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## Advisory Committee on the Health Emergency Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) for People with Disability Meeting 10 May 2022 – Summary of Outcomes

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Committee members with lived experience of disability and carers raised the following issues:

- the scope of the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation's (ATAGI's) recommendations on winter boosters of COVID-19 vaccine. ATAGI is currently considering its recommendations on winter boosters and how they cover groups at greater risk from COVID-19
- access to influenza vaccination for people with disability who are reluctant to visit health care settings due to high levels of COVID-19 in the community, and
- the currency of online infection prevention and control training for disability support workers and carers.

The Committee discussed communications on oral treatments for COVID-19, including:

- a webinar on oral treatments for COVID-19 and winter preparedness for people with disability held on 28 April. View this webinar on the [Department's website](#).
- the inclusion of information about oral treatments for COVID-19 in updated [COVID-19 Person-centred Emergency Preparedness Planning \(P-CEP\) guides](#) for people with disability, and
- the development of advice for inclusion in a newsletter for general practitioners on P-CEP guides and discussing oral treatments for COVID-19 with people with disability.

The Committee requested further communications for people with disability on access to these treatments.

The Department reported on the development of COVID-19 and influenza testing and treatment pathways for high-risk groups in the community. The Committee recommended that pathways reflect the efficacy of currently available influenza treatments. The Department will seek further feedback on these pathways out of session.

The Department provided an update on the project to consolidate the lessons learned by the Committee. The Department has contracted an independent organisation, Nous Group, to undertake this project. Nous Group will be contacting Committee members and participating government agencies about this work.

The Commonwealth reported on its development of a statement for disability service providers on:

- how providers can discuss vaccine refusal with substitute decision-makers, and
- the circumstances in which providers should apply to tribunals to seek consent for COVID-19 vaccination.

Some jurisdictions reported on tribunal applications where consent for COVID-19 vaccination had been sought.

The Department presented data on COVID-19 vaccination rates for people with disability across states and territories over time.

### NEXT STEPS

The Department will:

- circulate a statement on how providers can respond to vaccine refusal on behalf of people with disability for the Committee's consideration
- seek out of session feedback from the Committee on COVID-19 and influenza testing and treatment pathways for high-risk groups in the community
- investigate the availability of data on influenza vaccination rates among people with disability
- consider what further information on oral treatments for COVID-19 can be developed for people with disability
- consider what further information about flu vaccination can be developed for people with disability, and
- provide the Committee with updates on:
  - any resources to support people with mental health conditions to access COVID-19 vaccination, and
  - the status of the Department's online COVID-19 infection control training.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 24 May 2022.