

1 September 2021

## Media Release

### Medical practitioners across Aotearoa New Zealand encouraged by COVID-19 vaccination uptake

The medical colleges who train and educate our specialist doctors are welcoming New Zealanders' enthusiasm to get vaccinated and urging the country to stay the course of lockdown levels during the delta COVID-19 outbreak. Through its members, the Council of Medical Colleges (CMC) represents over 9000 medical practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Dr John Bonning, an Emergency Medicine physician and chair of the CMC, says all New Zealanders can be proud of the role they have played in protecting the country against COVID-19 over the past 18 months. However, the delta variant raises significant new challenges.

"It's critically important we maintain our collective evidence-informed approach now that the vaccine is being widely offered. Any vaccine's strength is in numbers and the more of us who get vaccinated, the stronger and safer we'll all be. CMC strongly supports vaccination and other current public health measures to combat COVID-19.

The CMC also backs the call from Te Rōpū Whakakaupapa Urutā that unvaccinated Māori and Pasifika must be prioritised to receive their first COVID-19 vaccination. Māori and Pasifika are at greater risk of poor health outcomes from COVID-19, and a strategic approach is needed to lift vaccination rates for Māori and Pasifika, and save lives.

Vaccination is a critical part of Aotearoa New Zealand's COVID-19 response. Stringent vaccine approval processes have been maintained by Medsafe, and nearly a million New Zealanders are fully vaccinated now. We must continue to lower barriers to vaccine delivery and acceptance.

We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of front-line healthcare staff in caring for our people with the challenges the highly contagious delta variant raises. Vaccination is critical for healthcare staff, to protect themselves, their whānau, their patients, and their wider community from COVID-19.

## ENDS

### About the Council of Medical Colleges (CMC) in Aotearoa New Zealand

The CMC represents sixteen medical colleges which provide support to over 9000 medical practitioners working in a range of specialties in the New Zealand health system.

Australasian College for Emergency  
Medicine (ACEM)

Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists  
(ANZCA)

Australasian College of Sport and Exercise  
Physicians (ACSEP)

College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and  
New Zealand (CICM)

The New Zealand Association of  
Musculoskeletal Medicine (NZAMM)

New Zealand College of Public Health  
Medicine (NZCPHM)

Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators  
(RACMA)

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of  
Ophthalmologists (RANZCO)

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of  
Obstetricians and Gynaecologists  
(RANZCOG)

The Royal Australian and New Zealand  
College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP)

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of  
Radiologists (RANZCR)

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia  
(RCPA)

Royal New Zealand College of Urgent Care  
(RNZCUC)

The Royal New Zealand College  
of General Practitioners (RNZCGP)

**For further information or to arrange an interview with Dr Bonning please contact:**

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