of documents for release

| # | Date | Document details | Decision on release |
|---|----------------|---|--|
| 1 | 13 August 2021 | COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV-TAG) email correspondence | Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons. |
| 2 | | Memo: Extending age groups who can receive COVID-19 vaccine | Released in full. |

Please refer to the original email for remainder of the chain.

From: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 8:25 am
To: Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH); Ian Town
Cc: Edwin Reynolds; 'Ian Frazer'; James Ussher; 'Nikki Moreland'; Nikki Turner; 'Sean Hanna'; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield; Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott; 'Helen Petousis-Harris'; Peter McIntyre
Subject: RE: Confidential

Kia ora koutou

I also agree with these comments, including the service delivery issues.

Ngā mihi
David



Professor David Murdoch

Dean and Head of Campus | *Ahorei, Manukura, Tumuaki Paenga*

University of Otago, Christchurch | *Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtāgo ki Ōtautahi*
PO Box 4345, Christchurch 8140
New Zealand | *Aotearoa*
Tel: +64 3 364 0522

From: Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH) <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 8:08 am
To: 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; 'Edwin Reynolds' <edwin.reynolds@health.govt.nz>; 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; James Ussher <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>; 'Nikki Moreland' <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>; Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>; 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>; Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz; 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; 'Juliet Rumball-Smith' <juliet.rumball-smith@health.govt.nz>; 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>; 'Helen Petousis-Harris' <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>
Subject: RE: Confidential

Morena tatou,

Even though I may have seemed a bit reluctant about vaccinating children against COVID-19, the 12 -15 year age group does seem an easy one to vaccinate to help overall numbers, especially if this can be done as part of whanau groups. As Peter says, the vaccination of younger children is a very different equation, but we do not need to address that yet.

My main concern is capacity: national immunisation schedule coverage rates are falling, including the HPV school based programme. In addition the focus on COVID-19 vaccination must be contributing to the very poor uptake of the measles catch-up for 16-30 year olds. We are sitting on a time bomb there – as we open the borders the risk of further introduction of measles will increase and we will still have a susceptible population.

Perhaps one way to mitigate against overwhelming the vaccinating capacity would be to offer only one dose (for now) to this age group?

From: Sean Hanna <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 9:55 am
To: Ian Town; David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson; Helen Petousis-Harris; Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Peter McIntyre; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott
Subject: Re: Confidential

Kia ora anō tātou

Support what's been said.

Just a word of caution about the 12-15yo roll-out (and the COVID19 vaccine campaign in general) is that it should not impact on our HPV programme in schools (eg missed HPV doses because vaccinators are being pulled into giving COVID jabs, or COVID jabs being given instead of the school based HPV programme). This was raised as a concern at Tuesday's Immunisation (PTAC) meeting at Pharmac.

Ngā mihi

Sean

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From: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, August 12, 2021 9:11 PM
To: David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson; Helen Petousis-Harris; Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Peter McIntyre; Sean Hanna; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott
Subject: Confidential

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

Kia ora tatou

I expect you will have caught up with the major announcements today by the Prime Minister on a range of COVID issues.

Can I thank you all for the work you have undertaken in providing scientific and clinical advice through CV TAG. The Prime Minister acknowledged this in several places during her address today.

The revised collateral relating to the Elimination Strategy and Reconnecting NZ has been loaded onto the relevant websites:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/latest-updates/government-sets-out-plan-to-reconnect-new-zealanders-to-the-world/>

To our specific advisory role:

1. Our advice on myocarditis was accepted by the Director-General and communicated in detail to the Vaccine Ministers Group. This informed the decision announced today to extend the dose interval to at least 6 weeks.
2. Our advice on the use of the Pfizer vaccine in 12-15 year olds has also been considered by the Director-General and will be further considered by Cabinet on Monday after discussion at our regular Vaccine Ministers zoom meeting tomorrow afternoon (Friday 13th). In the light of the decision announced today about the opening of the vaccine booking system to those over 16 from 1 September, Ashley and I have been thinking that it would be sensible to recommend actioning the Medsafe approval for the younger age

Document 1

group from that date as well. This would embrace our advice around encouraging whanau groups to attend together with parents/whanau bringing family members with them.

