

30 September 2021

To Club Secretaries  
CC Regions

## **Covid 19- Advisory No 18**

Throughout the welfare of players is our primary concern. We have recommended a cautious approach, noting much of our demographic is in the higher risk category. Whether by good management or by good fortune we have been lucky.

We concur with the Government's goal of having >90% of people double jabbed. As a health management tool this makes a great deal of sense, mitigating the risk to the health system. Of course, being vaccinated does not prevent one from contracting the virus or being a carrier/asymptomatic.

We are now hearing increasing noise about requiring evidence that, in our case players, are fully vaccinated. We have players suggesting all players should be vaccinated otherwise they would not be eligible to play. We know some clubs have already taken the step requiring players are vaccinated. As mentioned earlier whilst vaccinations will reduce the risk it does not offer a silver bullet. Our approach to date has been to follow Government policy and guidelines. The Government has shared they are looking at requirements around the border, which is logical. Imposing evidence of vaccination in other settings is a management challenge without an electronic solution. Think of the fun and games about going to an event or even the supermarket without some form of electronic proof.

So, should bridge clubs and NZB introduce a requirement for players to provide evidence that they are vaccinated? We follow and adhere to Government policy and guidelines. Further there are privacy and Bill of Rights issues that require consideration. We suggest imposing an obligation on clubs to validate vaccination is a tall order. For example, who would be responsible within the club for vetting players and approving those who may be exempt or who have forgotten to bring evidence.

I suggest clubs may have to ask their membership if they could introduce a mandatory requirement as this would be a change in membership. Until the Government provides an electronic tool, and we have clarity around legal issues we advocate no change to the status quo. Players can participate provided clubs adhere to health management obligations and adhere to the rules laid down under each Alert Level.

However, we advocate that everyone if they are not already vaccinated take steps to be vaccinated. Being vaccinated is a positive community action, will help the health system and will provide comfort for those around you. I am aware some clubs have been very proactive in this space. They are encouraging and supporting their members to be vaccinated. To the point they are offering, if required, to take members to their GP, or

pharmacy, or vaccination clinic. The sooner people are vaccinated the sooner our lives will return to a greater deal of normality, and we can get on playing bridge with limited impositions.

Based on what we know, players have been very responsible so more of the same is recommended.

**We recommend**

- 1. Players are vaccinated.**
- 2. Helping members to be vaccinated.**
- 3. If a player is unwell or has been contact with Covid or has been at a place of interest, then they stay at home and seek medical assistance.**
- 4. Use (highly encouraged) of face masks.**
- 5. Scanning in.**

Should Government policy change then we will review our recommendation. In the meantime, continue to take a responsible approach and follow Government policy and guidelines. Further advisories will be issued following on-going announcements from Government.

Stay well, stay safe, and care for family friends and your fellow bridge player.

Cheers Allan