

Disability support announcement – transport and contact centre

Key messages

- A 30-strong team has been established as part of the COVID Vaccination Healthline to support disabled people to get their COVID-19 vaccines.
- The support can be accessed by calling the COVID Vaccination Healthline on 0800 28 29 26 for free 8 am – 8 pm Monday to Friday and push '2'.
- Disabled people, and their carers, can receive tailored advice and support for booking their vaccination appointments, including assistance with coordinating transport to and from the vaccination site and arranging the necessary support/accommodations during the appointment.
- Whakarongorau Aotearoa that run the COVID Vaccination Healthline has employed team members who are either disabled people themselves or who are allies to the disability community across Aotearoa.
- Since the team was established last week, the team have facilitated transport access for over 440 people.
- The team can support people with a range of disabilities including:
 - Blind, Deafblind, and low vision
 - Deaf and hard of hearing
 - Physical impairments
 - Intellectual impairments
 - Neuro diverse
 - Long term health conditions
- The team support each service user to identify and arrange transport to and from vaccination sites. This is a personalised service which caters specifically to individual needs of the service user.

Additional messages

The team can identify suitable vaccination sites or liaise with sites to ensure that needs can be met including mobility assistance, sign language interpreters or low sensory environments.

The team can work on a case-by-case basis to identify and arrange transport to and from vaccination sites.

Transport options will focus on existing District Health Board services and non-government providers. Where transport cannot be provided through existing services, the team can arrange transport through pre-approved providers across New Zealand.

Examples of support over the last week include putting in place mobility assistance at a site, arranging sign language interpreters, rearranging transport options after initial transport options became unavailable, arranging 1737 phone counsellors to support people with needle anxiety.

We recognise this service is just a start and will continue to evolve in the coming weeks. We've got a big job to do, and we look forward to the community's feedback.

A toolkit is available for people supporting disabled peoples with key messages, digital assets for social media channels, newsletters and website, frequently asked questions, and links to further information and resources <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lz2unsntfe7p9mj/AACmiDwn5LFGUYkFK-olFYIaa?dl=0>