



**Naturopaths &
Medical Herbalists
of New Zealand (Inc)**

Naturopaths & Medical Herbalists of NZ Inc.
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Position Statement: Vaccination as a Public Health strategy

The Naturopaths & Medical Herbalists of NZ (Inc) (NMHNZ) recognise the New Zealand Ministry of Health Immunisation Programmes as public health strategies.

Immunity occurs in the body when it is able to resist disease or a toxin. Active immunity to infection occurs when a person is exposed to a live pathogen and develops the disease and subsequent antibodies to the disease. Development of antibodies means the person is either no longer susceptible or significantly less susceptible to the disease. Passive immunity occurs following vaccination. The primary objective of vaccination is to induce the body's immunological memory against specific diseases, so that if exposure to a disease-causing pathogen occurs, the immune response will neutralise the infection or toxins before disease can occur¹.

Naturopaths and medical herbalists' education has a focus on the prevention and treatment of chronic disease and maintenance of wellbeing. Nutrition, herbal medicine, homeopathy, mind body therapies, body therapies and lifestyle counselling are used to support wellbeing, independent of a person's vaccination status.

Naturopaths and medical herbalists' education does NOT include in depth scientific education or research in the area of vaccination and therefore naturopaths and medical herbalists are not equipped to provide clinical comment on vaccination programmes as it is beyond their scope of practice.

Individuals seeking advice should be referred to scientific and primary research sources, including the Ministry of Health. To assist decision making, clients should be referred to their General Medical Practitioner [GP] within whose scope of practice vaccination is situated.

Naturopaths are seeking inclusion within a national integrative health system and as such are required to be mindful of professional boundaries related to scope of practice.

Members of NMHNZ abide by a Code of Conduct and membership responsibilities are taken seriously. NMHNZ has a complaints and disciplinary process. Members of the public who believe that the Code of Conduct, or the NZ law has been breached by an NMHNZ member can make a formal complaint to:

The NMHNZ Board Chair: chair@naturopath.org.nz

Please refer to the NMHNZ [Code of Conduct](#). Anonymous complaints are not accepted.

1. Ministry of Health (2020). *Immunisation Handbook*. Available from: [Immunisation Handbook 2020 \(health.govt.nz\)](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/immunisation-handbook-2020)