Our advice to delay a decision is this being reconsidered in the light of these factors and noting that in Australia and elsewhere much younger people are being adversely affected by COVID-19. Our sense is that swings the balance towards vaccinating this group from 1 September.

Can you provide you feedback tomorrow morning by email noting that Ashley is copied in to this email and will see all your replies

Ministry staff need not respond thank you.

CVTAG colleagues are also welcome to call me direct tomorrow morning if preferred.

Thank you

Dr Ian Town (he/him)

Chief Science Advisor | Ministry of Health | Mob: S9(2)(a)



*For appointments and meeting arrangements please contact:
Janice Tomlin: Janice.Tomlin@health.govt.nz | Cell: S9(2)(a)*

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This e-mail message has been scanned for Viruses and Content and cleared by the Ministry of Health's Content and Virus Filtering Gateway

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982

From: Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 10:02 am
To: Sean Hanna; Ian Town; David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson; Helen Petousis-Harris; Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott
Subject: Re: Confidential

Good point Sean, also mentioned by Liz - was one of the considerations of the UK's JCVI re vaccination for this age group there. Clearly if COVID-19 was to be added to school-based programmes, commensurate resources would be needed, although perhaps the argument could be made to stagger them through the year

Peter



Peter McIntyre | AO, PhD, FRACP, FAFPHM
Professor

Womens and Childrens Health
University of Otago | Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtāgo
Tel/Waea +64 470 9541 | Mobile/Waea pūkoro S9(2)(a)

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5808-7450>

From: Sean Hanna <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, August 13, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>; David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; Edwin Reynolds <Edwin.Reynolds@health.govt.nz>; Elizabeth Wilson <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>; Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Ian Frazer <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; James Ussher <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>; Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>; Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>; Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; Caroline McElnay <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; Fiona Callaghan <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>; Niki Stefanogiannis <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; Pippa Scott <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Confidential

Kia ora anō tātou

Support what's been said.

Just a word of caution about the 12-15yo roll-out (and the COVID19 vaccine campaign in general) is that it should not impact on our HPV programme in schools (eg missed HPV doses because vaccinators are being pulled into giving COVID jabs, or COVID jabs being given instead of the school based HPV programme). This was raised as a concern at Tuesday's Immunisation (PTAC) meeting at Pharmac.

Ngā mihi

Sean

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Document 1

From: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Thursday, August 12, 2021 9:11 PM

To: David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson; Helen Petousis-Harris; Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Peter McIntyre; Sean Hanna; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield

Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott

Subject: Confidential

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

Kia ora tatou

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Our advice to delay a decision is this being reconsidered in the light of these factors and noting that in Australia and elsewhere much younger people are being adversely affected by COVID-19. Our sense is that swings the balance towards vaccinating this group from 1 September.

Can you provide you feedback tomorrow morning by email noting that Ashley is copied in to this email and will see all your replies

Ministry staff need not respond thank you.

CVTAG colleagues are also welcome to call me direct tomorrow morning if preferred.

Thank you

Dr Ian Town (he/him)

Chief Science Advisor | Ministry of Health | Mob: S9(2)(a)



*For appointments and meeting arrangements please contact:
Janice Tomlin: Janice.Tomlin@health.govt.nz | Cell: S9(2)(a)*

From: Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 10:05 am
To: Ian Town; David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson; Helen Petousis-Harris; Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Peter McIntyre; Sean Hanna; Sue Crengle; Ashley Bloomfield
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott
Subject: Re: Confidential

Hi Ian

I have always supported vaccinating young people 12-15 - I just don't think they are a priority and any emphasis on getting them vaccinated seems to take the focus off the older folk who need protection more. It is my view that the risk to teenagers from CoVID infection is constantly overstated.

I also support what others have said about protecting our routine immunisation services which are not going well at present. I don't think there is any justification for using a school-based programme to deliver CoVID vaccines if it means we lose capacity for our HPV service delivery.

