



# COVID-19 vaccines

Special Bulletin – 21 April 2021

Information for COVID-19 vaccine providers

**OFFICIAL**

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**This is a special bulletin for health professionals and services, and subscribers to the weekly newsletter for COVID-19 vaccine providers.**

## Access to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine

- The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends that Pfizer is the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for people aged under 50 years.
- There are a sizable number of people who are aged under 50 years who are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine under Phase 1a and Phase 1b.
- The updated priority access to Pfizer vaccine for people under 50 years is based on public health advice. Several factors were considered as part of this advice including the risk of exposure from overseas or interstate, risk of serious health consequences if someone catches COVID-19, settings where there is a higher risk of transmission and outbreaks and current supply.
- **Due to the limited number of Pfizer doses currently provided by the Australian Government, people aged under 50 years who are part of the following groups will currently receive priority access to Pfizer across state vaccination centres:**
  - **Phase 1a** – Hotel quarantine, border workers, frontline healthcare and testing staff.
  - **Phase 1b (Priority 1)** – Household members of hotel quarantine staff, other healthcare workers
- People who are under 50 years and in phase 1a or Phase 1b (Priority 1) can book an appointment by calling the Victorian Coronavirus Hotline on [1800 675 398](tel:1800675398) – Select Option 3 – Option 2 – Option 2.
- The Department of Health is working with health services to identify more locations, including locations in regional Victoria. At this time appointments for Pfizer vaccine are only being offered through locations in Melbourne and via the Victorian Coronavirus Hotline. When people book, they will be able to choose the appointment location most convenient to them.

- The priority access to Pfizer will continue to be reviewed in light of the latest information and supply of Pfizer vaccine from the Australian Government.
- People who are aged under 50 years and are currently eligible (Phase 1a or 1b) can instead choose to receive an AstraZeneca vaccine through a range of locations including their GP, community health service or high-volume vaccination centre. The Australian Government has provided updated information about the risks and benefits of the AstraZeneca vaccine. The Victorian Department of Health has provided an updated training package.

### Priority access to Pfizer vaccine

The following guidance outlines how Pfizer will be rolled out to people aged under 50 years. The following people are currently able to receive Pfizer:

- **Phase 1a** – Hotel quarantine, border workers, frontline healthcare and testing staff
- **Phase 1b (Priority 1)** – Household members of hotel quarantine staff, other healthcare workers

The following people will be the next priority groups to receive Pfizer. Department of Health will advise when these people can access Pfizer.

- **Phase 1b (Priority 2)** – Critical and high-risk workers (e.g. meat processing, emergency services, CFA/SES volunteers, and those involved in AstraZeneca manufacturing), and adults with underlying medical conditions or disability
- **Phase 1b (Priority 3)** – Transport workers

Priority populations requiring bespoke engagement and delivery models, including those living in high-risk accommodation and corrections staff and clients will be able to access Pfizer as part Phase 1B.

The following people are also able to continue to receive Pfizer vaccine (irrespective of age):

- Those who have received a first dose of Pfizer vaccine
- Those with a history of Cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) or Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT) and other situations where it is medically indicated
- Those who have anaphylaxis after a previous dose of AstraZeneca vaccine
- Those who have anaphylaxis to polysorbate 80 (a component of AstraZeneca vaccine)

There may be minor exceptions for operational reasons only.

As at 21 April 2021, eligible 1B aged care and disability care staff and residents will be able to book an appointment at an AstraZeneca vaccine clinic at a high-volume vaccination centre only.

## Flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine reminder

The COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against the flu, so people are encouraged to still have a flu shot. When people book an appointment to have a COVID-19 vaccine or flu vaccine they should be advised of the recommended spacing between these vaccines:

- The flu vaccine should not be administered at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine. It is recommended that you wait at least 14 days after you receive the COVID-19 vaccine to get the flu vaccine.
- The same applies if you have a flu vaccine first, you should wait at least 14 days before being vaccinated against COVID-19.

For more information visit the [Australian Government Department of Health](#) website.

## Resources and helpful links to information

### Updated Australian Government patient resources – AstraZeneca vaccine

- The patient consent form has been translated

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