



Australian Government



Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

Phase 1b Bulletin

10 June 2021

These bulletins are intended to provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccine Program. They will be provided monthly, but may be provided more frequently as needed.

On 4 June 2021, National Cabinet agreed to open access to COVID-19 vaccines to the following groups from 8 June 2021:

- people aged 40 to 49 years not otherwise eligible;
- all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 to 49 years;
- NDIS participants aged 16 years and over and carers aged 16 years and over of NDIS participants of any age; and
- temporary visa holders aged under 50 years who are currently in Australia and have been approved for return travel to Australia through the travel exemption process.

National Cabinet also agreed to not proceed with the identification of 'other essential and high priority workers' in Phase 2a, given the difficulty defining these populations.

The National Cabinet statement can be accessed here: <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-040621>.

Key messages from Department of Health:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 16 years and over are now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination

As all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 16 years and over are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, it is more important than ever that all health services continue to commit to provide culturally safe care which helps to create an environment that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cultural safety also means not challenging or denying self-identification.

Practitioners administering COVID-19 vaccines should continue to ask safely for a patient's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, to accept self-identification and



to record the answer provided.

Questioning identity or requesting individuals to provide proof of identity may create barriers to quick and culturally safe access to vaccination and care. The question of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity should be included on all forms as a prompt for health professionals, and recorded in the Australian Immunisation Register or pathology forms.

Correction of 'Transfer of the AstraZeneca vaccine between general practice sites' factsheet

It has been noted that there was incorrect wording in the 'Transfer of AstraZeneca vaccines between participating primary care vaccination site' factsheet (sent on 21 May 2021). Please see the amended content:

Wastage under 5 vials does **not** need to be reported immediately, but should be captured in the weekly *Vaccine Stock Management Form* in CVAS.

Reminder about second dose appointments

Primary care has been the backbone of the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. Over 5.3 million doses have been administered across the country, with more than half being administered through primary care (3 million doses).

We are now in week 12 of the primary care roll-out (week 16 of the entire roll-out) which means patients are now due to receive their second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

The [COVID-19 provider communication kit](#) on the Department's website has suggested appointment reminder content. A [second dose flyer](#) for patients receiving their COVID-19 vaccine dose outlining when they are due for their second appointment is also available for your distribution.

Please reach out to your patients and remind them when it's time for the second dose!

New ATAGI advice on flu vaccine

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has updated its [advice](#) about the interval between COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines (including the flu vaccine):

'Recommended minimum interval between COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines (including influenza vaccine) is 7 days, but can be shortened (including same day administration) in special circumstances'.

Special circumstances include in settings where there is increased risk of COVID-19 or another vaccine-preventable disease (e.g. tetanus-prone wound) or for logistical reasons.

ATAGI update following COVID-19 meeting – 9 June 2021

ATAGI held its weekly COVID-19 meeting on 9 June 2021. An update from this meeting is provided at: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-update-following-weekly-covid-19-meeting-9-june-2021>

Changes to consumables

Due to an expected increase in supply of Pfizer vaccine in coming months, the Department of Health is making changes to consumable deliveries to ensure best use of the available consumables across the program.

The **3mL Luer Slip Syringe** had been used for AstraZeneca vaccine administration, however this has now been substituted for the 1mL Tuberculin Injection Syringe.

The 3mL Luer Slip Syringe will now be reserved for Pfizer vaccine administration only.

From 29 May 2021, your deliveries for the 3mL Luer Slip Syringe were replaced with the equivalent number of **1mL Tuberculin Injection Syringes**.

Cold chain requirements

It's important to remember the maintenance of cold chain requirements for all COVID-19 vaccines in emergencies, including power outages. Practices should have appropriate processes in place in line with the [National Storage Guidelines: Strive for 5](#).

If you have any concerns or need assistance with local solutions, please contact your Primary Health Network. If a cold-chain breach is suspected, please follow the current processes and contact the VOC (Vaccine Operations Centre) on 1800 318 208.

AIR Uploads

There have been reports of a small number of general practices uploading COVID-19 vaccinations to the Australian Immunisation Register that they themselves did not administer.

If an individual has evidence of vaccinations which have not been reported to the AIR, vaccination providers are **encouraged** (but not required to) report this information, as this ensures their patients have a complete AIR record. The AIR has functionality for vaccination providers to report vaccines that were administered by another provider and also to identify information previously reported to prevent duplicate information from displaying on an individual's Immunisation History Statement.

If a patient has received their first Pfizer or AstraZeneca COVID-19 dose in another country, it can also be added to the AIR by a recognised vaccination provider in Australia. Individuals must present documents in English that show what immunisations they have had.

Targeted AstraZeneca EOI

The Australian Government opened an Expression of Interest (EOI) on 27 May 2021 to 31 May 2021 to identify additional general practices to immediately join the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out to increase the access to AstraZeneca vaccine within areas of limited availability.

All non-participating general practices were invited to apply. Over 860 were found eligible to participate and will commence administering the AstraZeneca vaccine from mid-June to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for those aged 50 and over.

Increasing the number of general practices in the vaccination program does not impact dose allocations to participating general practices. The continuing increase in AstraZeneca supply has allowed for additional practices to join the program.

Resources

COVID-19 Vaccines – Clinical considerations

The latest clinic advice on the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out can be found on the Department's [website](#).

AstraZeneca Vaccine Easy Read

The [AstraZeneca Vaccine Easy Read](#) (Easy Read) has been updated and is available on the Department of Health's website. Easy Reads provide easier to read information on key concepts regarding AstraZeneca vaccine administration and safety.

There are 11 Easy Reads about the COVID-19 vaccines. Following the announcement of National Cabinet on 4 June 2021 all of these will be reviewed and updated as needed.

ATAGI

A list of updated ATAGI factsheets are below:

- Weighing up the potential benefits against risk of harm from COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-weighing-up-the-potential-benefits-against-risk-of-harm-from-covid-19-vaccine-astrazeneca>
- COVID-19 vaccination – AstraZeneca vaccine risk-benefit printable: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-astrazeneca-vaccine-risk-benefit-printable>
- COVID-19 vaccination – ATAGI clinical guidance on COVID-19 vaccine in Australia in 2021: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-atagi-clinical-guidance-on-covid-19-vaccine-in-australia-in-2021>
- Guidance on the use of multi-dose vials: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-atagi-guidance-on-the-use-of-multi-dose-vials-for-covid-19-vaccination>
- Decision guide for people receiving palliative care or end of life care: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-atagi-decision-guide-for-people-receiving-palliative-care-or-end-of-life-care>
- Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-information-for-immunisation-providers-on-thrombosis-with-thrombocytopenia-syndrome-tts-following-covid-19-vaccination>
- Guide to seeking consent: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-atagi-immunisation-provider-guide-to-obtaining-informed-consent-for-covid-19-vaccine>