Cheers

Tony

Dr Tony Walls MB ChB, FRACP, MD (Lond.)
Paediatric Infectious Diseases
Associate Professor and Head of Department
Dept. of Paediatrics, University of Otago, Christchurch
PO Box 4345, Christchurch 8140
New Zealand
Phone: +64 3 3726718
tony.walls@otago.ac.nz

From: Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Sent: 12 August 2021 9:11 PM
To: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; Edwin Reynolds <Edwin.Reynolds@health.govt.nz>; Elizabeth Wilson <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>; Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Ian Frazer <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; James Ussher <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>; Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>; Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>; Sean Hanna <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>; Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>
Cc: Andi Shirtcliffe <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; Caroline McElnay <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; Fiona Callaghan <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>; Niki Stefanogiannis <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; Pippa Scott <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>
Subject: Confidential

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

Kia ora tatou

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Can you provide you feedback tomorrow morning by email noting that Ashley is copied in to this email and will see all your replies

Ministry staff need not respond thank you.

CVTAG colleagues are also welcome to call me direct tomorrow morning if preferred.

Thank you

Dr Ian Town (he/him)
Chief Science Advisor | Ministry of Health | Mob: S9(2)(a)



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Janice Tomlin: Janice.Tomlin@health.govt.nz | Cell: S9(2)(a)

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Please refer to the original email for remainder of the chain.

From: Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 10:14 am
To: Nikki Turner; Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH); Ian Town
Cc: David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; 'Ian Frazer'; 'James Ussher'; 'Sean Hanna'; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield; Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott; Helen Petousis-Harris; Peter McIntyre
Subject: Re: Confidential

I also support vaccination in 12-15 year olds based on international data showing this age group is increasing being affected by Delta.

As James highlighted there are also potential benefits for the education and high schools. School closures in the Northern hemisphere when cases are identified looks like it will become increasingly disruptive for the education system.

I very much appreciate the service delivery issues and concerns re myocarditis.

But no other country that I'm aware of (possible I've missed something?) has recommended only one dose of Pfizer in this age group.

Would the suggestion be one dose for now and another later once more safety data are available?

From an immunology perspective, while 1 dose does look to be effective in the short term in young people, its likely that the boost in immune response from a 2nd dose would significantly improve protection in the longer term. So need to factor that in from a community immunity perspective.

Ngā mihi,
Nikki M

From: Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>
Date: Friday, 13 August 2021 at 9:01 AM
To: "Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH)" <elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>, 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>, Edwin Reynolds <edwin.reynolds@health.govt.nz>, 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>, 'James Ussher' <james.ussner@otago.ac.nz>, Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>, 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>, Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>, Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>, "'ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz'" <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>, 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>, 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>, 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>, Juliet Rumball-Smith <juliet.rumball-smith@health.govt.nz>, 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>, 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>, Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>, Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>
Subject: RE: Confidential

A further point to note I would suggest that if we did consider recommending starting with a single dose at this point for this age group and postponing the decision on when to offer the second dose, we can say that for this age group a single dose is highly effective

From: Nikki Turner

Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 8:17 AM

To: Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH) <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>; 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; Edwin Reynolds <edwin.reynolds@health.govt.nz>; 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; 'James Ussher' <james.ussher@otago.ac.nz>; Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>;

'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>; Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; 'ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz' <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>; 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; Juliet Rumball-Smith <juliet.rumball-smith@health.govt.nz>; 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>; Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>

Subject: RE: Confidential

Hi all

I think there are separate issues here

1. Vaccinating 12 - 15 year olds to improve general vaccination coverage and particularly support equity issues for whānau delivery. While overall it makes very little gain on herd immunity there are slight gains and we are going to move this way eventually so I support this approach and I certainly support it from the ability to offer to all the family as an effective vaccination approach
2. Service delivery issues - we do not want to distract services from focusing on high coverage of older age groups. I would be concerned if we wanted to try and run school based delivery this year, that would be a big strain on the system so I wouldn't support that. I suspect we would want good school based delivery ??some time next year when we have licensed vaccines down to younger ages
3. The concern re myocarditis and second dose still remains unclear and I think this is still the major issue. This was our original concern and it still stands. -I would support recommending a single dose at this point for 12 -15 year olds at this point and review the decision re a second dose as the data comes in. I agree with Peter's points that the early data is looking pretty good to date for less myocarditis for a longer interval approach but we still really need to see data on this age group.

