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## **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities COVID-19 Health Advisory Group**

**Update: 21 May 2021**

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities COVID-19 Health Advisory Group (Advisory Group) held its fifth meeting on 21 April 2021. Members include leaders from culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse communities and their representative organisations, health experts and medical and public health practitioners. The Advisory Group meets monthly and publishes a communique following each meeting. It has two Working Groups: the Communication Working Group and the Vaccination Strategy Working Group.

The Advisory Group plays a main role in supporting the Australian Government in an evidence-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It builds on the department's long engagement with culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse stakeholders. The Advisory Group will give advice on the experience of multicultural people and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will recommend options to lessen the health impacts of COVID-19 on people and communities from multicultural backgrounds.

### **Updates from this meeting**

The Department of Health (the department) provided an update on the Australian COVID-19 Vaccination Program roll out and recalibration. On 8 April 2021, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) provided a recommendation for the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine for people under 50 years of age. Following the announcement, National Cabinet met on 19 and 22 April 2021 and agreed to a series of changes.

The Advisory Group discussed the roles of the Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines following the recalibration. Extra AstraZeneca doses are being provided to Primary Care sites. The number of Commonwealth and state and territory vaccination sites is expanding as Pfizer supplies increase.

The department also gave an update on COVID-19 vaccine rollout across residential aged care facilities for residents and workforce. The workforce can access vaccines in multiple ways, including at new Pfizer sites. Vaccination in residential aged care facilities is on track to be complete in June.



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The Advisory Group heard about the communication content the department is distributing across different platforms. Products include regular updates for health practitioners, information for people 50 years and over, animations and videos. The department is taking a multi-channelled approach to promoting positive stories about people's experience of vaccination. The Advisory Group discussed recommendations to enhance communication with multicultural communities.

Members discussed the accessibility of vaccines for people without Medicare numbers, the rollout of vaccines in immigration detention centres, and data on vaccination coverage. Members discussed the coordination of communications messaging, how to reach CALD communities and information about the blood clotting side effect.

The department told members that the Secretary agreed to extend the Advisory Group through to 31 December 2021.

The Advisory Group will meet again in June 2021.

See [Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities COVID-19 Health Advisory Group](#) and [terms of reference](#) for more information.