

UPDATED Friday 20 March 2020 1:00pm

## Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update

**As of Friday 20 March, Bowls New Zealand strongly recommends that (until further notice) all bowling clubs throughout the country be closed for all organised bowls events and activities.**

This follows the government yesterday announcing that it will ban indoor gatherings of more than 100 people and effectively closing our borders; advancing further New Zealand's fight against the spread of Covid-19 into our communities.

As a community, Bowls must acknowledge that our membership is most at-risk to Covid-19. With an older demographic and more significantly a demographic that has health issues, we need to be especially vigilant in our response to Covid-19.

This effectively means that all organised bowls events and activities throughout New Zealand are either postponed or cancelled for the rest of the summer 2019/2020 season. We will make recommendations on winter (2020) events dependent on information received from the government and after consultation with our bowls community.

**Everyone – stay safe – stay connected and look out for your fellow bowlers.**

If we can assist in any way, then please contact one of the Bowls New Zealand team.

Kia Kaha



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UPDATED Thursday 19 March 2020 4:15pm

Today (Thursday 4pm) the government announced that it will ban indoor gatherings of more than 100 people, as it steps up its fight on Covid-19.

Bowls New Zealand will therefore be updating its own position on Covid-19 and will provide these details to the bowls community **1pm Friday 20-March**.

Mark Cameron – Bowls New Zealand

UPDATED Wednesday 18 March 2020 4:00pm

## Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update

- Bowls New Zealand has **postponed** the Interclub Sevens Finals scheduled for 16-19 April 2020. This event has been postponed for six months, minimum.
- Bowls New Zealand has **postponed** the Bowls3Five Interclub Finals scheduled for May 2-3 at the Naenae Bowling Club. This event has been rescheduled to June 20-21 2020.
- World Bowls has **postponed** the World Championship scheduled for May/June 2020, to be held on the Gold Coast of Australia.

### Community (Club and Centre) Update – Wednesday 18 March

The bowls community needs to be especially vigilant in its response to Covid19, due to the demographics of our community (older and those with health issues).

To date the bowls community has acted swiftly in its response to Covid-19, with all national events being postponed and new guidelines in place at all clubs around personal hygiene and interaction between bowlers.

It is very important that as a community we continue to be vigilant in our response to Covid-19, acknowledging that this pandemic is increasing in intensity AND the bowls community is most at-risk due to our demographics.

Having consulted with Sport New Zealand and acting on the latest advice from the Ministry of Health:

**As of Wednesday 18-March, Bowls New Zealand strongly recommends that (until further notice) all bowls events throughout the country be limited to 50 persons (or less) per club event.**

Over the past couple of days we have had a number of clubs ask Bowls NZ for more specific direction on how their local event might continue to be run, in light of decisions made around national bowls events and the wider sporting and community context.

Significantly, we have not made the decision to postpone or cancel all bowls at the community level (as other sports like Netball, Cricket and Rugby have). The Ministry of Health is not (as yet) promoting this option and we are acutely aware that in times like this, **our communities need to stay connected**. As long as we are all sensible, take precautions and understand our vulnerability and those around us, then we continue to support our bowling clubs remaining open.

Bowls New Zealand expects that all clubs and their membership will follow the protocols established by the Ministry of Health and outlined in the 'Club Guide for Covid-19' available on the Bowls New Zealand website: <https://bowlsnewzealand.co.nz/news/club-guide-for-covid-19/>

If you have returned from overseas then self-isolate; If you are feeling unwell then self-isolate; practice good hygiene; don't engage in personal contact such as shaking hands and avoid touching other bowlers bowls – all examples of how we can act responsibly during this global pandemic.

Covid-19 continues to be evolve – today New Zealand’s confirmed cases rose to 20. If the Ministry of Health and Government make decisions around the closure of schools and universities, then Bowls NZ will absolutely recommend the closure of all bowling clubs for the required period.

Until then, let’s be sensible, take precautions, understand our vulnerability and those around us, and stay connected.

If you have a question not covered above and specific to the bowls context, please feel free to contact any of Bowls New Zealand’s staff, as usual.

Ngā mihi nui,



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UPDATED Tuesday 17 March 2020 10:00am

### **Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update**

- Bowls New Zealand and Auckland Bowls has **postponed** the New Zealand Secondary Schools Bowls Championship, scheduled for 31-March and 1-April.
- This event has been postponed for six months, minimum.
- This follows the recent announcement from Schools Sport NZ that all sports in the School Sport national calendar are suspended.

