



Australian Government

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Keep your disability workforce up to date by circulating this alert widely in your organisation

Disability provider alert

7 December 2021

TGA provisionally approves Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for 5 to 11-year-olds

On Sunday 5th December 2021, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) provisionally approved the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine as safe and effective for use among children aged 5 to 11 years old.

The Australian Government will start rolling out the Pfizer vaccine to 5 to 11-year-olds from 10 January 2022, once all approvals have been made. The rollout depends on final considerations and recommendations from the vaccination experts on the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), and other related approvals.

[Click here to read the full media release from Minister Greg Hunt MP.](#)

ATAGI statement on SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant and COVID-19 booster doses

A booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine is currently available to anyone in Australia aged 18 years and over. However, they must have completed their primary course of vaccination at least six months ago.

On Friday 3rd December 2021, ATAGI provided a statement about the Omicron variant in relation to the timing of booster dose administration.

ATAGI states there is no evidence to suggest that earlier booster doses of current COVID-19 vaccines will augment protection against the Omicron variant.

ATAGI advises that in certain circumstances, the routine six-month interval for booster doses may be shortened to five months for logistical reasons, for example:

- for patients with a greater risk of severe COVID-19 in outbreak settings;

- if an individual is travelling overseas and will be away when their booster dose is due; or
- in outreach vaccination programs where access is limited.

[Click here to read the full ATAGI statement on SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant and COVID-19 booster doses.](#)

Webinar recording coming soon

COVID-19 Vaccination Consent, Hesitancy and Refusal:

A webinar for disability service providers on supporting clients with intellectual disability

The Australian Government held a webinar on Tuesday 7 December 2021 for disability service providers. The webinar covered issues of vaccination consent, hesitancy and refusal that can arise when supporting clients with intellectual disability.

A recording of the webinar will be available shortly, look out for the link in next week's Provider Alert.

Current hubs offering vaccination services

There are vaccination hubs offering specific services for people with disability, their carers, and disability workers. The list of current hubs is on the webpage for [disability vaccination clinics](#). This page also has links to state and territory websites with information about vaccination clinics for people with disability, including state and territory contact information. If you have a vaccination clinic or hub you would like us to promote, please [let us know](#).

The [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#) is still the main method to book an appointment.

Booster doses

People with disability who have completed their primary course of a COVID-19 vaccine at least six months ago are eligible for a booster dose. Booster doses are available through Commonwealth vaccination providers, either through in-reach or a dedicated disability hub. They are also available through other channels such as a GP, pharmacy, or state or territory vaccination clinic.

Disability service providers for disability residential accommodation settings will be contacted by a Commonwealth vaccination provider to organise in-reach for booster doses. This is for providers that received their primary course doses through the Commonwealth in-reach program. Commonwealth vaccination providers are currently working through their allocations, based on indicative booster dose due dates.

The process for supporting in-reach for a booster dose will be the same as preparing for dose 1 and dose 2. That is, confirming in-reach support is needed for a site, then arranging consent and support for individuals as required. For more information about on-site vaccination read the [COVID-19 vaccination – Disability residential accommodation checklist](#).

If you have an enquiry, you can contact DisabilityCovidVaccineDelivery@Health.gov.au

[See booster vaccine advice on the Department of Health's website](#)

Other ways to get a booster vaccine

When you become eligible to receive a booster vaccine, you can access a booster through any of these ways:

- Use the [COVID-19 Clinic Finder](#). The Clinic Finder also has information about:
 - getting help from a translator
 - booking for someone else
 - disability vaccination clinics.
- Talk to a doctor (GP)
- Visit a pharmacy that is administering COVID-19 vaccines.

National Coronavirus helpline and the Disability Gateway

The National Coronavirus Helpline now offers enhanced help to callers with disability, their family/friends or carers looking for information and advice about **COVID-19** or **COVID-19 vaccines**.

For more information people can call the helpline on 1800 020 080 and select Option 5.

Disability and aged care workers should select Option 4. This dedicated worker line can answer questions about vaccination and help book a vaccination appointment.

People with disability can also access support through the [Disability Gateway website](#) or by calling 1800 643 787 Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST)). This is a **free service** that also can help people make a booking to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

[See this video - How to use the Disability Gateway](#)

What's new on the Department of Health's website

- Updated information for [disability support workers](#) (including information about vaccine mandates).

Follow us on Facebook

Don't miss the latest news and updates about COVID-19 and other health matters – follow [the Department of Health on Facebook](#).

- Watch [Disability advocate Tara Elliffe receive her COVID-19 vaccination](#) and talk about her experience.