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19 MARCH 2021

Extra support for Pacific health providers to vaccinate



HON AUPITO WILLIAM SIO

Health

The Government is providing a funding boost to Pacific health providers to assist them with the

delivery of the Government's COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Pacific communities.

"Our Pacific providers know and can reach our communities best. They will have access to vaccines on a rolling basis. This will enable them to vaccinate as many people as they can reach," Associate Minister of Health Aupito William Sio says.

"These providers are trusted. They have the language skills and cultural intelligence to engage with Pacific communities effectively. They will mobilise vaccination services to make it easy for people to access services, such as holding temporary clinics in our churches, workplaces and where our communities gather.

"The second tranche of vaccinations will focus on non-border frontline workers and those living in high-risk settings. This includes those in the Counties Manukau DHB district over the age of 65 years or who live with relevant underlying health conditions.

"This will also include older members of our Pacific communities who don't live in residential care facilities. This is important as we know many of our older Pacific peoples live at home supported by their aiga," Aupito William Sio said.

Pacific health providers have the discretion to immunise family members living with older people, disabled people and people with relevant underlying health conditions when they accompany them to the appointment. This will be, however, with consideration to enough vaccine doses being available on site to meet expected demand until new deliveries arrive.

There are a range of measures that the Government will implement to ensure equity and support for Pacific Peoples throughout the COVID-19 vaccine programme, including:

- Investing \$10.5 million to support Pacific service delivery options.
- Investing \$4 million to support Pacific providers to deliver COVID-19 vaccines.
- Investing \$750,000 to support additional workforce training and development for Pacific Health providers and vaccinators.
- Training and support to ensure the cultural competency of the vaccinator workforce.
- Enabling community-based delivery so that Pacific people can easily access vaccination.
- Developing accessible information in our nine Pacific languages.
- Deliver a dedicated social marketing campaign to raise awareness for Pacific communities.

"The COVID-19 Immunisation roll-out has a specific focus on encouraging our Pacific communities to get vaccinated.

"Throughout the COVID-19 response, the Government has proactively recognised the need to ensure Pacific communities are vaccinated.

“The Ministry of Health is working in partnership with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples to deliver a targeted Pacific engagement campaign. This includes communications in our nine Pacific languages and across channels like radio, print media, zoom and face-to-face fono,” says Aupito William Sio.

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