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UPDATED Monday 16 March 2020 4:30pm

### **Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update**

Bowls New Zealand has reviewed the latest information available from government agencies, including the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), Sport NZ and HPSNZ. We have also consulted with a wide range of participants and stakeholders from within the bowls community.

### **International Events**

- The World Indoor Championships in the United Kingdom, scheduled for April 2020, has been cancelled.
- Bowls New Zealand has cancelled its Blackjacks April training camp on the Gold Coast, a preparation event for the 2020 World Championships in Australia.
- We await news from World Bowls on the status of the 2020 World Championship in late May. Our current expectation is that this event is likely to be postponed, however we await the decision of the world body and host country (Bowls Australia) which we expect within the next week.
- Bowls NZ has informed the IBD (International Bowls for the Disabled) that we will not be hosting the IBD World Championships in November 2020. We have made this decision to give the IBD community certainty during these troubled times; an acknowledgement too, that we were unlikely to see many participant entries by the May deadline, due to uncertain international travel conditions.

### **New Zealand Domestic Events**

- Bowls New Zealand has **postponed** the Intercentre event due to commence this Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March
- Bowls New Zealand has **postponed** the North v South Challenge scheduled for this Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Both of these events have been postponed for six months, minimum.

These two events have been postponed following consultation with 21 of the 25 centres attending the Intercentre and having consulted with Sport NZ. We offer the following explanation for the decision made:

- Of utmost importance to the bowls community is the health and wellbeing of our bowls membership and their families.
- The government has advised that there will be a restrictions placed upon domestic events and gatherings. Whilst this is likely to be a much higher number than evidenced at these two events, we are acutely aware that a number of our participants sit in the older and health challenged demographics – demographics most at risk to Covid-19.
- We are aware that a number of our participants will be flying domestic routes to get to Wellington and therefore in planes and airports, that are at risk to Covid-19.
- We understand and respect that a number of athletes representing centres are already questioning their attendance at the Intercentre event. Of the 22 centres spoken to, five had reservations about their attendance at the event.

Bowls New Zealand has not made this decision lightly and we acknowledge that a number of athletes have been preparing for this event for a number of weeks. We also acknowledge that many have travel and accommodation commitments that they may not be able to recover.

However we remind everyone, that the health and wellbeing of our bowls membership and their families is the priority.

- Bowls New Zealand and Auckland Bowls is considering postponing the New Zealand Secondary Schools Championship schedule for 31-March and 1-April in Auckland

We are working through this decision with Secondary School Sport New Zealand and we acknowledge that this may not be a popular decision for our rangatahi and their families. However the health and wellbeing of our bowls community is the priority. We will confirm this decision within the next 48 hours

- At this point the Interclub Sevens Finals scheduled for 16-19 April in Auckland has not been postponed, however it is a fair assumption that this event is also at risk. A decision on this event will be made by Monday 23 March. Participants in this event should consider delaying the booking of travel and accommodation until a decision is made.
- At this point the Bowls3Five Interclub Finals scheduled for 2-3 May in Wellington has not been postponed. A decision on this event will be made by Monday 13-April.

## **Club and Centre Events**

Bowls New Zealand, using the advice of the Ministry of Health and Sport New Zealand, recommends that bowls events at club and community level with low participation (<100) numbers continue until advised otherwise.

If a club or centre is holding an event (or simply enjoying a roll-up) then we recommend the following:

- Bowlers should not shake hands before or after the event – a simple “good bowls” statement will suffice;
- Bowlers should not pick up their opponents or teammate bowls;
- If any bowler or official is feeling unwell, coughing or sneezing – they should consider withdrawing from local bowls events;
- Bowlers should where possible maintain a distance of 1 meter from other bowlers; and
- Bowlers should wash their hands thoroughly before and after a game.

Bowls New Zealand respects that this recommendation should be considered by each club and centre individually; understanding that you will always act in the best interests of your community. A guide on dealing with Covid19 within bowling clubs will be available on the Bowls NZ website within the next 24 hours.

If you have a question not covered above and specific to the bowls context, please feel free to contact any of Bowls New Zealand’s staff, as usual.

We are currently experiencing a global pandemic, something that hopefully none of us experience again in our lives. The correct decision should always be to err on the side of caution when such a decision impacts on our health and wellbeing.

