

22 April 2020

To community allied health, scientific and technical providers,

Alert Level 3 for community allied health, scientific and technical sector

Thank you for all your hard work to slow the spread of COVID-19. I understand that it has been a difficult time for the allied health, scientific and technical sector. Many of you have had to move quickly to different ways of working such as virtual consultations, which is challenging for most of our professions.

As you will know, the country will move to Alert Level 3 at 11.59pm on Monday 27 April 2020. For the health and disability sector this will mean little change in the way we work. We must remain vigilant in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

This does not mean that you cannot practice and support your communities in a safe way. In Alert Level 3 the following guidance remains:

- Virtual appointments should be provided where possible and is the preferred method of service delivery. Face-to-face appointments may be provided for **urgent care only** so long as professionals can take appropriate measures to manage public health.

'Urgent care' for community allied health professionals is defined as:

- a condition which is life or limb threatening
- treatment required to maintain the basic necessities of life
- treatment that cannot be delayed or carried out remotely without risk of significant harm or permanent and/or significant disability
- treatment which cannot be delivered by a service which is currently operating or by health professionals that are already in contact with the patient.

If you do need to see a patient face to face, please do the following:

- Practice good infection prevention control procedures.
- Use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Keep accurate documentation of the appointment to aid contact tracing if required.
- Let your Responsible Authority know that you are treating a patient face to face.

The 'Health Professionals' tab on the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) website has the latest information on infection prevention control and PPE. <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-resources-health-professionals>

Further information on health and disability services at Alert Level 3 can be found on the Ministry website <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-current-situation/health-and-disability-services-alert-level-3>

Thank you again for looking after New Zealanders in this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'm Chadwick', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Martin Chadwick
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer