



# COVID-19

## Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) Prevention Alert Level 2 Guidance

7 September 2021

Most of Aotearoa New Zealand is now in COVID-19 Alert Level 2. SUDI prevention and the distribution of infant safe sleep beds remain priorities.

### This guidance aims to:

- provide advice for SUDI prevention and safe sleep bed provision in Alert Level 2
- protect whānau by minimising the possibility of COVID-19 community spread
- help maintain safety of the clinical workforce.

**Important:** advice in this guidance should be implemented with the COVID-19: Alert Level 2 – Guidance for Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) providers.

### Who is the guidance for?

- Lead Maternity Carers (LMCs)
- WCTO providers
- District health board (DHB) midwives and maternity staff
- SUDI prevention coordinators

### What to do if whānau require safe sleep bed, further information, or support?

Health care services are expected to operate as normally as possible under Alert Level 2. See [NZ Government Covid-19 Alert Levels](#). We expect that:

1. WCTO services are essential. WCTO kaimahi continue to provide usual care for whānau on their caseload.
2. Any WCTO kaimahi who has [symptoms of COVID-19](#) must not be at work. They should seek health advice and have a COVID-19 test.
3. WCTO services must implement a pre-contact screening process to identify any risk of COVID-19 transmission before WCTO kaimahi have contact with whānau.
4. Decisions about the way contacts are provided will be made in partnership with whānau. Whānau must be provided with options for WCTO contacts that include:
  - a. in-person in home, clinic or marae
  - b. virtual contact with in-person contact planned at a time to suit the whānau needs
  - c. virtual contact only.

**NB:** Raised risk of transmitting COVID-19 includes where there is any person in the whānau you are visiting or household or colleagues of WCTO kaimahi who:

- reports any signs of COVID-19 or flu-like illness; or
- is showing any signs of COVID-19 or flu like illness; or
- is in self isolation and/or reports being in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19; or
- is an essential worker who comes in and out of the household 'bubble'; or
- works at the border or in any managed isolation or quarantine facility; or
- is immune-compromised or has heightened vulnerability.

SUDI risks for some whānau are greater during any COVID-19 Alert Level. These risks are included in the common criteria<sup>1</sup> for the provision of a safe sleep bed.

- **Safety concerns** – unsafe sleeping environment (eg, car seat, co-sleeping, or bed sharing), maternal wellbeing concerns, birthweight <2500 grams, <37 weeks gestation, discharge from a Special Baby Care Unit, history of SUDI within the whānau, alcohol and/or drug use, overcrowding, low maternal support, and mental health issues.
- **Māori and Pacific** – due to increased rates of SUDI that occur within these groups.
- **Exposure of infant to tobacco smoke** – during pregnancy or second-hand smoke in the home.

### Specific roles and responsibilities

- **DHB safe sleep coordinators**
  - support WCTO/LMCs/maternity services to partner with local health and social services that conduct home visits and can support safe sleep bed home deliveries.
- **Regional SUDI coordinators**
  - support effective dissemination of WCTO and SUDI COVID-19 guidance documents to DHB safe sleep coordinators and WCTO stakeholder groups
  - feedback to the Ministry of Health WCTO Maternity COVID-19 Governance Group to whānau accessing safe sleep beds
  - work with DHBs and Hāpai te Hauora on any safe sleep bed supply issues.

## Key contacts and related website advice

Rachael Hetaraka-Gotz, Acting Manager Well Child Tamariki Ora, [wcto@health.govt.nz](mailto:wcto@health.govt.nz)

Dr Timothy Jelleyman, Chief Advisor Child and Youth, [timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz](mailto:timothy.jelleyman@health.govt.nz) or [wcto@health.govt.nz](mailto:wcto@health.govt.nz)

Unite against COVID-19 website: [covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/alert-level-4/](https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/alert-level-4/)

For whānau requiring a safe sleep bed or need further information, contact the National SUDI Prevention Coordination Service, Hāpai te Hauora on **027 601 3997**, or go on their website at: [hapai.co.nz/national-sudi-prevention-coordination-service](https://hapai.co.nz/national-sudi-prevention-coordination-service)

Hāpai te Hauora COVID-19 Alert page: [sudinationalcoordination.co.nz/covid-19-alert-page](https://sudinationalcoordination.co.nz/covid-19-alert-page)

<sup>1</sup> These criteria guide clinical assessment and judgement.