Ngā mihi nui,



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UPDATED Saturday 14 March 2020 6:30pm

## **Coronavirus / COVID-19 Update**

### International Events

Following the Prime Minister’s announcement this afternoon, requiring a 14 day self-isolation period for anyone coming into New Zealand, Bowls New Zealand is currently reviewing its participation in

international events and the hosting of international events. These include the World Champs in May/June (and associated camps in April) and the hosting of the IBD World Champs later in the year. Kaushik Patel (HP Manager, Bowls NZ) will be in contact with all high performance athletes and support staff, as decisions are made.

#### Restrictions of mass events

The Prime Minister has also indicated that early next week, there will be restrictions placed upon large mass events, which in turn will ask questions of our bowls community. Whilst it is unlikely that restrictions will be placed upon gatherings of less than 100 persons, we are mindful that due to the demographics of the bowls community, we need to be especially vigilant.

The bowls community (clubs and centres) should consider their club members health to be of upmost priority. We should also follow any communication and directives from the Government and Ministry of Health (MoH).

#### Intercentre and Secondary Schools

The Bowls NZ North v South Challenge and Intercentre commence this Thursday, with the NZ Secondary Schools Nationals taking place at the end of the month. At this stage no decision has been made on postponing or cancelling these events.

Bowls NZ will review its position on these three events over the next 48 hours and will provide an update for all participants by 5pm Monday 16-March, having considered any mass event restrictions imposed by the government and also having considered the feedback of our community.

#### PREVIOUS UPDATE (Friday 13 March)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is increasingly having an impact on the global community and is rapidly evolving.

Government agencies including the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) continue to provide accurate, timely and detailed updates relevant to the whole community.

Bowls New Zealand has been working with Sport NZ and HPSNZ in assessing the impact of this significant health event on the play, active recreation and sport system and issuing information as relevant in conjunction with lead agencies including the MoH and MFAT.

It is recommended that all individuals and organisations in the play, active recreation and sport sector **continue to follow the advice of the Ministry of Health** who are able to share the latest information on a range of topics from travel to holding public events and mass gatherings.

Advice to date indicates individuals should be vigilant with personal hygiene and avoid people with cold or flu symptoms. Physical activity often involves being together in groups or at events. **At this stage, the Ministry of Health is not recommending any changed approach to holding gatherings and events.**

The risk of becoming unwell with COVID-19 without a history of travel to countries significantly impacted by COVID-19 in the last 14 days is very low. As a result, there are no current restrictions on New Zealanders participating in or attending sporting or large public events.

What specific challenges do bowlers need to consider when evaluating infection transmission in higher risk environments (competitions, events, etc.)?

- In a team environment, there will be increased proximity and duration of physical contact that can facilitate the transmission of respiratory and gastrointestinal pathogens. Research in respiratory infections in travelling sporting teams suggests that the most likely pattern of spread occurs from within a team, rather than from external sources.
- Close physical contact with an opponent may expose a player to risk. For example, tennis has effectively no contact between opponents. Combat sports, however, may involve significant close contact for minutes at a time. Risks related to bowls include picking up teammates or opponents bowls, shaking hands, etc.
- Size and proximity of crowds attending the event. Any mass gathering represents an increased opportunity for infection spread. WHO has produced a document outlining the Key Considerations.
- There is no need to alter your exercise or training if you are feeling well.
- There is no need to wear a mask in public if you are well.
- If you become unwell prior to travel, it is recommended that you organise a review with your GP prior to travel, to ensure it is medically safe to travel.
- If you become unwell and are due to play or train, it is recommended that you do not attend training or competition, and organise a review with your GP to ensure it is safe to train and minimise infectious spread

Advice for event organisers is published on the MoH dedicated web pages ([www.health.co.nz](http://www.health.co.nz)). There is also a Healthline COVID-19 number- 0800 358 5453.

With respect to outbound travel by athletes and related officials to other countries, you should again follow the latest information provided by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

For those athletes and officials attending international events on behalf of Bowls New Zealand (including the upcoming World Champs in May/June), Kaushik Patel, High Performance Manager for Bowls NZ ([kaushik@bowlsnewzealand.co.nz](mailto:kaushik@bowlsnewzealand.co.nz)), will be in contact providing the latest updates.

If you have a question not covered by Ministry of Health information, or specific to the bowls context, please feel free to contact any of Bowls New Zealand's staff, as usual.

Ngā mihi



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