



COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS OF MEDICAL COLLEGES



AMA

COVID VACCINATION ONLY PATHWAY TO MORE NORMAL LIFE

Joint statement – AMA & Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges

The AMA and members of the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC) have said getting the COVID vaccination is the only pathway back to a more normal life.

In a joint statement released today the peak medical bodies have said the benefits of vaccination far outweigh any risks and urged all Australians to get vaccinated when their turn comes.

The AMA and CPMC also reminded Australians the vaccination program had been extended to include all people aged 50 years and over. People in this age group are assessed as being at higher risk of severe COVID-19 and death.

AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid said Australia had an “outstanding record on vaccination, with some of the highest rates of vaccine take-up in the world”, protecting the community from a wide range of serious illness. He said Australians could approach vaccination for COVID-19 with the “same confidence”.

“To date, there have been over 160 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 world-wide and a death toll exceeding 3.3 million people. It is not sustainable for Australia to rely on international border closures, restrictions, and potential lockdowns to protect the community from COVID-19.

“The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is being used in 139 countries and the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in 90 countries. The evidence from the hundreds of millions of doses delivered in these countries is that both are protecting people from serious illness and hospitalisation and helping to stop the spread of COVID-19,” Dr Khorshid said.

CPMC Chair Dr Kym Jenkins said while Australia had avoided much of the experience seen overseas, the country would be vulnerable to its re-emergence until the population was largely vaccinated.

“Vaccines, like other medicines, can have side effects and there have been a very small number of serious adverse events from COVID-19 vaccination that may understandably worry some people. However, the community can be reassured by knowing these are extremely rare, and that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) have moved swiftly to address any safety concerns.

“Australia’s frontline doctors, who know the risks of COVID-19, have come forward in large numbers to receive either the Oxford-Astra Zeneca or Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines,” Dr Jenkins said.

There are range of reputable sources of information about COVID-19 vaccinations including the [Department of Health’s website](#). General practitioners are also experts in vaccinations and should be the first point of call for patients who want advice and help, when considering whether a COVID-19 vaccination is right for them.

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