

BOP HEALTH COVID-19 RESPONSE ▶

6 April 2020
Issue No. 1

The BOP HEALTH COVID-19 Response is a joint initiative by Toi Te Ora Public Health (Toi Te Ora), and the Bay of Plenty and Lakes District Health Boards – uniting the people of the Bay of Plenty and Lakes by providing information on the local response to COVID-19

BOP HEALTH has created a new website to help address any COVID-19 questions.

The website has the latest health updates relating to COVID-19, plus answers to frequently asked questions. You can find it at: covid19.bopdhb.govt.nz.

Enquiries to the BOP HEALTH COVID-19 response team can be emailed to: bopcovid19@bopdhb.govt.nz



Radio updates

Ngā reo irirangi Māori

Kaimahi Graham Cameron (Pou Tikanga and Acting Pou Umanga, Māori Health Gains and Development) and Phyllis Tangitu (GM Māori Health at Lakes DHB) will share the latest COVID-19 response information and updates through our reo irirangi Māori throughout Te Moana ā Toi. Hēoi ka whakapaahotia ngā kōrero nei ki runga i ēnei reo irirangi Māori:

- Moana Radio - **98.2 FM**
- Sun FM - **106.5 FM**
- Tūwharetoa FM
97.6 FM 87.6 FM
- Te Arawa FM - **89 FM**

Dr Phil Shoemack, Medical Officer of Health, will also share regular updates through the following networks during their breakfast shows:

- Radio 1XX
90.5 FM 92.9 FM 1242AM
- The Breeze
95.8 FM 91.9 FM 100.8FM
- The Hits
95.0 FM 97.5 FM 96.8FM

A full schedule of these is available at covid19.bopdhb.govt.nz.

Criteria for COVID-19 testing



The National Technical Advisory Group has updated the criteria for COVID-19 testing. This is now anyone with respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 regardless of travel history or contact with a confirmed case.

Find out where you can be tested for COVID-19 in BOP and Lakes at covid19.bopdhb.govt.nz

Keeping up with the numbers

The number of cases of COVID-19 in the BOP and Lakes area is updated daily at covid19.govt.nz.

The Ministry of Health is updating the confirmed and probable numbers by DHB area on their website, as well as how many people are in hospital with COVID-19, and in which locations.

To protect the privacy of people confirmed to have COVID-19, neither Toi Te Ora, Bay of Plenty District Health Board or Lakes District Health Board will provide any further details.



HAND WASHING

Soap destroys the virus, but we need to wash our hands for twenty seconds for it to work.

Te Apārangi Tūpore

Te Apārangi Tūpore are a kaupapa Māori mobile service to Māori communities. We understand our people have specific needs and often struggle to access primary healthcare services. Te Apārangi Tūpore will undertake;

- **COVID-19 assessment; and**
- **kaupapa Māori long-term conditions and social services triage.**

We are working with health practitioners, iwi and Māori communities to ensure Māori needs are met in the best way possible. We will be undertaking the first pilot programme in the next week and will update you all as developments progress.

Go home - stay home

- The evidence tells us if we don't stay home the price will be high
- We have one job New Zealand. Stay home
- If you're exercising in your neighbourhood and it's too busy, return home and go out later

Shop safely

- Send one person from your household at a time
- Go with a list so you can shop fast
- Keep 2 meters away from others
- Use a contactless payment method, not cash
- Wash your hands when you get home
- Be kind!

Note: Supermarkets will be required to close as usual on Good Friday but will be able to open on Easter Sunday. All shop employees (including essential services employees working during Alert Level 4) have the right to refuse to work on Easter Sunday without giving a reason to their employer.

Community volunteering

People who want to volunteer should help their friends, whānau and neighbours first as long as they can do so under the Level 4 requirements and use safe hygiene and distancing practices.

People that meet set criteria requirements can also register their interest in helping local volunteer agencies at www.volbop.org.nz

Are you interested in offering your services?

The Ministry of Health is seeking expressions of interest from health and care professionals who are able and willing to work for a limited period of time as part of the national strategic approach to managing COVID-19. This work involves both general and clinically specialised roles.

Please click on the link below to register your interest.

[CLICK HERE](#) 

Isolation

We're coming together by staying apart - and it's working. The quiet in our streets is the sound of an incredible national effort to keep our physical distance. We're playing our part in something bigger, slowing the spread of the virus. We're saving lives and protecting our healthcare system.



Private car use

- To access essential services (shopping for food or medicine)
- For essential workers to travel to and from work
- Only share the car with members of your household bubble



No wet wipes please

Please don't put wet wipes down the toilet as it causes blockages. Please dispose of them in rubbish bins, this includes flushable wet wipes.



Hold off lighting outdoor fires during the COVID-19 Lockdown

During the lockdown, consider alternatives to burning.

While Fire and Emergency NZ are still processing and granting necessary permits, site visits to review general applications is not possible during the lockdown.

Fire and Emergency NZ are trying to minimise these to only those that are absolutely necessary.

Go to www.checkitsalright.nz to check if you are allowed to have an open fire in your district and if you need a permit for it.

Flu vaccines

Flu vaccines are available to provide protection against some influenza strains. Priority will be given to:

- **people who are over 65**
- **people under 65 with a chronic medical condition**
- **health professionals**

Call your general practice or pharmacy to make a booking for your vaccination.



