

COVID-19 Vaccinations

Information for general practices not participating in Phase 1b

Fact Sheet

Version 1 / Up to date as of 25 March 2021

Please note: The COVID-19 vaccination rollout is progressing rapidly, and information provided in this factsheet is subject to change. We strongly recommend that all general practices and GPs keep up-to-date via the online channels listed under 'Keeping up to date' below.

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) is the operator of WA's 3 Primary Health Networks (PHNs): Perth North, Perth South and Country WA. We are part of the national PHN program. PHNs across Australia are assisting in the coordination, planning and delivery of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The COVID-19 vaccination rollout by general practices as part of Phase 1b commenced on 22 March 2021. General practices across Australia were invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the administration of the COVID-19 vaccination. Some practices were not eligible to participate and/or chose not to participate as a vaccinating general practice.

General practices that are not administering the COVID-19 vaccination as part of Phase 1b have an important part to play in supporting the COVID-19 rollout.

Keeping up to date

You can stay up to date with the latest COVID-19 vaccination information by:

- Subscribing to WAPHA's COVID-19 vaccination GP update online:
<https://www.practiceassist.com.au/Coronavirus-COVID19>.
- Checking HealthPathways WA for the latest updates.
 - HealthPathways WA is a secure web-based portal with information on patient assessment, management and referral pathways to assist clinicians in navigating patients through the complex primary, community and acute health care system in Western Australia. HealthPathways WA is also now on a mobile phone friendly platform.
 - HealthPathways WA has information to support GPs for COVID-19 vaccination including resources and decision guide for preparing patients. This information is updated regularly by our HealthPathways GP Clinical Editors. The COVID-19 Vaccination pathways are available here:
<https://wa.communityhealthpathways.org/839877.htm>.
 - You will need to register for HealthPathways WA if you have not done so already. You can register by completing the online form (<https://waproject.healthpathways.org.au/Home.aspx>) or by phoning 0439 283 894 (Monday to Friday).
 - If you need any assistance with accessing HealthPathways, please contact healthpathways@wapha.org.au or by phoning 0439 283 894 (Monday to Friday).
- Visit the [Practice Assist Website](#) COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Information page.

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Supporting your patients to access the COVID-19 vaccine

There are some important steps you can take to assist your patients in preparing for the COVID-19 vaccination:

- Identify patients at your practice that are eligible to receive the vaccination as part of phase 1b. Phase 1b includes people who are:
 - Over 70 years
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 55 years
 - Young adults over 18 years, with certain underlying medical conditions, including those with a disability
 - Critical and high-risk workers including defence, police, fire, emergency services and meat processing
 - Health care workers not vaccinated in phase 1a.
- Contact patients eligible for vaccination in phase 1b. You may wish to use the template provided in the box below as an email to your patients or as a script for your staff to use when phoning patients.

Our records indicate that you may be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination as part of phase 1b. Our practice is not administering the COVID-19 vaccination, so we are contacting you to recommend that you:

- *Check your eligibility and book an appointment with another general practice via the COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker online: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccine-eligibility-checker> or by phoning the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on 1800 020 080.*
- *Book an appointment with your usual GP here at the practice if you have questions about the vaccination or your suitability to receive the vaccination.*

- There are specific COVID-19 Vaccination Suitability Assessment Service MBS items available to general practices that have been approved to administer the COVID-19 vaccinations. Non-participating practices cannot claim these MBS items. However, non-participating practices can utilise the existing MBS items (face-to-face, phone or telehealth) should your patients have questions or concerns about the vaccine and their suitability to receive the vaccination.
- Vaccination providers cannot charge to administer the COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is free for everyone in Australia and the consult appointment for patients to receive their vaccinations is also free. Charging a patient any costs associated with the administration of the COVID-19 vaccination (including booking fees) is a breach of the requirements under the program.
- If referring eligible patients to another general practice, please note that the patient will be required to provide evidence that they are eligible to receive the vaccination as part of Phase 1b. The following advice has been provided by the Australian Government Department of Health:

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Population group	Proof of eligibility required
Healthcare Workers not included in Phase 1a	Proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer) or Phase 1B Declaration Form
Critical and high-risk workers	Proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer) or Phase 1B Declaration Form
People over 70 years	All standard forms of identification (drivers licence, passport) will be accepted
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over 55 years	Self-identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person (remember to ask the question)
People over 18 years with an underlying medical condition, including disability	Medical records (for example, a clinic record, My Health Record, printout of chronic disease plan); a referral from a GP or treating specialist; or a Phase 1B Declaration Form
Carers and disability workers	Carers documentation or proof of occupation (ID card or letter from employer/centre-based support provider); or a Phase 1B Declaration Form available here: https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-eligibility-declaration-form)

How can I check if my patient has received the COVID-19 vaccination?

- All COVID-19 vaccination providers are required to update the Australian Immunisation Register after administering the vaccination. Information about AIR is available from:
 - Services Australia: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register-health-professionals>
 - Practice Assist: <https://www.practiceassist.com.au/http/www-practiceassist-com-au/The-Tool-Kit/programs-and-national-schemes>
- Patients can obtain proof of vaccination through their Medicare immunisation history (<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register/how-get-immunisation-history-statement>) through myGov, or by calling 1800 653 809.

Where can I find more information?

If you require additional support with any of the information above, please see:

- The Australian Department of Health has a range of resources and information available online: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines>.
- Information about the COVID-19 Vaccination Suitability Assessment MBS items is available here: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-eligibility-declaration-form>.
- Practice Assist, by email (practiceassist@wapha.org.au) or phone 1800 2 ASSIST (1800 2 277 478).