

# Information for Vaccinating Health Worker Clinical Supervisors

We're expanding the vaccinating workforce in Aotearoa by building the skills of people already working in the health sector.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we developed the COVID-19 Vaccinator Working Under Supervision (CVWUS) role. This role was short term and finished on 1 June 2023. We're building on the success of this initiative to enable healthcare workers to administer a broader range of vaccines.

As well as contributing to building our vaccinating workforce, the Vaccinating Health Worker (VHW) role will help diversify the health workforce by training more Māori and Pacific people to become vaccinators. This helps us have the right people in the right places at the right time to vaccinate our most vulnerable, and to help protect our tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and at-risk population groups from vaccine preventable disease.

## Why is the VHW Clinical Supervisor role important?

VHW Clinical Supervisors are critical to the success of the VHW role by helping ensure vaccines are prepared and administered safely and competently.

**As a VHW Clinical Supervisor, you will:**

- provide direct clinical supervision for VHWs to facilitate the best care for the health consumer, and for VHWs to safely and effectively prepare and/or administer vaccines
- provide support for training VHWs as they work through their training and workbook
- obtain consent from the consumer (this may be performed by another registered health professional on site)
- be onsite, and within earshot/calling distance for VHWs to ask for assistance or to escalate any areas of concern
- know the authorisation limits of the VHW you are supervising.
- confirm that there is a standing order or prescription in place while the VHW completes their assessments

- be immediately available to support the VHW in the event of an adverse reaction.

Your employer should support both you in the role of a VHW Clinical Supervisor, and the VHW in their role.

## Who can become a VHW Clinical Supervisor?

It is important that we have experienced and confident registered health professionals providing direct clinical supervision for VHWs.

**A VHW Clinical Supervisor will:**

- be a New Zealand registered healthcare professional
- be a fully authorised vaccinator, provisional vaccinator or pharmacist vaccinator
- have relevant, recent vaccination experience
- have been nominated as a suitable candidate to be a supervisor by your employer
- have completed [VHW supervisor training](#) (this is highly recommended).

There is a 1:6 ratio of VHW Clinical Supervisor to VHWs when administering vaccines and a 1:1 ratio when preparing multi dose vials.

## What training is required for the role?

A VHW Clinical Supervisor must have a full understanding of the scope of the VHW role, their education pathway, and the responsibilities of being a supervisor.

We strongly recommend you complete the '[Course for Supervisors of Vaccinating Health Workers](#)'. This course is available on the [IMAC Learning Management System](#) (LMS) and is free. To access the course, just log in to the IMAC LMS and register for the course.

## What are the responsibilities of the VHW Clinical Supervisors?

VHW Clinical Supervisors are responsible for providing direction and guidance to the VHW to ensure their consistent competent practice.

A VHW Clinical Supervisor may have a clinical background in nursing, medicine, pharmacy or other allied health profession. The following Guideline is a useful reference and guide in this context. It is important to be familiar with the Principles of Delegation in this document. [Nursing Council's Guideline: Delegation of care by a registered nurse to a health care assistant](#).

Supervisors must always be onsite and within constant ear shot/easy calling distance of the VHW and be immediately available for reasonable access, i.e. must always be available on the premises.

Supervisors must work within their scope of practice, and therefore can only supervise VHW administering the vaccines they themselves are authorised to administer.

Note: Pharmacist vaccinators who are not authorised to administer tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough) (Tdap) to people aged 11 years old, can still supervise VHWs administering Tdap to people aged 11 years old.

As usual, Supervisors must adhere to the terms of their employment contract and to all systems, policies, processes and frameworks set out by their employer. This includes effective oversight of the employees they supervise.

## What is the difference between Clinical Supervisor and the VHW Practical Assessor?

The VHW Clinical Supervisor may be different to the VHW Practical Assessor. The VHW Practical Assessor must be an authorised vaccinator with a minimum of six months vaccinating experience.

The VHW Practical Assessor completes the assessments of VHWs to enable them to apply for authorisation.

VHW Clinical Supervisors can carry out this role as well if you have the requisite experience.

## Keen to get involved?

Please talk with your employer if you're interested in becoming a VHW Clinical Supervisor. You can also find out more about the role and the VHW programme by checking out the following resources:

- [Vaccinating workforce](#) webpage which also has links to Information Sheets on 'Becoming a Vaccinating Health Worker' and 'Information for Employers'
- [VHW Capability matrix](#)
- [IMAC webpage](#) for training information.