
Advisory Committee on the Health Emergency Response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) for People with Disability

Meeting 26 April 2022 – Summary of Outcomes

Members of the Committee asked the Commonwealth to consider publishing a statement that provides clear guidance on:

- how disability support providers (providers) can discuss vaccine refusal with substitute decision-makers, and
- the circumstances in which providers should apply to the relevant tribunal to seek consent for COVID-19 vaccination.

Members also requested states and territories report on several tribunal applications. These are ones that seek consent for COVID-19 vaccination for a person with disability.

States and territories reported on strategies to improve COVID-19 vaccination rates among people with disability. Reports detailed:

- targeted outreach to local government areas with low vaccination rates
- specialist vaccination clinics for people with disability (e.g. pop-up clinics at disability services)
- the availability of sedation services
- communicating with unvaccinated individuals via text messages, emails, letters and videos
- engagement of Disability Liaison Officers, and
- cooperation across government agencies to reach specific groups (e.g. school students).

The Department presented data on COVID-19 vaccination rates for people with disability by:

- living arrangement, with a focus on people living in private rental accommodation, and
- by disability type with a focus on people with psychosocial disability and other mental health conditions.

The Committee requested further data on:

- third and winter doses of COVID-19 vaccine
- influenza vaccination
- the relationship between socioeconomic status and vaccination rates, and
- the use of antiviral treatments.

NEXT STEPS

The Commonwealth will consider providing a statement for disability support providers on the steps they can take when vaccine consent is denied on behalf of a National Disability Insurance Scheme participant.

States and territories will report on the number of tribunal applications made in their respective jurisdictions. These are the number of tribunal applications seeking consent for COVID-19 vaccination for people with disability.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 10 May 2022.