

## Visit to Botany Downs Birthing Unit- Announcement of Immunisation Funding for Lead Maternity Carers (LMCs)

<b>Due to MO:</b>	14 August 2025	<b>Reference</b>	HNZ00095826
<b>To:</b>	Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Health		
<b>From:</b>	Dr Nick Chamberlain, National Director, National Public Health Service		
<b>Copy to:</b>	n/a		
<b>Security level:</b>	In Confidence	<b>Priority</b>	Urgent
<b>Consulted:</b>	n/a		
<b>Proactive Release:</b>	This title is proposed by Health NZ for proactive release		

Contact for phone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Nick Chamberlain	National Director, National Public Health Service		
Nikki Canter-Burgoyne	Director Prevention – Immunisation, National Public Health Service		x

Attachments	
<b>Appendix 1:</b>	
<b>Appendix 2:</b>	Location Map
<b>Appendix 3</b>	
<b>Appendix 4</b>	
<b>Appendix 5</b>	

## About the event

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide information to support the announcement of immunisation funding for LMCs
<b>Date</b>	Friday, 15 August 2025
<b>Time</b>	10:45am – 11:15am
<b>Venue</b>	Botany Downs Birthing Unit, 292 Botany Road, Golflands, Auckland 2013
<b>External Attendees</b>	<p>Dr Owen Sinclair, Māori Paediatrician at Waitemata and Chair of New Zealand Paediatric Society and Chair of the Immunisation Taskforce</p> <p>Adrienne (Ady) Priday, Midwife, College of Midwives</p> <p>Dr Mamaeroa David, IMAC Senior Māori Medical Advisor and Chair of the National Immunisation Technical Advisory Group</p> <p>Note: no attendees from Midwifery and Maternity Providers Organisation</p>
<b>Health New Zealand and Ministry of Health representatives</b>	<p>Nikki Canter-Burgoyne, Director Prevention Immunisation, National Public Health Service (NPHS)</p> <p>Christina Mallon, Chief Midwife, Counties Manukau</p> <p>Helen-Mary Walker, Unit Charge Midwife</p> <p>Amanda Hinks, Service Manager Primary Birthing Units, Counties Manukau</p> <p>Koula Kutu, Principal Advisor, National Public Health Service</p> <p>Emma Farner, Director of Midwifery</p> <p>Kiley Clark, Interim Chief Midwife</p> <p>Nicole Pihema, Chief Midwife, National Hauora Māori Service</p> <p>Rachael Hetaraka-Gotz, Group Manager, Kahu Taurima</p> <p>Netini Vaeau, Northern Regional Director for Pacific Health</p> <p>Heather Muriwai, Chief Clinical Officer Maternity, Ministry of Health</p>
<b>Media</b>	Media are expected to attend. An invitation has been sent to the New Zealand Doctor, TBC.

## Background

1. The purpose of the event is to announce funding to support self-employed Lead Maternity Carers (LMC) midwives to undertake antenatal immunisations events (Tdap – whooping cough, flu, and COVID-19).
2. The event will announce funding to support self-employed LMC midwives to deliver antenatal immunisations, with training and cold-chain setup support, to boost coverage among pregnant women.
3. It is within the current endorsed midwifery scope of practice to administer antenatal immunisations – however, unlike primary care providers and pharmacies, LMC midwives have been unable to claim for vaccination event payments. Administering immunisation is not listed in the Primary Maternity Services Notice (which sets out the terms and conditions under which LMC midwives are paid by Health New Zealand (Health NZ), and associated service specifications).
4. Within New Zealand there are three Maternity Practice Management System (PMS) providers that LMC midwives use to claim for services under the Primary Maternity Services Notice. Health NZ invited these providers to participate in a Request For Proposal (RFP) process for a payment system, with the Midwifery and Maternity Providers Organisation (MMPO) selected as the preferred provider.
5. A two-year agreement (1 July 2025 – 30 June 2027) between MMPO and Health NZ was signed on 8 July 2025. Health NZ has committed **\$730,000** to support this initiative. This funding is currently for antenatal immunisations (Tdap, influenza, COVID-19). Payment for additional vaccines such as MMR, HPV and infant vaccines may be introduced later.
6. Botany Downs Birthing Unit (birthing unit) is a midwifery-led service in East Auckland supporting the provision of maternity care as a provider to approximately 1,000 pregnancies per year, hosting 198 births in 2024 and 1,200 postnatal stays. The maternal immunisation service (located within/at the birthing unit) was established in 2023. It has provided 1,299 immunisations during pregnancy, from May 2023 to July 2025, which include flu and pertussis or post birth vaccinations for measles, rubella and mumps for those detected as non-immune or low immunity during pregnancy.
7. The birthing unit has vaccines and a cold chain process to ensure safe provision – LMC midwives who access the birthing unit for their clinics can provide this service too. There are 21 LMC midwives who use the birthing unit for clinics and birthing. During the period July 2024 to June 2025, 530 pregnant women were immunised – 375 Boostrix, 24 flu and 15 MMR immunisations were administered.
8. Currently, the Midwifery Council endorsed scope of practice covers the antenatal and postnatal period up until the baby is six weeks old. The Council is currently considering expanding the scope to cover all-of-life vaccinations.

## Recent communications from the sector and public

9. Sector communications were released by MMPO and the New Zealand College of Midwives on 12 August 2025 about the new funding available to them and how LMCs can register. Both organisations will be monitoring their social media channels closely to

ensure the announcement does not attract negative feedback.

10. In the first 24 hours since communications were sent to the midwifery sector, MMPO received 22 responses from midwives interested in vaccinating. Notably, three of these midwives practise in Northland – a region with limited access to vaccination providers and low coverage
11. Concerns relating to vaccine safety and anti-vaccine views may be raised. We are aware an Official Information Act 1982 request relating to vaccines has just been received by the Ministry of Health. This is connected to the person who has also been making social media posts this past week about anti-vax antenatal immunisations.
12. Vaccines, like all medicines, carry both benefits and risks. Before approval, they undergo rigorous clinical trials to assess immunogenicity, efficacy, and safety. Regulatory authorities, including Medsafe in New Zealand, thoroughly review this data. All vaccines available in New Zealand have been evaluated for safety and effectiveness and are subject to ongoing monitoring.

Proactively Released

## Appendix 2: Location Map, Botany Downs Birthing Unit

- X on the map is where the Minister should get dropped off, his vehicle can stay there as it will be coned off tomorrow morning.
- Yellow highlighted is not to be used as parking for this visit by staff. It is an emergency / ambulance entry / exit. Best alternative parking spot for other staff will be at the Botany Super Clinic or across the road on street parking on Golfland Drive.

