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NEW ZEALAND | Politics

Covid 19 coronavirus: Janssen single-dose Covid vaccine approved for use in NZ

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The single-dose Janssen Covid vaccine has been approved for those aged 18 and older in New Zealand.

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The single-dose Janssen Covid vaccine has been approved for those aged 18 and older in New Zealand.

Covid-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins announced today that Medsafe had granted provisional approval.

He described the Janssen vaccine as a "very safe and very effective" vaccine, but the plan remained to "ramp up and roll out" the Pfizer vaccine.

"It just provides us with flexibility."

Hipkins said the Government had yet to decide when the new vaccine would be made available to New Zealanders.

Hipkins said the Astrazeneca vaccine was another option that was part of the portfolio New Zealand was paying for and many of those would be donated to other countries, particularly in the Pacific.

"Our expectation is our DHBs will be rolling out the vaccine as part of a nationally consistent plan," Hipkins said.

NZ secures 2 million Janssen vaccines

New Zealand secured two million doses of the Janssen vaccine through an advance purchase last year.

"We purchased a portfolio of vaccine options to provide us with flexibility, and the approval of a second Covid-19 vaccine is welcome news."

Hipkins said Cabinet would decide in August what the best use for the vaccines were.

"While our plan remains to ramp up the roll-out using the Pfizer vaccine from here, having the option of the Janssen vaccine increases our choices and provides us with flexibility if we need it.

"As a single-dose vaccine, it may be useful in hard-to-reach locations or emergencies, or for those who cannot get the Pfizer vaccine."

Hipkins said New Zealand had secured enough doses of the Pfizer vaccine for the population of New Zealand and our Pacific neighbours in 2021.

500,000 Kiwis now fully vaccinated

Meanwhile 500,000 Kiwis have now received both jabs and are fully vaccinated against Covid.

A total of 1.2 million doses have been administered.

There are three new Covid cases to report in managed isolation today. They are travellers from Britain, Malaysia and the UAE.

There are currently 40 active Covid cases in New Zealand.

Close contacts of infected mariners fully vaccinated, were using PPE