

Overview of trends in COVID-19 complaints received by HDC (1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022)

Number of complaints received

HDC has received a significant increase in complaints about COVID-related issues in 2021/22.

The 879 complaints received about COVID-19-related issues represent around 26% of all complaints received by HDC in 2021/22.

HDC is currently receiving around 60-70 COVID-related complaints a month.

Table 1. Number of complaints received by HDC about COVID-19-related issues by year complaint received

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of complaints received relating to COVID-19	152	212	879
Number of complaints received overall	2393	2721	3413

Table 2. Number of complaints received by HDC about COVID-related issues each month in 2021/22

Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
11	75	46	115	114	85	62	94	81	61	74	61

Common issues raised by complainants

The majority of COVID-19 complaints received by HDC in the 2021/2022 year related to the COVID-19 vaccine (52%). Other complaints related to:

- COVID-related policies, e.g., infection control, visitor restrictions, mask requirements, etc (25%);
- the impact of COVID-19 on the system, e.g., delayed care, staffing etc (18%); and
- testing issues (5%).

The profile of complaints has changed as New Zealand's response to the pandemic has evolved. For example, complaints about the impact of COVID-19 on the health and disability system have become more prominent in 2022, whereas complaints about vaccine-related issues have become less prominent over time.

The most common specific issues raised by complainants to HDC in relation to COVID-19 in 2021/2022 include:

- Refusal by health providers to treat unvaccinated people or people not wearing masks.
- Issues around streaming protocols (particularly seeing unvaccinated people in locations that they felt did not uphold their right to dignity/personal privacy).

- Misinformation about COVID-19 and the vaccine provided by a small number of individual providers.
- Deferred or delayed access to services due to impacts of COVID-19, particularly in relation to planned care, emergency care, and home care and community support services.
- Standard of care provided by providers during COVID-19 outbreaks/restrictions (including impacts of reduced staffing on standards of care).
- Lack of access to support people/visitors.
- Concerns about vaccine mandates.
- Consent process for vaccine.
- Concerns around vaccine administration errors/technique or adverse reactions to the vaccine.
- Concerns about health providers communicating with consumers in a disrespectful way because of their vaccine status.
- Testing issues, including access to testing, wait times, and delays in receiving test results.
- Treatment of COVID-19.