

Covid-19

A joint statement from The Podiatrists Board of New Zealand (PBNZ) and Podiatry New Zealand

Kia ora,

As you will all now be aware, The Prime Minister has announced that from midday Wednesday 12 August, the Auckland Region will return to Alert Level 3 until midnight on Friday 14 August. The rest of New Zealand moves to Alert Level 2 for the same time period.

Until we receive further advice from the Ministry of Health, please review what these levels mean for your ability to practice, as per our previous guidelines. We know that this information will be difficult to receive and the aim of this statement is to ensure that regulatory and professional guidelines are crystal clear, so the podiatry profession can continue to operate with public and personal safety at the heart of all professional and clinical decisions.

As before, in Alert Level 3 virtual appointments should be provided where possible and is the preferred method of service delivery. Face-to-face appointments may be provided for urgent care only.

To be clear, urgent care means a condition which is life or limb threatening.

Podiatrists must take appropriate measures to manage public health and stop the spread. For podiatry services to be provided **safely**, restrictions on providing **urgent care only continue to apply**. It is important to note the **very high bar** set in the definition of urgent care and face-to-face care should only occur in exceptional circumstances. You must be prepared to justify your decision for face-to-face treatments for each patient appointment.

Practitioners need to register their intention to practice for urgent care with the Podiatrists Board via covid19@podiatristsboard.org.nz

To reduce community spread, including to yourself, your staff and your patients, all non-urgent and community based primary podiatry treatment is now suspended until further notice.

For those returning to Alert Level 2, please review our guidelines for infection prevention control, including PPE where required, physical distancing requirements, patient screening and contact tracing protocols. All guidelines are available on the PBNZ and PodiatryNZ websites.

We also ask you to plan, given that many of you travel across regions to provide services. It is essential that you are aware that travelling into Auckland is currently prohibited, unless you live there or are travelling home. We all hope that this fast, sharp response by our government is effective, but you must plan ahead and ensure that if you operate in different regions that you are prepared to respond quickly and

effectively if any other regions also move to Alert Level 3. If this happens, it will happen quickly, and you must be prepared.

For Alert Level 3, travel is allowed within your local area to/from work if required. For Alert Level 2, you can travel, but do so in a safe way.

We acknowledge that this is a particularly difficult time for students and placements in Auckland under Alert Level 3 guidelines will be cancelled, as most private practices will be closed. Student placements outside of Auckland, under Alert Level 2 can continue to operate, but if you or your student wish to make any changes to your placement please contact AUT directly to discuss. Student placements under Alert Level 3 and Alert Level 2 can continue in DHB's and clear guidelines are in place for this.

We will continue to update you with any new information as we are updated by the New Zealand Government and Ministry of Health.

To all Podiatrists, thank you for your continuing hard work, care, and commitment to supporting New Zealanders and keeping us all safe. The effects of the global covid-19 pandemic have been felt across every part of our daily lives and we do hope you and your families are all continuing to keep as well as you can as we head into another challenging period for everyone.

Kind regards

Fiona Angus, Chair, Podiatrists Board of New Zealand



Ben Lamb, Chair, PodiatryNZ

PodiatryNZ