



Infection Control and Immunisation

Background Information



[Infectious diseases](#) can be transferred from one infected person to another and include common viral illnesses which can be a significant cause of lost productivity for a business. [New Zealand](#) lost around 9.95 million working days to absence in 2022 (these are COVID 19 influenced statistics). Illness (non-work related) was the most common cause of absence. The direct costs of absence amounted to \$2.86 billion across the economy [in 2022](#).

Why is it Important?

According to the [2023 Workplace Wellness Report](#), New Zealanders are most likely to be absent from work due to illness, the second most common reason to take sick leave is caring for a family member or other dependent due to illness.

Promoting good infection control measures and immunisation within your workplace can prevent a wide range of infectious diseases. [Correct hand hygiene](#) in the workplace is a key measure to help staff avoid contracting and spreading infectious diseases.

Encourage staff to keep themselves and their families up to date with immunisations. National campaigns are currently being run to encourage New Zealanders to be vaccinated against covid-19, measles, whooping cough (pertussis) and influenza.

Workplaces can play a key role in supporting our national vaccination campaigns. We encourage all businesses to support their workers to access vaccination without workers facing costs or disadvantage.

Facts

According to the [2023 Workplace Wellness Report](#) the average rate of absence in 2022 was 5.5 days per employee, up from 4.7 in 2020.

Key Messages

Encourage staff to:

- Stay at home if they are unwell.
- Wash and dry their hands.
- Get their COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations.

Reliable resources can be found below:

- [Ministry of Health](#)
- Ministry of Health [Covid Vaccines](#)
- Ministry of Health [Influenza Vaccines](#)
- Ministry of Health [Whooping Cough Vaccines](#)
- Ministry of Health [Measles Vaccine](#)
- Health Ed [Hand Washing and Immunisation resources](#)