

Information for carers: Supporting someone through the COVID-19 vaccination



Some people will need support to access the free COVID-19 vaccination program. If you are supporting a person who may need help with the process of getting a vaccination, this information sheet may be useful.

What vaccines are available?

There are two types of COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved by the ATAGI (Australian Technical Advisory Group for Immunisation - medical experts) in Australia

- AstraZeneca vaccine (for people aged 60 years and over)
- Pfizer vaccine (preferred for people 16-59 years).

Both vaccines are safe and effective. The age of the person you support will determine what vaccine they will receive.

Supporting someone to make a vaccination booking

You can help someone make an appointment by:

1. Helping them understand where they can get an appointment. There are a range of options.
 - A GP if they have registered to be part of the rollout program
 - GP-led respiratory clinics
 - Tasmanian Government Community Clinics
 - Aboriginal Community Controlled HealthServices

More information can be found at: www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/vaccination-information/covid-19-vaccination/book-your-vaccine.

2. Supporting the person to book an appointment.

Carers are also able to get a vaccination

Carers (paid and unpaid) of someone living with disability, serious mental illness and/or underlying medical conditions have also been prioritised to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

If you would like to receive the vaccine at the same time as the person you support, please ask if it is possible when booking an appointment for the person you support.

Find out where you can make an appointment at the www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au website.

What to expect at the appointment

You can attend the vaccination appointment with a person, or help them to arrange another support person to do this.

Talk about what they can expect to happen at the appointment, such as:

- When they arrive for their appointment, they may have to wait, so they might want to bring a phone or activity for entertainment
- The whole process may take up to a one hour
- Some people might be wearing face masks
- The person giving the vaccine will ask questions about how they have reacted to other vaccines in the past
- The place where they are getting the vaccine might be busy and noisy

- An appointment will be made for their second dose at the first appointment. You can support them with this.

It is helpful if the person you support takes their Medicare card and identification (e.g. driver's license) to the vaccination appointment, but it is not essential.

The person being vaccinated will be asked to complete a **consent form** at their vaccination appointment. You can help the person being vaccinated to complete the consent form. An Easy Read guide about giving consent is available here: www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-giving-your-consent-easy-read

The person being vaccinated will need to wait 15 minutes after the vaccination to make sure they are well before leaving the clinic.

If the person needs to cancel their appointment this can be done by phoning the GP or GP respiratory clinic they have booked into, or if they are attending a Community Clinic calling **1800 671 738**.

Supporting someone after they have been vaccinated

- Support the person who has been vaccinated to read and understand the information that will be given to them about possible adverse reactions or side effects to the vaccine and what to do if they have an adverse reaction.
- If you are concerned about a **life-threatening illness or reaction, call 000**. Severe or unexpected reactions are rare.
- If you are concerned about another person's reactions, but it is not life threatening, you can seek advice from the person's local doctor.
- If you or a health care provider are concerned about a side effect, we encourage you to report it. You can get advice about vaccine symptoms and report through the **NPS MedicineWise Adverse Medicine Events (AME) Line** on **1300 134 237**, 7 days a week 8am-8pm AEST/AEDT Or call the Tasmanian Public Health Hotline on **1800 671 738** and ask to talk to a Clinical Nurse Consultant.

Information about vaccines

If the person is uncertain about vaccination or has questions about their health and the vaccine, encourage them to make an appointment with their GP to discuss.

There is also a series of Easy Read Fact Sheets about the COVID-19 vaccine available here: www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/covid-19-vaccination-easy-read-resources

Information about frequently asked questions about vaccinations is available here: www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/vaccination-information/covid-19-vaccination/faqs