

## Protecting yourself

Council appreciates that this is a very challenging time for everyone. The level of uncertainty and an ever-changing environment, both personally and professionally places additional stress on pharmacists as health professionals providing guidance and health services to the public. In such times it may be even more difficult to balance your own health and wellbeing against workload pressures.

This [article](#) from the NZ Institute of Well-being and Resilience was circulated by NZHPA and contains tools which might be useful for yourself, your pharmacy team, your family and your patients.

### **How do I look after myself when I am at the front-line?**

Pharmacy Council reiterates the importance of keeping yourself fit and healthy so that you can continue to provide care to patients in your pharmacist role. You should not risk exposure to COVID-19 when providing care to patients. We have heard that pharmacists are dispensing unprecedented numbers of prescriptions. If this is making you feel unsafe, contact your DHB portfolio manager to discuss your situation. Council is working with other sector organisations to identify ways in which your workload can be reduced to ensure you have the energy and focus to continue practising during the pandemic.

### **What to do if you have been exposed or have COVID-19 symptoms**

It is also important to note, that if you are infected or unwell yourself with symptoms that align with COVID-19 you should not risk exposing other staff or patients. Council is following up with the Ministry to seek information around urgent testing for health professionals. Once we understand what mechanisms are in place for testing information will be provided. In the first instance, follow Ministry guidelines for self-isolation. We understand the need to maintain the medicine supply chain for the public and if you have concerns about your health or ability to continue to deliver pharmacy services, please contact your DHB Pharmacy Portfolio Manager for advice.

### **How do I access additional pharmacists?**

Council is coordinating pharmacist workforce supply in order to respond to demand requirements raised by pharmacists with their DHB pharmacy portfolio manager. If you know of a pharmacist who would like to offer their services to assist your colleagues, please contact Council via our email [COVID-19@pharmacycouncil.org.nz](mailto:COVID-19@pharmacycouncil.org.nz).