

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

To: AHANZ  
Allied Health Responsible Authorities  
Sue Waters, Chair, National Directors of Allied Health, Scientific and Technical  
Hilary Exton, Deputy Chair, National Directors of Allied Health, Scientific and Technical  
Amanda Newton, Secretariat, TAS.

Firstly, my thanks for the work we are all doing during Alert Level 4. It is appreciated. With regards to the notice (see appendix A) sent out on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021; **Advice for community allied health, scientific and technical providers in Alert 4**, there has been feedback that there is a need to ensure interpretation of this guidance continues to enable appropriate access to services and facilitates timely and effective care delivery in our hospitals. My apologies for any confusion this has created. Key points of clarification:

- Advice within the notice of 18th August needs to be read in the context balancing public safety with urgent access to health services
- 'preserving life and limb' – includes all services to all urgent/essential patients admitted to/referred into a hospital system. It should also be read as those with acute illness and those with urgent Planned care needs where deferral is clinically unacceptable.
- All acute work and any community work that facilitates discharge from a hospital setting is considered urgent/essential.
- All actions considered in preparation for readiness for discharge/transfer to the community from a hospital facility are also considered essential.
- Any urgent situation that arises for an existing community patient needs to be referred to their general practice for triage in the first instance.
- Any emergency situation that arises for an existing community patient needs to be referred to ED for assessment.
- This advice does not apply to community pharmacies, laboratories or time critical care such as clinically appropriate obstetric scanning during pregnancy.

As you all have indicated supporting the patient journey is critical at this time and where Allied Health, Scientific and Technical staff are involved you are an important part of this process. Thank you for the hard mahi that you are providing, it will allow us all to emerge quickly from Alert Level 4.

Ngā mihi nui,



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## Appendix A: Original Advice, now amended

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18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**To: Allied Health, Scientific and Technical Service Providers**

**Re: Alert Level 4 Allied Health, Scientific and Technical Service Provision**

With the move to alert level 4 it has given us the opportunity to review access to services in light of the Delta variant of COVID-19. This notice intends to minimise the confusion of multiple messages.

- The alert level 4 health services scope of provision is to **preserve life or limb only**.
- Level 4 is an **emergency measure** and has been put in place to be a transmission circuit breaker
- Health service provision should not be face to face other than to preserve life or limb.
- Where possible all consultations should be via methods of telehealth

We must not underestimate the transmissibility of the Delta variant; this is significantly different to the last outbreak. If your patient needs are urgent/acute and cannot be assessed, or treated via telehealth, please contact your local DHB and refer them to these services.

This status will not change until the Alert Levels drop and face to face consultations resume. Please consider your scope of practice, develop, and prepare alternate care plans and connect with your colleagues. We need to continue to protect each other, reduce risk and prevent transmission.

This notice will also be posted on the COVID-19 allied health, scientific and technical providers [web page](#).

We will get through this together, working in partnership as a team of 5 million, kia kaha.  
Ngā mihi aroha



Martin Chadwick  
Chief Allied Health Professions Officer  
Ministry of Health