



Planning checklist for COVID-19 vaccination clinics at residential aged care homes

Information current as at 23 April 2024

Residential aged care homes are responsible for ensuring residents have access to the recommended COVID-19 vaccinations as soon as they are eligible.

Older age continues to be the biggest risk factor for severe COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccination reduces the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and death. COVID-19 vaccines continue to be principally administered in residential aged care homes by primary care providers such as GPs and pharmacists. COVID-19 vaccines can be given on the same day as the influenza vaccine.

Residential aged care homes are encouraged to engage with their Primary Health Network (PHN) for assistance in securing a primary care vaccination provider if they do not have an existing GP or pharmacist available.

The Vaccine Administration Partners Program can also deliver in-reach clinics in residential aged care homes in circumstances where there is a clear gap in provision of services by primary care providers.

The following checklist provides tips to assist in planning and delivering a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at a residential aged care home. It is recommended service providers start planning early as some activities will take time to organise.

Aged care homes are strongly encouraged to arrange vaccinations for individuals or small numbers of residents as soon as they are due and eligible, rather than waiting for other residents to become eligible to hold a clinic.

Planning

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Identify the Registered Nurse (RN) Clinical Lead and contact your PHN to advise them of your key contact person.			
Make sure you are familiar with all COVID-19 vaccine guidance material.			
Ensure key people on site at your home have contact details for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the vaccination provider administering the vaccine at your homeyour PHN support person.			
Consider what arrangements need to be in place to obtain informed consent from each resident being vaccinated.			
Consider which residents will need a substitute decision maker to provide informed consent.			

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Allow plenty of time for vaccination information to be provided to all residents, their families and representatives prior to discussion of consent.			

Logistics

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
<p>Plan out the physical clinic set up which ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate space for individuals waiting to be vaccinated that observes physical distancing requirements a private space for consultation with individuals and vaccinator where applicable, a dedicated area where vaccines from multi-dose vials may be drawn up, labelled, and prepared for administration a dedicated, clean, well-lit space for administration of the vaccine to individuals, including a desk and chairs for individuals and vaccinator(s) adequate space for individuals to wait and be observed post-vaccination, separate from the area for administering the vaccine safe, risk free and directed access in vaccine clinical areas to allow movement of staff between areas while minimising the risk of workplace incidents adequate handwashing facilities for immunisation provider staff with visual reminders and cues in place to reduce the risk of errors. Talk to your PHN if you have any concerns about the clinic meeting the physical environment requirements. 			
Identify which residents may need to be vaccinated in their room and consider if they should be vaccinated at the start or the end of the clinic. They will each need to be monitored directly for 15 minutes post vaccine.			
Provide mechanisms for residents and families to ask questions around clinical suitability prior to and during vaccination clinics, including with nominated GPs.			
Make sure you have plenty of hand sanitiser and antibacterial wipes in stock to clean stations between patients.			
Make sure you have basic diagnostic equipment to monitor residents post vaccination.			

Staffing

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Identify if you need to roster on additional staff (e.g. Registered Nurses or Personal Care Assistants) to support residents.			
Ensure you have enough staff to support residents who may need extra reassurance, assistance and oversight.			
Make sure roles and responsibilities on the day are clear for everyone.			
Share information with staff about how the clinic will operate on the day.			
Have contingencies in place in the event staff experience side effects after their vaccination and are not able to attend work.			
Consider timing of staff vaccinations in relation to their shifts.			
Ensure staff understand potential side effects so they can review and support residents and provide pain relief medication if required.			
Lock in additional staff early to reduce uncertainty.			

Communication

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Consider how you can support and engage with your residents, their families and your staff to encourage vaccination uptake.			
Encourage residents and staff to view information (including translated information) on the Department of Health and Aged Care's COVID-19 vaccines website .			
Facilitate discussion between your residents and their GP or other healthcare professional if they require more information.			
Consider how you will communicate with families post-vaccination to provide reassurance about wellbeing.			
Engage and connect residents with OPAN (via 1800 700 600 or opan.com.au) and other local seniors' rights' advocates.			

Consent

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Start giving residents and staff access to information early, including facilitating discussions where required with vaccination providers to determine vaccine suitability and eligibility.			
Organise consent early, if possible, so relevant documentation can be easily provided to the vaccine provider on the day of vaccination.			
<p>Consider mechanisms to encourage substitute decision making approaches to vaccination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support information sharing and discussions with residents and their substitute decision makers so that the resident's preferences are properly accounted for. 			
Keep in mind that you will need to provide evidence of consent to the vaccine provider. Organise consent early if possible.			
Plan how you can accommodate individuals who request vaccination at the last minute.			

Supporting residents on the day

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Work with families and carers to ensure a support person will be present to assist residents who require additional support (e.g. translate information, calm nerves, provide reassurance).			
<p>Plan to use wrist bands (or similar) to identify residents who have been vaccinated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will help in monitoring residents to understand if a change in condition might be vaccine-related (those not vaccinated will not be wearing a wrist band). 			
Plan to celebrate residents' participation (like morning tea in the lounge room).			
Plan and develop processes and protocols for how you will monitor residents after the clinic, understanding the possible side effects and how they might impact individual residents.			

GPs and other vaccine providers

	Yes/No	Person responsible	Completion
Work with GPs and other primary care vaccine providers to provide early notice of your proposed date for the vaccination clinic.			
Consider whether GPs and other primary care vaccine providers need to meet with residents ahead of vaccination day to determine suitability and eligibility.			
Make sure you will have access to GPs on the day of the clinic in case you need GP assessment of resident suitability to receive the vaccine if something changes.			