Ngā mihi

Nikki

Original email

From: Fiona Callaghan
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 11:11 am
To: Sue Crengle; Nikki Turner; Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH); Ian Town
Cc: David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; 'Ian Frazer'; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; 'Sean Hanna'; Tony Walls; Ashley Bloomfield; Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott; Helen Petousis-Harris; Matire Harwood; Peter McIntyre
Subject: RE: Confidential

Dear all

Thank you everyone for your prompt responses and feedback. I will incorporate the feedback as summary points for today, and then incorporate into a memo for review.

Ngā mihi,
Fiona

Fiona Callaghan, PhD (she/her)
Lead Science Advisor

COVID-19 Science and Insights | COVID-19 Health System Response | Ministry of Health - Manatū Hauora | New Zealand

<http://www.health.govt.nz>

Email: Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz

Cell: S9(2)(a)



From: Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>
Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 10:42 am
To: Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>; Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH) <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>; Ian Town <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; Edwin Reynolds <Edwin.Reynolds@health.govt.nz>; 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; James Ussher <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>; Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>; 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; Ashley Bloomfield <Ashley.Bloomfield@health.govt.nz>; Andi Shirtcliffe <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; Caroline McElnay <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; Fiona Callaghan <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>; Niki Stefanogiannis <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; Pippa Scott <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>; Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Matire Harwood <m.harwood@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>
Subject: Re: Confidential

Attached is the data on covid vax delivery.

From: Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>
Date: Friday, 13 August 2021 at 10:38 AM
To: Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>, "Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH)" <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>, 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>
Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>, Edwin Reynolds <Edwin.Reynolds@health.govt.nz>, 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>, James Ussher <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>, Nikki Moreland

Document 1

<n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>, 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>, Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>, "ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz" <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>, 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>, 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>, 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>, Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>, 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>, 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>, Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>, Matire Harwood <m.harwood@auckland.ac.nz>, Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>

Subject: Re: Confidential

Kia ora

Generally, I agree with the points raised.

I have a more nuanced view about vaccination of 12-15 y olds and related service delivery issues.

While I agree that this age group is a small proportion of the population, it is a greater proportion in Māori and Pacific communities so is going to have greater importance in achieving herd immunity in those populations. We should be thinking about vaccination coverage and herd immunity within population groups rather than as a total population which will inevitably mask inequities. There are existing inequities in covid vaccine delivery in the age groups below 55 years. see Table below. Note that we need at least equitable delivery of vaccine in all age groups including younger ones (for Māori and Pacific because we are vulnerable to covid at all ages - increased exposure risk, increased risk of infection if exposed, and increased risk of adverse outcomes).

There are existing inequities in delivery of HPV, MMR etc. The idea of 'protecting' services that are delivering inequitably makes me quite uncomfortable. My preference would be to find a way (providing alternative community based and outreach imms delivery by people/groups who know how to deliver equitably) to do both ie deliver covid and the other vaccines. If we don't do this you are going to end up with both inequities in covid once it gets into the community AND ongoing/recurrent inequities in Measles, HPV/cx cancer etc etc....

Sue

From: Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>

Date: Friday, 13 August 2021 at 8:16 AM

To: "Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH)" <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>, 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>, Edwin Reynolds <Edwin.Reynolds@health.govt.nz>, 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>, James Ussher <james.ussher@otago.ac.nz>, Nikki Moreland

<n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>, 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>, Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>, Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>, "ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz" <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>, 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>, 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>, 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>, Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>, 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>, 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>, Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>, Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>

<sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>, Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>, "ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz" <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>, 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>, 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>, 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>, Juliet Rumball-Smith <Juliet.Rumball-Smith@health.govt.nz>, 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>, 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>, Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>, Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>

Subject: RE: Confidential

Hi all

I think there are separate issues here

1. Vaccinating 12 - 15 year olds to improve general vaccination coverage and particularly support equity issues for whānau delivery. While overall it makes very little gain on herd immunity there are slight gains and we are going to move this way eventually so I support this approach and I certainly support it from the ability to offer to all the family as an effective vaccination approach
2. Service delivery issues - we do not want to distract services from focusing on high coverage of older age groups. I would be concerned if we wanted to try and run school based delivery this year, that would be a big strain on the system so I wouldn't support that. I suspect we would want good school based delivery ??some time next year when we have licensed vaccines down to younger ages
3. The concern re myocarditis and second dose still remains unclear and I think this is still the major issue. This was our original concern and it still stands. -I would support recommending a single dose at this point for

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12 -15 year olds at this point and review the decision re a second dose as the data comes in. I agree with Peter's points that the early data is looking pretty good to date for less myocarditis for a longer interval approach but we still really need to see data on this age group.

