MINISTRY OF HEALTH
MANATŪ HAUORA

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Immunisation Handbook 2020

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This publication, which has been prepared for, and is published by, the Ministry of Health, is for the assistance of those involved in providing immunisation services in New Zealand.

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Feedback

Comments on this book and suggestions for future editions are invited, to enhance the usefulness of future editions. These should be sent to the Manager Immunisation, Ministry of Health, at the address below.

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Foreword

With the publication of the *Immunisation Handbook 2020* (the *Handbook*), I would once again like to sincerely thank everyone involved in supporting, promoting or delivering immunisations to the people of New Zealand. This *Handbook* has been designed as a comprehensive source of information on immunisation, to support you in the work you do.

Since the July 2017 edition of the *Handbook*, there has been one subsequent online edition, the 2017 (2nd ed) which included PHARMAC's revised vaccine eligibility criteria for certain individuals at increased risk of the relevant vaccine-preventable diseases. On 1 July 2020, further changes were made to the online *Handbook* to include PHARMAC funding for the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccine to be given at ages 45 years and 65 years and also a change to the pneumococcal vaccination (PCV10) primary series with the 3-month dose no longer required.

This 2020 edition of the *Handbook* covers the 1 October 2020 schedule and updates the disease chapters affected by this schedule change. These changes include a new immunisation event at age 12 months with the pneumococcal vaccination booster and the first measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations given at this event followed by the second measles, mumps and rubella dose, varicella and *Haemophilus influenza* type b vaccinations given at age 15 months. As well as the schedule changes several chapters and appendices have been reviewed and updated.

Never in our generation has there been a greater need to have high immunisation coverage than in 2020 when New Zealand and the world are dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. To quote the World Health Organization 'Immunisation is one of modern medicine's greatest success stories. Vaccination has greatly reduced the burden of infectious diseases. Only clean water, also considered to be a basic human right, performs better'.

At a population level, the effects of increasing immunisation coverage are clearly discernible, with fewer cases of vaccine-preventable diseases as coverage increases. In New Zealand, we have seen significant decline in hepatitis B, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, genital warts and, in infants, pneumococcal and rotavirus diseases since the introduction of vaccines. Closing our immunisation equity gaps is essential for all scheduled vaccinations if we are to continue to maintain high immunisation coverage and to maintain our measles elimination status. In July 2020 the Ministry of Health launched a one-year measles vaccination campaign with a focus on our known measles vaccination gap in those aged 15 to 29 years.

I congratulate the health community on the past immunisation achievements and encourage your ongoing commitment to improving immunisation coverage and reducing vaccine-preventable diseases in New Zealand. Pharmacists can now also assist with achieving this goal and in 2020 it has been particularly pleasing to see the number of funded influenza vaccinations given by pharmacist vaccinators has more than doubled those given in previous years.

Immunisation is an important opportunity for health professionals to interact with people from all walks of life: mothers with newborns, school-age children and adults either working or retired. Your attitude and the conversations you have with people affect their attitudes toward immunisation and their engagement with the health care system in general. We hope this *Handbook* will support your interactions with your patients and their families/whānau.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the Handbook Advisory Group who updated the *Handbook*. I trust this edition, like its predecessors, will prove a valuable resource for health professionals.

Ngā mihi.

Dr Ashley Bloomfield
Director-General of Health