



Changes to COVID-19 vaccine access and indications (updated)

1 July 2021

Distributed to:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance
- Directors of Public Health

Action required by:

- Chief Executives
- Directors of Clinical Governance
- Medical Staff
- Public Health Units
- Immunisation Staff.

We recommend you also inform:

LHD staff involved in delivering vaccination

Directors of:

- Emergency Departments
- Intensive Care Units
- Surgery
- General Medicine
- Cardiology
- Respiratory medicine
- Haematology
- Neurology

Expert Reference Group

Content reviewed by:

- NSW Health Public Health Response Branch

Clinical Excellence Commission

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Email: CEC-Recalls@health.nsw.gov.au

Internet Website: <http://health.nsw.gov.au/sabs>

Intranet Website: <http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/sabs>

Review date

1 August 2021

Updated advice regarding choice of COVID-19 vaccines

On Thursday 17 June the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) provided updated advice that Pfizer is the preferred COVID-19 vaccine for people **under 60 years**. On 29 June, the Australian Government announced that people under 60 years of age can access the COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca through their GP, with fully informed consent. Clinicians should be alert to the **possibility of adverse events in people aged less than 60 following COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccination.**

Pfizer COMIRNATY® COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for:

- People under 60 years
- People with a history of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST)
- People with a history of heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT)
- People with a history of splanchnic (mesenteric, portal, splenic) vein thrombosis
- Patients with anti-phospholipid syndrome with thrombosis
- People with contraindications to COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, such as:
 - Anaphylaxis to a previous dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, or to an ingredient of the vaccine
 - Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia after the first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca
 - Other serious adverse events attributed to the first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca (these events should be reported to the local Public Health Unit. A specialist service is available to support clinical decision making and advice)

ATAGI advises the following can continue to receive AstraZeneca:

People aged 60 years and older (other than those with conditions above), including:

- People with a history of venous thromboembolism in typical sites, such as deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism
- People with other predisposition to form blood clots, such as those with Factor V Leiden, or other non-immune thrombophilic disorders
- People with a family history of clots or clotting conditions
- People currently receiving anticoagulant medications
- People with a history of ischaemic heart disease or cerebrovascular accident
- People with a current or past history of thrombocytopenia (low platelet count).

ATAGI reinforces that people of any age who have had their first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca without any serious adverse events can receive the second dose.

Access to Pfizer COMIRNATY® COVID-19 vaccination

- Patients who receive medical advice that Pfizer is preferred for them should regularly check the COVID-19 vaccine [eligibility checker](#) and monitor the 'clinic booking' link as local availability of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine may change
- LHDs should refer patients requiring clinical assessment regarding vaccine suitability to their local Pfizer vaccination clinic or GP
- Patients under 60 years can access Pfizer vaccine at a NSW Health clinic through the vaccine [eligibility checker](#).

Suggested actions required by Local Health Districts/Networks

1. Ensure clinicians are aware of updated advice regarding COVID-19 vaccines
2. Remind clinicians to be alert to possible suspected adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination, and report to the local public health unit on **1300 066 055**.



Safety Notice 013/21

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Specialist immunisation advice

If specialist advice is needed, for example in relation to providing the second dose of vaccine, contact the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) NSW Immunisation Specialist Service (NSWISS)

☎ Phone: 1800 679 477 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) **OR**

✉ Email: SCHN-NSWISS@health.nsw.gov.au

For urgent after-hours clinical support, contact NSWISS via The Children's Hospital at Westmead switchboard on ☎ 02 9845 0000

Contraindications and precautions to immunisation with COVID-19 vaccines

It is important that patients are provided with the latest advice regarding which COVID-19 vaccine is recommended. Latest information for clinicians is available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/vaccine/Pages/clinicians.aspx>. This advice changes regularly as additional information around vaccine safety becomes available.

Where clinical advice is required regarding interpretation of this advice please contact the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) NSW Immunisation Specialist Service (NSWISS).

Obsolète