



# Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

## Provider Bulletin

13 July 2021

*Bulletins provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccine Program.*

### Key Messages

#### 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 your waitlists for any unused or excess doses.

Please also remember that all aged care workers, regardless of age, can access the Pfizer vaccine.

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.

#### 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).

## Current Eligibility for a COVID-19 vaccine

The government has adopted [ATAGI advice](#) that recommends the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as the preferred vaccine for those aged 16 to 59 years. COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca will be prioritised for people aged 60 years and over. Anyone over 18 can make an informed choice to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine, following the appropriate risk/benefit analysis, assessment of suitability, and confirming consent.

Adults of any age without contraindications who have had their first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine without any serious adverse events should receive a second dose of the same vaccine. On the basis of currently available information, Pfizer vaccine and AstraZeneca vaccine are not considered interchangeable. The two-dose course should be completed with the same vaccine.

If an individual develops anaphylaxis, a severe allergic reaction, or thrombosis with thrombocytopenia after the first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine, the Pfizer vaccine can be used for the second dose.

### People who are eligible to receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine

The following people are eligible for the Pfizer vaccine:

- All people aged 40 to 59 years
- All residential aged care workers aged 16 years or older
- The following people aged 16 to 39 years:
  - Quarantine and border workers and their household contacts
  - Aged and disability care workers and disability care residents
  - Healthcare workers
  - Critical and high risk workers
  - Traveller with a travel exemption
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
  - Person with an underlying medical condition
  - Pregnant women
- People aged 60 years and over with a contraindication to the AstraZeneca vaccine or with a history of the following:
  - Cerebral venous sinus thrombosis
  - Heparin-induced thrombocytopenia
  - Idiopathic splanchnic (mesenteric, portal, splenic) vein thrombosis
  - Antiphospholipid syndrome with thrombosis

For more information see:

- [COVID-19 vaccination program for 16 to 39 year olds](#)
- [Information for residential aged care workers about COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [ATAGI clinical guidance on COVID-19 vaccine in Australia in 2021](#)
- [Shared decision making guide for women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning pregnancy](#)