

9 August 2019



Re: Official Information Act request – Vaccination rates for health workers

I refer to your Official Information Act request dated 25 July 2019 requesting the following information

This is a request, under the Official Information Act, for:

1. Any information the DHB holds about vaccination/immunization rates for its health workers, including the various rates for midwives, nurses and doctors working for the DHB.
2. Any information the DHB holds about trends in vaccination rates for health workers over the previous decade, and whether any measures have been taken to increase uptake.
3. Any information the DHB holds about vaccination rates for its health workers specifically from Pertussis/Whooping cough, seasonal 'flu and MMR.

We do not hold the information in a form that allows reporting without significant collation, however the information readily available is:

1. Flu vaccination data since 2009: total count and %, and % breakdown by roles.
2. Boostrix: total vaccination numbers given since 2012 from a vaccination spread sheet.
3. Staff measles immunity – recent audits in high risk work areas, using March 2019 staff lists, provide total count and % of staff immune. We also have estimates for total 'patient contact staff' using extrapolated data from a 2009 study.
4. We can provide a paragraph about what has been done over the last decade to increase vaccination uptake.

Influenza Vaccination

Employees vaccinated: % and count. Total number = employees plus volunteers, student, contractors.

Years	%	Number staff	Total number
2009	43		
2010	48		
2011	54		
2012	52	4371	4896
2013	64	5514	6218
2014	74	6530	7170
2015	76	6679	7588
2016	76	6903	7923
2017	77	6962	7932
2018	79	7518	8625
2019*	78	7875	8972
To date			

*Vaccinations are still being offered in 2019

% workers vaccinated per year per employee category

	2019*	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Doctor	81	82	79	72	75	73	65	52	51	48	45
Midwives	84	72	80	81	81	89	50	48	73	-	-
Non Patient Contact	67	74	67	69	68	67	60	48	47	48	43
Nurse	84	84	83	83	80	77	66	51	45	51	42
Other Patient Contact	74	76	74	78	78	78	62	52	47	46	42

(Nurse and midwife role categories separated from 2011)

Whooping cough/Boostrix vaccination

Boostrix Vaccination spread sheet: 2012 – present

Total vaccinations given: 5336 (employees) / 5952 (including volunteers, contractors, students)

This figure is vaccinations given both at OH clinics and during the flu vaccination campaigns. It will be lower than the overall number of staff up-to-date with their Boostrix as the figure does not include new staff who have joined us who did not require vaccination (already up to date).

Staff Measles Immunity

Staff immunity audits carried out in March 2019 in high risk work areas: CED, AED, NICU, PICU, Maternity and Paediatric and Adult Oncology.

We used the current staff lists provided in March: 1160 patient-contact staff in total (clinical, ward clerks, orderlies etc.).

Staff known to be immune: 97% (ranging from 94%-100% in the work areas).

Staff found to be non-immune or their immunity status was unknown: 3%

We followed up the 34 staff who were non-immune or immunity status unknown:

18 non-immune staff were offered vaccination.

15 staff whose immune status was unknown were asked to do a serology blood test.

Audit on 31/7/19 of these 34 staff found: 24 immune, 6 immunity status still unknown, 3 non-immune, 1 resigned.

So, our immunity rate for the high risk areas (assuming no significant staff changes since March) is now: 99% with known immunity.

NICU 99%, PICU 98%, Maternity 98%, AED 99%, CED 100%, Adult Haematology/Oncology 100%, Paeds Haematology/Oncology 100%. Orderlies 96%.

This data correlates well with the findings from a joint study we did with Microbiology in 2009, which again looked at high risk work areas, along with pre-employment health screening laboratory data. The extrapolated data from this study showed 97-98% immunity among patient-contact staff in 2009.

Efforts to Increase Staff Vaccination over the Past Decade

Flu vaccination campaign

- Increased support and involvement from the executive leaders from 2013 onwards, with the Director of Nursing chairing the seasonal flu vaccination steering committee.
- A comprehensive communication strategy developed each year
- Aspirational targets set each year
- An 'in-team' vaccination model was introduced in 2013 where trained nurses within the work areas are able to vaccinate colleagues. This has improved access for vaccinations. In-team vaccination runs in conjunction with fixed venues during the campaign.
- In 2014 there was increased OHS management input into running the campaign (prior to this the OH nurses had overseen the campaign).
- From 2017 we have had a dedicated campaign manager.
- Since 2017 we have extended the hours of the fixed venues and offered more roaming vaccinators. This has further improved access especially for staff working late shifts.

Other vaccinations: MMR, VZV (chickenpox), Hepatitis B and Boostrix

Auckland DHB current policy is that immunity status to certain diseases is a requirement and vaccination is strongly recommended. The OHS department makes considerable effort to offer free vaccination to staff.

- Intermittent audits to look at vaccination rates and to inform how we can make improvements.
- We have changed our communication strategy over the past few years to use phone calls more than emails to book appointments. This is time consuming but more effective.
- We introduced an appointment text reminder several years ago.
- In the past year we have introduced additional email communication to the person and their manager when appointments are missed. This includes a reminder to ensure staff are given time to attend.
- We use a Recall system to make sure staff are offered their follow-up vaccinations.
- Over the last year we have offered extra vaccination clinics, when able, to try and provide quicker vaccinations. This has been possible by our OH service gaining additional nurse FTE.

I trust this information answers your questions.

You are entitled to seek a review of the response by the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, or an edited version of this response, may be published on the Auckland DHB website.

Yours faithfully



Ailsa Claire, OBE
Chief Executive