



Australian Government

COVID-19 VACCINATION

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

Disability provider alert

4 November 2022

Department of Health and Aged Care COVID-19 – Disability Support Workers

It is important that we ensure continued protection of those most vulnerable to severe illness from COVID-19. This is especially true in settings where there is increased risk of outbreaks occurring. As you are aware, isolation requirements for people who are COVID-19 positive changed on 14 October. The Department of Health and Aged Care recommends disability support workers do not provide disability support services for 7 days after testing positive for COVID-19. This includes while symptoms persist.

The Department of Health and Aged Care also continues to encourage disability support workers stay up to date with their [COVID-19 vaccinations](#). They are also encouraged to stay up to date with public health advice and requirements in their state and territory. Visit your state or territory government health website for more information.

The Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment ended on the 14 October. Workers in high-risk settings that test positive for COVID-19 may apply for the High-Risk Settings Pandemic Payment, effective from 15 October, with Services Australia. A high-risk setting includes disability care, aged care, Aboriginal healthcare and hospital care. Workers from high-risk settings must meet [eligibility criteria](#) to access this payment. Information on the payment and how to apply is available [here](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination: Commonwealth Vaccination In-Reach Program

Disability service providers can still support residents in disability accommodation settings (including NDIS SIL) to access the recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses. You can do this through the Commonwealth's Vaccination Administration Provider Program (VAPP). Both residents and staff can use in-reach (in-home) vaccination services.

Vaccination and staying up to date with recommended vaccinations continues to offer important protection against severe illness, hospitalisation and death from COVID-19.

If a VAPP provider has not already contacted your organisation, and residents need support to access their next COVID-19 dose, please submit an [expression of interest](#) online. For more information or any enquiries please contact DisabilityCovidVaccineDelivery@Health.gov.au.

Access for All – Disability awareness training

The National Disability Insurance Agency, through their NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Program, has funded the Access for All program. This free interactive online training raises awareness of the barriers people with disability experience when accessing mainstream health care. The course also provides strategies and resources to improve the accessibility of health services for people with disability. Click this link: <https://accessforall-checkup.talentlms.com/> to 'Sign up' and begin 'Access for All'.

ATAGI recommendations: paediatric booster dose

On 24 October 2022, [ATAGI recommended](#) a booster dose of the Paediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine be given to children aged 5 to 11 years, who:

- have completed a primary course of vaccination 3 or more months ago, and who:
 - are severely immunocompromised;
 - have a disability with significant or complex health needs;
 - have complex and/or multiple health conditions that increase the risk of severe COVID-19.

National Health Literacy Strategy - consultation

The Department of Health and Aged Care has procured the Sax Institute, in partnership with the Sydney Health Literacy Lab, to develop the National Health Literacy Strategy (NHLS). The NHLS will aim to improve the health literacy environment in Australia and individuals' self-care capabilities.

The Sax Institute has developed a Consultation Paper which includes a draft NHLS Framework, to seek stakeholder and community feedback. The paper will be available online for comment until **9 November 2022 at 11:59pm**, on the Department's [Consultation Hub](#).

COVID-19 response update – weekly webinars

The Department of Health and Aged Care hosts weekly COVID-19 update webinars for health and aged care sector staff. The webinars are hosted by the Deputy Chief Medical Officers and other experts. There is no need to register to attend. Go to the [Department of Health and Aged Care website](#) for more information and to view previous webinars.

Support for people with disability, providers, carers and families

Disability Gateway on **1800 643 787** - open from 8 am to 8 pm, Monday to Friday.

Department of Health and Aged Care website at www.health.gov.au

National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline on **1800 020 080**. People with disability, their families and carers should choose Option 5, disability workers should choose Option 4.

For information in a language other than English, call the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccine Helpline on **1800 020 080** and press option 8. This is a free service.

The Translating and Interpreting Service is also available on **131 450**.

For people who are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, call the National Relay Service on **133 677**.

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