

Navigating Declined Immunisations

Supporting informed, respectful conversations with whānau

What the Data Tells Us

Around **50% of children with recorded declines** have previously received vaccinations. This suggests many whānau may still be open to immunisation, even if they've declined recently. It's important to approach these conversations with curiosity and care.

What Is a Declined Immunisation?

A **decline** is when a parent, guardian, or individual **consciously chooses not to accept** a specific vaccine or group of vaccines that is offered and available.

Guiding Principles for Recording Declines

- 1. Declines are not permanent**
They reflect a moment in time—not a fixed stance. Whānau may reconsider later, especially with support from outreach services (e.g., OIS).
- 2. Respect consumer rights**
If a person is old enough to consent, they should be offered catch-up options. Recalls should still apply. Refer to the **Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights**.
- 3. Don't record access barriers as declines**
If the issue is transport, timing, or clinic availability, support access instead of recording a decline.
- 4. Record only the next due vaccine**
If all future vaccines are declined, record accordingly—but let whānau know they may still be contacted in specific situations (e.g., outbreaks or health changes).
- 5. Declines require a conversation**
A decline should only be recorded after a discussion—ideally with a clinician or authorised vaccinator. Failed contact attempts do **not** justify recording a decline.
- 6. Alternative service preference ≠ decline**
If whānau prefer another provider (e.g., OIS), complete the referral in the PMS and remove the recall. Do not record a decline.
- 7. Delays aren't declines**
If whānau want to wait (e.g., until a child is older), mark the vaccine as **overdue**, not declined. Adjust the recall date accordingly.