
**Advisory Committee on the Health Emergency Response to Coronavirus
(COVID-19) for People with Disability
Meeting 16 November 2021 – Summary of Outcomes**

Commonwealth agencies provided updates on:

- vaccination rates among:
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants, and
 - disability workers who have undergone NDIS worker screening
- COVID-19 cases and related deaths of NDIS participants and workers
- work targeting engagement with disability service providers
- data sharing arrangements that will enable states and territories to identify unvaccinated NDIS participants
- the development of triage guidance that consider the COVID-19 specific risks to people with disability. The National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce is developing this guidance.

The Department of Health provided the Commonwealth's response to recommendations in Inclusion Australia's paper on barriers to COVID-19 vaccination for people with an intellectual disability. The department shared a document outlining the actions for each recommendation.

States and territories provided jurisdictional updates on the vaccine rollout. They also provided information on vaccination rates for people living in:

- assisted boarding houses
- supported residential services, and
- juvenile detention facilities and prisons.

Services Australia presented on accessing non-digital vaccination certificates. People can request paper certificates:

- at service centres
- from vaccine providers, or
- by calling the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809.

The Committee discussed vaccine hesitancy and refusal by substitute decision makers. Committee Members emphasised the need for clear guidance for disability service providers on:

- identifying correct substitute decision-makers
- what to do when that person cannot be identified, and
- responding to substitute vaccine refusal by substitute consent givers.

The Committee emphasised the importance of directing service providers to relevant state and territory resources on consent regimes. This is due to varying arrangements between jurisdictions.

The Committee also discussed:

- concerns about hospitalisation as a management strategy for COVID-19 positive people with disability, who have mild or no symptoms
- providers' role identifying unvaccinated people
- accessibility of Departmental video resources, and, the need to include captioning, and
- vaccination rates for disadvantaged and vulnerable cohorts.

NEXT STEPS

The Department will work with other Commonwealth agencies to deliver a webinar for disability service providers. The webinar will address vaccine consent, substitute decision-makers and vaccine refusal.

The next meeting will provide updates on:

- work under National Cabinet on preparing for 'Living with COVID-19', including guidelines being developed on the triage of patients with COVID-19
- matched data on vaccination and people with disability, and
- COVID-19 vaccine communications for people with disability.

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is scheduled for 24 November 2021.