

A message to New Zealand's Deaf Community from Healthline

COVID-19 has presented all New Zealanders with unprecedented challenges and understandable concerns.

We know that those challenges and concerns are likely to be even greater for some people, including our Deaf Community.

We want to ensure that people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing continue to have access to all the COVID-19 health information and support that Healthline offers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We've set out below the range of ways you can reach our services (available in NZSL at: <https://vimeo.com/415338422>).

Please let us know you are Deaf when you first make contact and advise us of the best way to respond.

- Access to Healthline's dedicated COVID-19 helpline:
 - ✓ The **NZ Relay Service** and the **Video Interpreting Service** can be used to contact the Healthline COVID-19 **telephone** service - 0800 348 5453, or +64 9 358 5458 from overseas SIMs*
- There are other ways to get advice for non-urgent concerns; please note that there may be a delay in responding.
 - ✓ Healthline COVID-19 advice can be accessed **by e-mail** on ops@homecaremedical.co.nz
 - ✓ Or **fax** on 09 377 6247 (e-mail and fax are monitored round the clock, but you may not get an immediate response)
 - ✓ You can use **Facebook Messenger** to reach Healthline through its Facebook page (monitored 7am – 11pm every day)
- Feeling down? Anxious? Overwhelmed?
 - ✓ You can **text** to 1737 if you are experiencing distress or anxiety. It's available 24/7 and a webchat option is also available.
- As always, in an emergency situation, use 111.

**If these systems don't work for you, and you are with a hearing person that you trust, Healthline staff will work with them as your advocate.*

We've worked with members of the Deaf Community to develop additional training materials for frontline staff - including the many new people who've joined our team as part of the COVID-19 response - to ensure they are better equipped to take calls from the Deaf Community. We're continuing to work with the Deaf Community to explore options for improving access to our range of services in the future.

We'd be happy to hear directly if you have suggestions about how to make it easier to access services: feedback@homecaremedical.co.nz

We hope you find this information useful and can promote it within your networks.

He waka eke noa.

Ngā maanaki,



Andrew Slater, CEO, Homecare Medical

On behalf of The Healthline Team