



## COVID-19 VACCINATION

# Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

## Provider Bulletin

26 July 2021

*Bulletins provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccine Program.*

### Key Messages

#### The Therapeutic Goods Administration approves the use of the Pfizer (Comirnaty) vaccine for children aged 12 to 15 years

On 23 July 2021, the [Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) (TGA) announced provisional approval for the Pfizer vaccine for use in children aged 12 to 15 years. Up until now, the Pfizer vaccine had only been approved for us in Australia for people aged 16 years and over.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) is currently considering this approval and will provide expert advice on which groups of adolescents should be prioritised for the roll-out of the vaccine, and how and when it should be administered.

#### New priority service for residential aged care facilities workforce

A dedicated priority service has been established on the National Coronavirus Helpline, to help the residential aged care facilities workforce to make a vaccine appointment. The service is staffed by clinical call handlers and can assist with enquiries, managing concerns, and can guide callers through the Eligibility Checker and Vaccine Clinic Finder, to make a booking. The service is accessed by calling 1800 020 080 and choosing **option 4**.

#### Translations available through the COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker

The COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker has been translated into a range of languages to support individuals from a culturally and linguistically diverse background to access information about COVID-19 vaccines. The languages now available include:

- Chinese simplified
- Spanish
- Arabic
- Greek
- Hindi
- Turkish
- Chinese traditional
- Korean
- Italian
- Vietnamese
- Serbian
- Punjabi

## Change of Saline Needle

Due to the large increase in Pfizer doses being distributed across the country, the National COVID Vaccine Taskforce is making changes to consumable deliveries to ensure the best use of the available consumables across the program.

A different saline needle will now be available with all Pfizer orders. There are no clinical differences between the previous saline needle and the new saline needle.

### Current Saline needle supplied

Sub-category	Supplier (or Sponsor)	Logistics Product ID (SKU)	Product Display Name + (UOM description *i.e. minimum order size)	ARTG ID	Purpose for Pfizer
Needle	Becton Dickinson	304727	Needle 22 gauge bevelled 25mm [1 inch] (pack of 100)	331117	<p>Main purpose given limited stock: Injecting saline into the Pfizer vaccines (1 per vial/6 doses)</p> <p>Other potential uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration of adrenaline in the event of an anaphylactic reaction (have on hand in case of emergency)</li> <li>Drawing up vaccine (while ATAGI recommends 19 or 21 gauge bevel needle for this purpose, the ATAGI SG2 advised that 22 gauge would also be acceptable) (1 per dose if this method used)</li> <li>Administering vaccine to most adults (1 per dose)</li> </ul>

### Replacement saline needle supplied

Sub-category	Supplier (or Sponsor)	Logistics Product ID (SKU)	Product Display Name + (UOM description *i.e. minimum order size)	ARTG ID	Purpose for Pfizer
Needle	Becton Dickinson	300900	Needle 22 gauge bevelled 32mm [1-1/4 inch] (pack of 100)	331117	<p>Main purpose given limited stock: administering vaccine (and also drawing up if using the same needle), to very large/obese people (but not morbidly obese who require 38 mm) (1 per dose)</p> <p>Other potential uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injecting saline into the Pfizer vaccines (1 per vial/6 doses)</li> <li>Administration of adrenaline in the event of an anaphylactic reaction (have on hand in case of emergency)</li> <li>Drawing up vaccine (while ATAGI recommends 19 or 21 gauge bevel needle for this purpose, the ATAGI SG2 advised that 22 gauge would also be acceptable) (1 per dose if this method used)</li> </ul>

## Updated advice on Health website

The Department has now updated the [clinical considerations webpage](#) to reflect recently published ATAGI advice on the following:

- [Advice for people with a contraindication to a second dose of COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Precautionary conditions for COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca](#)
- [Advice for people with a past history of precautionary conditions, who have received dose one of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccinations in pregnancy](#)
- [People who have received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine not yet available in Australia](#)

The Department has also updated its [COVID-19 vaccine - Advice for vaccine providers](#) page.

## Revised ATAGI statement

On 24 July, ATAGI released a revised statement in response to the NSW Outbreak – this advice is attached below for your reference.

## ATAGI Statement: Response to NSW Outbreak 24th July 2021: 11.50am AEST

### Summary

All individuals aged 18 years and above in greater Sydney, including adults under 60 years of age, should strongly consider getting vaccinated with any available vaccine including COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca. This is on the basis of the increasing risk of COVID-19 and ongoing constraints of Comirnaty (Pfizer) supplies. In addition, people in areas where outbreaks are occurring can receive the second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine 4 to 8 weeks after the first dose, rather than the usual 12 weeks, to bring forward optimal protection.

### Detail

ATAGI continues to closely monitor the epidemiology of COVID-19 in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. The outbreak in NSW continues to grow and the risk of disease, particularly in the greater Sydney area, is likely to continue to be significant over coming weeks.

ATAGI reaffirms our previous [advice](#) that in a large outbreak, the benefits of the COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca are greater than the risk of rare side effects for all age groups.

In the context of the current risk of COVID-19 in NSW and with the ongoing constraints on Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine supplies, all adults in greater Sydney should strongly consider the benefits of earlier protection with COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca rather than waiting for alternative vaccines

Maximal protection requires two doses of vaccine, but even a single dose of either vaccine provides substantial [protection](#) (by more than 70%) against hospitalisation. A single dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca partially [reduces](#) transmission by around half and therefore may also benefit close contacts and the community. It should be noted that there is a delay of 2-3 weeks after receiving a first dose of vaccine and being protected from COVID-19.

A second reason for ATAGI to recommend that individuals strongly consider vaccination at this time is emerging data about severity of disease. The Delta variant may be more severe than the original SARS-CoV-2 strain. The proportion of people less than 60 years requiring hospitalisation appears to be higher than was reported in outbreaks with the original SARS-CoV-2 strain. This reinforces the benefit of protection with any available vaccine.

People considering vaccination should be informed of the benefits and risks and give informed consent. People who receive COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca should be aware of the [symptoms of thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome](#) (TTS), and when to seek prompt medical attention. Early detection of TTS means that people can get treatment and this can improve their outcomes.

ATAGI has [previously issued advice](#) recommending a shorter interval between the first and second doses of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca of 4-8 weeks in an outbreak (versus the routine 12 week interval) so that maximal protection against COVID-19 can be achieved earlier.

ATAGI also reinforces that the interval between the first and second doses of Comirnaty (Pfizer) is 3-6 weeks, providing flexibility in managing available supplies of vaccines, whilst also noting two doses are required for optimal protection. Spacing Comirnaty (Pfizer) to a routine interval of 6 weeks would allow limited vaccine supplies to be redirected to obtain first dose protection in outbreak areas of greatest need.