



Australian Government

Department of Health

Chief Medical Officer

Dear Colleagues

Administration of seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccines

Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure that our most vulnerable populations are protected against the effect of both seasonal influenza and COVID-19.

We are fortunate in Australia to have access to vaccines which can protect against both of these diseases and most importantly to do this ahead of the upcoming winter period.

You may be aware, that the co-administration of a seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccine on the same day is not routinely recommended. This [advice](#), generated by our independent medical experts, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) was first developed on what was an absence of data on the safety and effectiveness of those vaccines being administered on the same day.

ATAGI advised that the preferred minimum interval between receipt of a COVID-19 vaccine and any inactivated influenza vaccine is 14 days. ATAGI have also advised however that there are circumstances when shortening the interval between the administrations of these vaccines is justified. This includes if there is an imminent need to administer either of these vaccines because of the prevailing local epidemiological situation, for example for protection from influenza or COVID-19.

I am writing today to advise that I have consulted with members of ATAGI and can assure you that given the evolving COVID-19 epidemiological situation in Victoria, it is my strong recommendation that residents and staff in residential aged care settings be vaccinated as quickly as possible against COVID-19.

In order to do this, it will mean that there is a shortened interval of time placed between the administrations of the seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccine. It is important to note that this will not have an impact on the effectiveness of the two vaccines, but rather ensure that our most vulnerable are protected at a time when COVID-19 is circulating more readily within the community.

Thank you once again for your continued efforts to combat COVID-19.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Professor Paul Kelly
Chief Medical Officer

27 May 2021