

## **Cross Infection Policy - People with CF attending CFNZ Meetings**

### **Infection Prevention and Control Policy**

The health and well-being of people with Cystic Fibrosis (CF) is the primary concern of Cystic Fibrosis New Zealand (CFNZ); it is at the heart of all we do. To help protect the health of people with CF, CFNZ has an Infection Prevention and Control policy in place for all of its events and meetings. The policy limits the participation of people with CF at indoor gatherings in order to reduce the serious risk of cross-infection between people with CF. It is the recommendation of our CF Clinical Advisory Panel (CAP) that we as an organisation strongly discourage people with CF (PWCF) from attending conference and indoor gatherings.

### **Attending CFNZ Meetings/ Conferences/ Events etc.**

At any CFNZ event a limited number of invitations will be issued to people with CF to participate in venue-specific sessions. These invitations will ensure that we minimize the issue of having multiple people with CF in the same place at the same time.

CFNZ suggest that people (particularly PWCF) who are unable to attend an event (such as a conference) in person take the opportunity to attend remotely. For example where possible each CFNZ National Conference will be live-streamed and the sessions recorded and posted online.

For CFNZ events (such as a National Conference) information about which sessions will be available and how you can join a session will be available on the CFNZ website

<http://cfnz.org.nz/>

**Note:** People with CF and their families should be aware that individuals with CF might still choose to attend CFNZ conferences, events or meetings. Although this will be strongly discouraged, CFNZ will ensure that any PWCF attending a CFNZ event follow the infection control testing procedure as outlined in our CFNZ Policy document and meet criteria (see below).

PWCF attending a CFNZ event will be expected to sign a waiver establishing that they are aware of the risk of cross infection. CFNZ will also provide a free mask to any PWCF who does attend conference if they would like to avail themselves of this as an extra security measure.

### **Important Reminder for All PARTICIPANTS**

As a reminder, here are some simple yet effective steps you can take to help minimise the spread of germs:

1. Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel.
2. Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing, throw it away and then clean your hands.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
4. Stay away from others and seek medical attention if you are ill.
5. Maintain at least arms-length distance (two metres) from those with a respiratory infection.
6. Use an elbow bump instead of a handshake as an alternative greeting.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping to safeguard the health of those who attend our conference.

**CFNZ Cross Infection Policy** (that pertains to conference attendance):

**Cross Infection Policy - People with CF attending CFNZ Meetings**

CFNZ periodically runs meetings, both indoors and outdoors, for a variety of purposes. This policy provides guidance regarding the attendance at such functions by those with CF.

This policy recognizes that people with CF can infect each other with bacteria because of their proximity to each other in indoor settings and with slightly reduced risk at outdoor events. Furthermore, it recognizes the following key facts with regard to cross infection:

1. There are no “foolproof” tests to determine the culture status of an individual with CF.

Whilst most testing is reasonably accurate, 100% accuracy cannot be guaranteed

2. There are various bacteria, such as pandemic pseudomonas that cannot be tested for but which present a significant risk to individuals with CF who choose to be near each other at events and meetings

3. The systems and recommendations such as hand-washing, anti-bacterial gel use, safe disposal of tissues, safe coughing and distance rules are all, in themselves, no guarantee that a new organism will not be acquired during such a meeting because several individuals with CF are all present at the same time

CFNZ wishes to provide the maximum protection for its members with CF, whilst preserving the individual with CF’s right to self-determination.

**Policy 1: People with CF will be informed, in writing, of all the risks inherent in attending CFNZ indoor meetings where others with CF may be present. Furthermore, people with CF shall be discouraged from attending such meetings but shall not be specifically banned from doing so**

**Procedures:**

a) Whilst people with CF will not be banned from attending, they will be asked to sign an acknowledgement that demonstrates that they have read and understood the risks if they DO choose to attend.

b) CFNZ will no longer assist adults with CF to attend conference with a waiver of their registration fees

c) The Jono Fowler scholarship for adult attendance at conference will no longer be available.

d) Branches will be asked to ensure adults in their area who have indicated a desire to attend conference are well aware of the risks

e) Those with CF who attend meetings will be asked to provide a Doctor’s letter, dated not more than three weeks prior to the conference, stating that, to the best of their knowledge, their patient is not carrying MRSA or Burkholderia Cepacia, or non-tuberculosis mycobacterium in the previous two years that could be transmissible to others.

f) People with CF attending meetings will be required to wear an identifying badge, wristband or lanyard. Refusal will lead to the individual being denied access to the meeting

g) People with CF who do choose to attend will be encouraged to use safe greeting methods with ALL other attendees, CF and non-CF

h) Smaller meetings such as branch meetings or smaller national governance meetings etc. will set up a system whereby only one person with CF may attend at any one meeting.

**Policy 2: People with Cystic Fibrosis attending CFANZ events which are held outdoors, will be informed of all attendant risks as above and will be encouraged to adhere to the following guidelines:**

- Maintain a 1.5 metre distance from all other people with CF
- Wear a readily identifiable badge/ wristband or lanyard
- Wash hands frequently and make use of hand sanitiser as provided
- Safely dispose of tissues and employ safe coughing protocols