Ngā mihi
Nikki

From: Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH) <Elizabeth@adhb.govt.nz>

Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 8:08 AM

To: 'Ian Town' <Ian.Town@health.govt.nz>

Cc: David Murdoch <david.murdoch@otago.ac.nz>; Edwin Reynolds <edwin.reynolds@health.govt.nz>; 'Ian Frazer' <i.frazer@uq.edu.au>; 'James Ussher' <james.usscher@otago.ac.nz>; Nikki Moreland <n.moreland@auckland.ac.nz>; Nikki Turner <n.turner@auckland.ac.nz>; 'Sean Hanna' <sean.hanna@oratoa.co.nz>; Sue Crengle <sue.crengle@otago.ac.nz>; Tony Walls <tony.walls@otago.ac.nz>; 'ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz' <ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz>; 'Andi Shirtcliffe' <Andi.Shirtcliffe@health.govt.nz>; 'Caroline McElnay' <Caroline.McElnay@health.govt.nz>; 'Fiona Callaghan' <Fiona.Callaghan@health.govt.nz>; Juliet Rumball-Smith <juliet.rumball-smith@health.govt.nz>; 'Niki Stefanogiannis' <Niki.Stefanogiannis@health.govt.nz>; 'Pippa Scott' <Pippa.Scott@health.govt.nz>; Helen Petousis-Harris <h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>; Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz>

Subject: RE: Confidential

Morena tatou,

Even though I may have seemed a bit reluctant about vaccinating children against COVID-19, the 12 -15 year age group does seem an easy one to vaccinate to help overall numbers, especially if this can be done as part of whanau groups. As Peter says, the vaccination of younger children is a very different equation, but we do not need to address that yet.

My main concern is capacity: national immunisation schedule coverage rates are falling, including the HPV school based programme. In addition the focus on COVID-19 vaccination must be contributing to the very poor uptake of the measles catch-up for 16-30 year olds. We are sitting on a time bomb there – as we open the borders the risk of further introduction of measles will increase and we will still have a susceptible population.

Perhaps one way to mitigate against overwhelming the vaccinating capacity would be to offer only one dose (for now) to this age group?

I was very pleased to hear about the “normalising” of the moderately extended dosing interval, not just limiting that to under 30s.

Ngā mihi

Liz

From: Helen Petousis-Harris [<mailto:h.petousis-harris@auckland.ac.nz>]

Sent: Friday, 13 August 2021 7:50 a.m.

To: Peter McIntyre

Cc: Ian Town; David Murdoch; Edwin Reynolds; Elizabeth Wilson (ADHB)(SSH); Ian Frazer; James Ussher; Nikki Moreland; Nikki Turner; Sean Hanna; Sue Crengle; Tony Walls; ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz; Andi Shirtcliffe; Caroline McElnay; Fiona Callaghan; Juliet Rumball-Smith; Niki Stefanogiannis; Pippa Scott

Subject: Re: Confidential

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Support Peter's comments.

Also, while interesting and hopefully correct, I would suggest changing the wording about increasing spacing reduces risk for myocarditis to MIGHT until there is more empirical evidence. Or better, leave it until more certainty.

Kind regards
Helen

Sent from my iPhone

On 12/08/2021, at 11:20 PM, Peter McIntyre <peter.mcintyre@otago.ac.nz> wrote:

Kia ora Ian

I am inclined to agree that going down to 12 years is inevitable, primarily for whanau and school-related reasons rather than direct personal health benefits.

Was on a zoom call with Nikki Turner tonight regarding other research where Professor Liz Miller, a highly respected UK vaccine expert and epidemiologist who has strong family connections to Israel, stated that

1. UK not seeing myocarditis at level reported in US or Israel and
2. UK not seeing evidence of waning immunity in >60 years as reported in Israel.