BAY OF PLENTY
DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
HAUORA A TOI

Message from the Bay of Plenty District Health Board Acting Chief Executive

I want to start by recognising the incredible efforts which are being made on behalf of the communities we serve by all our healthcare staff, across both the primary and secondary sectors and throughout the Bay of Plenty. Thank you for your commitment to the welfare of our people living in the Bay of Plenty.

Whilst it has undoubtedly been a testing time for all concerned it has simultaneously been an inspirational one for me, watching everyone pull together as a united healthcare system to prepare for COVID-19. People are going above and beyond and we've seen the results of that in terms of planning and preparedness across our Bay of Plenty network of health providers. What I'm also hearing back is how much all of this effort is being appreciated by the public.

The planning highlights have included:

- Reducing all non-essential electives (surgeries) and outpatient appointments to create capacity within our hospitals.
- Moving to alternative ways of providing patient care, such as the use of telehealth (phone and video consultations with our patients).
- As the national level increased to Level 4, moving to a lockdown environment for our hospitals and reducing visitor flow to help protect our community and our patients from COVID-19.
- Establishing Community Based Assessment Centres (CBACs), allowing people to be assessed for potential COVID-19 symptoms away from our hospital and GP environments. A further exciting development is the implementation in the coming week of 'pop up' CBACs providing support and assessment for our rural, remote and Māori populations.
- Significant preparation (with planning covering workforce, equipment and training) across our hospitals' Emergency Departments, inpatient

wards and critical care units to build capacity to deal with the numbers of unwell and critically unwell patients we may receive.

- Working with our 18 Iwi in the Bay, our Kaupapa providers and Māori in general, to ensure good access to healthcare services, including exploring different ways for services to be provided to rural and remote communities.
- Supporting our primary, community providers and NGOs by establishing what supports are needed and working with them on this.

The preparation is ongoing in a lengthy, 24/7 response such as this one, but this continued attitude of 'getting the job done whatever it takes' will serve us well going forward.

The way we operate will continue to change as we move through this but we can, and we will, adapt the way we go about our day-to-day lives. This whole event has been moving at pace and we have been working extremely hard to get changes implemented as alert levels or case definition changes occur. We are a large organisation but have been learning ways to act and respond in a way that is much more agile without some of the usual barriers getting in the way. We are still learning and thank you for your patience with us as we adapt our way of working in this new environment.

Thank you for all that you are doing to contribute to this remarkable health response to help us eliminate COVID-19.

I would urge everyone to be kind to yourselves and others, to spend time with your whānau and enjoy the quiet moments when they come.

Ngā mihi nui

Simon Everitt
BOP DHB Acting CE



Message from the Lakes District Health Board Chief Executive



We are grateful for the excellent support and hard work being put in by all our health staff across the primary and secondary sectors. This effort has been done in incredibly uncertain and anxious times but everyone has been looking to how we can provide confidence to our communities that “the thin white line” has been preparing to do the very best for all.

I have seen how well people have worked together to ensure our hospitals, clinics, GP practices, pharmacies and other community providers can provide quality services over the coming weeks.

We have seen amazing innovation in how we will work to deliver services but keep all our staff safe across every health provider.

I also encourage all health workers to take advantage of the free flu vaccination to ensure that we limit the impact of this seasons winter flu season on staff availability to help us ensure we can cope with our COVID response. Although uptake this year has been good we are targeting 90% immunisation rate.

Everyone has been incredibly busy planning, training and preparing for what may come and how to strengthen our work together to stamp this virus out of our communities.

Volumes of patients in both the Rotorua and Taupō Hospitals have reduced in the past week and we are running at just over half of our usual hospital occupancy. Part of this is due to delaying some of our

elective services but also as a result of plans to reduce occupancy in our rehabilitation services by delivering these services in the community. While the numbers presenting to our emergency departments have dropped recently it is also important that everyone who needs help feels they can still come to us and will be cared for.

Safety of staff, key workers and patients and whānau across the health sector has been a key focus with distribution of and training on correct utilisation of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Ensuring a robust supply chain remains a priority which is being worked on nationally and at each DHB.

We will continue to support the Prime Minister’s position that in order to effectively stamp this out and reduce the impact on our communities. We have to maintain social distancing, stick to the 2 meter rule, washing hands and coughing or sneezing in your elbow.

We continue to encourage our communities to do the right thing and stay at home and help keep us all safe.

We are all in this together and working together will get us through.

Nick Saville-Wood
Lakes DHB CE



Key contacts for public enquiries and assistance

Healthline 0800 358 5453

For local health agency information visit www.covid19.bopdhb.govt.nz or email bopcovid19@bopdhb.govt.nz

- Government helpline **0800 779 997**
- Bay of Plenty Civil Defense & Emergency Management Group Call Centre **0800 884 222** (7am to 7pm, 7 days)
- For counselling support call or text **1737**

- Essential business enquiries essential@mbie.govt.nz or **0800 22 66 57**
- Reporting breaches of self-isolation nhccselfisolation@health.govt.nz
- Reporting breaches of any Level 4 Alert restrictions www.police.govt.nz/105support
- For financial or employer wage subsidy assistance, contact WINZ on **0800 40 80 40**