

We thought it might be timely to reach out to our unvaccinated patients as we know you may be feeling vulnerable and apprehensive at what lies ahead with the expected surge in COVID-19 numbers in the community.

We wanted to assure you that we remain committed to looking after you, and that we are your first point of contact for all health matters. The good news is that as Auckland has moved to the new Traffic light system, the range of services available to all patients including unvaccinated patients has increased. However, to do this safely we will be using procedures and precautions to keep you, our other patients and our staff, as safe as possible. We are communicating with you in advance to avoid confusion and so you know what to expect (to smooth the process when you enter the clinic.) Please be patient with our front desk staff who are charged with directing the traffic and keeping everyone safe.

Firstly, we will continue to invite all patients including vaccinated patients to have a virtual (phone/video) consult in the first instance, for unvaccinated patients this will however be compulsory. This increases safety by decreasing the face-to-face contact, by reducing the patient numbers in the practice at the same time, and importantly it provides an important safety net as we can identify potential COVID positive patients before they enter the clinic. You will not be able to walk into the clinic without a pre-arranged appointment or book a face-to-face appointment online. For nursing services, you will be triaged for COVID symptoms and risk before an appointment can be made. Any patients, vaccinated and unvaccinated, identified as potentially having COVID-19 will be directed to our "Red Stream" (covid testing clinic), which for all such patients means getting a COVID test, and for those who need to be assessed by a doctor this will be done in our "COVID cabin" just as it has been done throughout the pandemic. Anybody unable or unwilling to wear a mask will also be seen outside in the red stream.

If your appointment means that staff will be in contact with you for more than the usual 15 minutes (e.g., surgery, full medicals) we may require you to have a covid test before your planned appointment.

If you require a face-to-face consultation after the initial phone/video consult, then we will arrange for you to come into the medical centre. Un-vaccinated people are much more likely to contract COVID-19 and are more likely pass it on to others so we will need to take additional precautions to ensure the maximum level of safety for you and others within the practice. Overseas experience has shown that Doctors' waiting rooms are particularly high-risk areas for transmission.

We have therefore created a new waiting area for those who are not vaccinated away from our other waiting rooms. You will be directed by reception. There is also the option to wait outside until you are called in for your appointment. If you require a support person to attend with you, they must be vaccinated, or they will not be allowed into the medical centre. The other main precaution is that all clinical staff caring for unvaccinated patients will continue to use full personal protective equipment (PPE). Some of our staff are more vulnerable than others so you may not be able to see your usual doctor or nurse.

We hope this helps, and please let us know if you have any questions, including questions regarding vaccination or any other COVID-19 matters.

Nga Mihi

The team at CityMed