



# COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout Primary Care Update

**Update – 13 July 2021**

## Advice from ATAGI on AstraZeneca

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has released a statement clarifying the **dosage intervals for AstraZeneca** in the context of a COVID-19 outbreak. The advice clarifies that in an outbreak setting, an interval of 4-8 weeks is preferred. In line with this, you may also have seen that Dr Kerry Chant, Chief Health Officer of NSW, has promoted a 6 week interval for individuals in Greater Sydney.

Professor Paul Kelly has written to all general practitioners to provide them with the updated statement. The letter is attached, and you can view [ATAGI's statement](#) on the Department of Health Website.

Professor Kelly's letter also provides [updated information](#) about thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS).

## Residential Aged Care Worker Prioritisation

Aged care workers are on the frontline of protecting the most vulnerable in our society.

Aged care workers are prioritised for access to a COVID vaccine before vaccination becomes mandatory on 17 September for this group.

Vaccination sites are requested to facilitate access to a vaccine booking (with AstraZeneca or Pfizer if available) within two weeks upon receiving a request from an aged care worker where possible. This should be facilitated through prioritising aged care workers on waitlists for any unused or excess doses.

The National COVID Vaccine Taskforce will be contacting all Residential Aged Care Facilities to ask them to encourage their workers to get vaccinated. The Taskforce will provide a list of locations to access vaccines, which will include general practices.

Please remind your practices that all aged care workers, regardless of age, can access the Pfizer vaccine.

## **All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 16 are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination**

From 8 June 2021, National Cabinet has agreed to open eligibility to a COVID-19 vaccine to all people aged 40 and over, as well as priority populations including all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 16. The National Cabinet statement can be accessed here: <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/national-cabinet-statement-040621>.

Awareness of and commitment to providing culturally safe care 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. 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. Practitioners administering the vaccine should continue to ask safely the patient's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, to accept self-identification and to record the answer provided.

## **COVID-19 indemnity scheme to protect health professionals and patients**

The Australian Government is establishing a COVID-19 Vaccine Claim Scheme to provide further assurance and confidence to patients and health professionals in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Further information can be found on the [Department of Health Website](#).

## **Primary Care provider bulletin**

A provider bulletin was issued on 7 July with information regarding the COVID-19 vaccines Multicultural Outreach Stakeholder pack, guidelines on the Practice Incentive Payment (PIP), updates to the Vaccine Eligibility Checker and advice regarding TGA advertising guidelines.

A second bulletin was provided on 13 July 2021.

Please find both provider bulletin attached for your information.