



Podiatrists Board COVID-19 update for NZ Podiatrists 30th March 2020

We are now at COVID-19 alert Level 4. The purpose of escalation to Level 4 is to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus throughout New Zealand. Only businesses that provide essential services are permitted to remain open during this time. Being at COVID-19 Alert level 4 is a new experience for everyone. The Podiatrists Board understands this is having a huge impact on our practitioners, but it is critical in order to protect our community. This is an unprecedented, stressful time for New Zealand podiatrists, especially as many of our primary care podiatrists are being asked to close their doors. Podiatry practices should now be operating in a very different way. This means you should not be providing any nonessential/routine (elective) podiatry treatments. However, practitioners can (and should) still provide care to their patients by providing a telephone contact service and triaging patient needs.

As you are all aware, the COVID-19 response has been constantly evolving and changing. During this challenging time, we have been liaising with the Ministry of Health, Podiatry New Zealand and other regulators to provide practitioners with certainty and guidance wherever possible. Gathering and understanding new information has been challenging for us all, as the COVID-19 situation is constantly developing and raising new issues to consider.







We are all adjusting the way we work and live in this unfamiliar situation. Like most people, our Registrar Annabel, and her support, Bridget, are now working remotely from their homes. Please be patient if you experience delays to our usual services during this time - we are doing our very best to support you. We will be updating our information and responding to your queries as best we can. We also urge you to regularly review our website and also the government, Ministry of Health and Podiatry New Zealand websites for the latest updates.

If any of our podiatrists are involved in Essential Services/Acute care provision, review and implementation of the below PPE guidelines is essential: https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/hp7353-ppe-ipc-poster-nonessential-final-28mar2020-v2_0.pdf

Personal protective equipment (PPE) used by community care providers for prevention of COVID-19*

*includes aged residential care, aged-related community care, disability, hospice, and homecare

For people who do **not** have COVID-19, and are **not** in 14-day isolation; standard precautions are still required as per normal practice

	 Hand Hygiene ‡	 Surgical Mask	 N95/P2 Mask	 Eye Protection*	 Gloves	 Fluid Resistant Gown or Plastic apron
People who are immunosuppressed	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Providing non-contact cares	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Providing cares that may involve exposure to blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, touching oral mucosa, or medication assistance	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓

For people caring for others who are confirmed or suspected COVID-19. In addition to standard precautions, apply contact and droplet precautions.

	 Hand Hygiene ‡	 Surgical Mask	 N95/P2 Mask	 Eye Protection*	 Gloves	 Fluid Resistant Gown or Plastic apron
Providing care	✓	✓	✗ [‡]	✓	✓	✓

For people in **self-isolation** due to recent travel or contact with someone with confirmed, probable or suspected COVID-19; standard precautions still apply.

Ask **patient to wear a mask** when providing cares if possible.

	 Hand Hygiene ‡	 Surgical Mask	 N95/P2 Mask	 Eye Protection*	 Gloves	 Fluid Resistant Gown or Plastic apron
Providing care not involving contact with body fluids or oral mucosa	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Providing cares that will have contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, touching oral mucosa, or medication assistance	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓

Ensure that you are familiar with Ministry information on COVID-19.
www.health.govt.nz/covid19-hp-resources

* Face shield or goggles. Prescription glasses are not classed as eye protection. Remember to clean reusable eye protection between use.

‡ Perform hand hygiene according to the 5 moment for hand hygiene

‡ N95/P2 mask should only be used if aerosol generating procedures are performed

Essential Services:

Podiatry services are non-essential with the exception of acute care, for example in the case of someone with diabetes. Therefore you must cease all non-essential face to face contact, and only treat people face to face who have acute needs.

It is the view of the Board that all acute care cases be referred to secondary care. If you do not have any direct links to secondary care, patients should be referred to their GP or advised to call Healthline on 0800 358 5453.

Practitioners are urged to comply with the intent and advice from the government. “Everyone should stay at home. This is the best thing we can all do to stop the spread of COVID-19. This will save lives.”

If you are a podiatrist working for an essential service, please be aware that you may be asked, while travelling, to show who you work for. We encourage you to carry some form of identification that shows who you are, who you work for, and a letter from your employer and/or your work ID.

If in doubt, you can check who is on the essential services [list](#).

Update thanks to Podiatry NZ