Neither conclusive regarding longer inter-dose interval of course but encouraging that 6 weeks is moving in right direction. Also a Belgian epidemiologist on call who stated Belgium immunising 12-15 and no issues to date.

Once age considerations move below 10-12 years I think the calculus becomes much less clear, especially <5 years where emphasis really has to be on adult carers, trial results are not yet in and direct benefits to children who do not have substantial comorbidities appear minimal.

Peter

Sent from my iPhone

On 12 Aug 2021, at 21:11, Ian Town <ian.town@health.govt.nz> wrote:

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

Kia ora tatou

I expect you will have caught up with the major announcements today by the Prime Minister on a range of COVID issues.

Can I thank you all for the work you have undertaken in providing scientific and clinical advice through CV TAG. The Prime Minister acknowledged this in several places during her address today.

The revised collateral relating to the Elimination Strategy and Reconnecting NZ has been loaded onto the relevant websites:

<https://smex12-5-en-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=https%3a%2f%2fcovid19.govt.nz%2falert%2dlevels%2dand%2dupdates%2flatest%2dupdates%2fgovernment%2ds ets%2dout%2dplan%2dto%2dreconnect%2dnew%2dzealanders%2dto%2dthe%2dworld%2f&umid=f23408f9-a219-4e2d-9ce1-40c53b81457c&auth=33daf4ba0a26549707f81ea1cfa75d4b0b8ff8df-00124d32cd2517d80f4d7497f2608ded02a0b046>

To our specific advisory role:

1. Our advice on myocarditis was accepted by the Director-General and communicated in detail to the Vaccine Ministers Group. This informed the decision announced today to extend the dose interval to at least 6 weeks.
2. Our advice on the use of the Pfizer vaccine in 12-15 year olds has also been considered by the Director-General and will be further considered by Cabinet on Monday after discussion at our regular Vaccine Ministers zoom meeting tomorrow afternoon (Friday 13th). In the light of the decision announced today about the opening of the vaccine booking system to those over 16 from 1 September, Ashley and I have been thinking that it would be sensible to recommend actioning the Medsafe approval for the younger age group from that date as well. This would embrace our advice around encouraging whanau groups to attend together with parents/whanau bringing family members with them.

Our advice to delay a decision is this being reconsidered in the light of these factors and noting that in Australia and elsewhere much younger people are being adversely affected by COVID-19. Our sense is that swings the balance towards vaccinating this group from 1 September.

Can you provide you feedback tomorrow morning by email noting that Ashley is copied in to this email and will see all your replies

Ministry staff need not respond thank you.

CVTAG colleagues are also welcome to call me direct tomorrow morning if preferred.

Thank you

Dr Ian Town (he/him)
Chief Science Advisor | Ministry of Health | Mob: S9(2)(a)

<image001.jpg>

*For appointments and meeting arrangements please contact:
Janice Tomlin: Janice.Tomlin@health.govt.nz | Cell: S9(2)(a)*

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Memo

Extending age groups who can receive COVID-19 vaccine

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Date: | 13 August 2021 |
| To: | Dr Ashley Bloomfield, Director General of Health |
| Copy to: | |
| From: | Dr Ian Town, Chief Science Advisor, Ministry of Health |
| For your: | Action |

Purpose of the memo

1. This is a noting memo confirming support from the COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG) to extend the age of people who can receive the Pfizer-BioNTech comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine to 12 to 15 year-olds.

Background and context

2. CV TAG convened by email on 12 August to discuss extending eligibility for the vaccine.
3. There was agreement that children aged 12 to 15 years should be vaccinated.
4. Potential benefits include helping to provide equitable vaccination coverage in Māori and Pacific Peoples, as young people represent a greater proportion in these communities compared to the overall population, and given that Māori and Pacific Peoples are higher risk from COVID-19.
5. It was also noted that this would likely lead to a reduction on school closures and disruption in the education system.

Recommendations

It is recommended that you:

| | | | |
|----|------|--|--|
| 1. | Note | CV TAG supports extending the eligibility for the Pfizer-BioNTech comirnaty COVID-19 vaccine 12-15 year-olds | |
|----|------|--|--|

Signature 

Date: 13/08/2021

Dr Ashley Bloomfield
Director General of Health