

COVID-19 vaccine FAQ for non-participating practices in phase 1b

Below are some of the commonly asked questions and answers received from practices who have opted not to participate in phase 1b.

How will my eligible patients know where to access the COVID-19 vaccine?

The COVID-19 Vaccination and Booking Service will be available from the week of the Monday 15 March 2021. Patients will be able to assess their eligibility and access a list of participating vaccine providers in their area. We have not been advised of a specific go live date but we will provide the link once the information is available.

Do patients have to book their COVID-19 vaccination through an online booking system?

Patients can book an appointment with a participating practice directly, without going through the online booking system. The online booking system is now known as *The COVID-19 Vaccination and Booking Service* and assists patients to determine their eligibility and provides a list of participating practices, however it is not compulsory for patients to use this service to book their COVID-19 vaccine.

When will the COVID-19 vaccine be available for patients eligible under phase 1b?

The phase 1b roll out in general practice will take place over 4 weeks starting on the 22nd March 2021. There are 185 participating practices in the North Brisbane and Moreton Bay region – 51 practices will start in week 1, 15 practices in week 2, 55 practices in week 3 and 64 practices in week 4. Initial allocation of doses has been quite conservative until available supply increases; therefore, patients may not be able to access the vaccine immediately.

Who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine?

The following priority population groups are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine under phase 1b and includes anyone eligible under phase 1a. Patients can also check their eligibility with the online [Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#)

Phase 1a priority population groups include:

- quarantine and border workers
- frontline health care workers
- aged care and disability residents
- aged care and disability staff.

Phase 1b priority population groups include:

- people 70 years of age or older

www.brisbanenorthphn.org.au

Level 1, Market Central
120 Chalk Street, Lutwyche QLD 4030
PO Box 845 Lutwyche QLD 4030
t 07 3630 7300 f 07 3630 7333

Level 2, 10 Endeavour Boulevard
North Lakes QLD 4509
PO Box 929 North Lakes QLD 4509
t 07 3490 3490 f 07 3630 7333

- health care workers
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults over 55 years
- people with an underlying medical condition, including people with a disability
- critical and high risk workers, including Australian Government officials about to be deployed overseas on official government business.

What proof of eligibility will my patients need?

Patients will need to prove their eligibility to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Healthcare Workers	Proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer) or Phase 1B Declaration Form
Critical and high risk workers	Proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer) or Phase 1B Declaration Form
People over 70 years	All standard forms of identification (drivers licence, passport) will be accepted
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over 55 years	Self-identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person (remember to ask the question)
People over 18 years with an underlying medical condition, including disability	Medical records (for example, a clinic record, My Health Record, printout of chronic disease plan); a referral from a GP or treating specialist; or a Phase 1B Declaration Form
Carers and disability workers	Carers documentation or proof of occupation (ID card or letter from employer/centre-based support provider); or a Phase 1B Declaration Form

Where can patients who do not have a Medicare card access the COVID-19 vaccine?

All eligible patients in Australia can access the COVID-19 vaccine even if they do not have a Medicare card. Patients who do not have a Medicare card can access the COVID-19 vaccine through Commonwealth funded GP Respiratory Clinics.

Where can our staff get vaccinated?

General practice staff, including non-clinical staff are eligible under phase 1b and can contact a participating general practice to arrange their vaccination. A list of participating practices will be listed on *The COVID-19 Vaccination and Booking Service* which will go live in the week of 15 March 2021.

Can our practice join the phase 1b rollout?

If you submitted an EOI and received an ineligible letter but you are now eligible e.g. your accreditation status has changed, please email covid19@brisbanenorthphn.org.au and you will be added to a wait list.

If you submitted an EOI and received an eligible letter and then withdrew from phase 1b and now wish to opt back-in, please email covid19@brisbanenorthphn.org.au and you will be added to a wait list.

If you did not submit an EOI or you are a non-accredited practice, you cannot join the phase 1b rollout at this stage. There will be an opportunity to participate in the next phase and we will be in touch when we have more information.

What can I do to prepare my patients for their COVID-19 vaccine?

As your patient's usual provider, you play an important role in informing and preparing your patients for their COVID-19 vaccine. You may wish to do any or all of the following:

- notify your eligible patients of where they can access the vaccine
- support your patients to provide proof of their eligibility by uploading a shared health summary to My Health Record or for paper based practices you could provide a letter for your patient to take to their vaccination appointment confirming their eligibility
- help answer any questions they have about the vaccine (there will be patient resources available soon to support this).
- set realistic expectations on when patients might be able to access the vaccine due to demand being higher than current supply

We will be providing the influenza vaccination to our patients, do we need to make sure patients have not had the COVID-19 vaccination recently?

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has provided advice on when the influenza vaccine can be provided to patients receiving the COVID-19 vaccination. [ATAGI advice on the relative timing of administering influenza and COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 Version 2.0](#)

If your practice is delivering the influenza vaccination you should include checking whether a patient has recently received or is due to receive a COVID-19 vaccination as part of your screening process.

How do I know if a patient has received their COVID-19 vaccine?

All COVID-19 vaccine information will be uploaded to AIR and can be accessed on the AIR site via Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) or via the patient's My Health Record.

Can I bill the COVID-19 assessment item if I am assessing a patient's suitability or eligibility for a patient prior to them attending another practice to receive the vaccine?

No, for a service to be valid, a COVID-19 vaccine must be available for immediate delivery to a patient who is assessed as suitable. You can however bill a consult item number (e.g. Item 23).

More information can be found here [Medicare Benefits Schedule – Note AN.44.1](#)

What do I do if a patient has received the COVID-19 vaccine and presents to my practice with an adverse reaction following immunisation (AEFI)?

You or the patient should notify the provider who administered the vaccine immediately so they can follow the appropriate AEFI reporting process. If this is not possible you can report the AEFI yourself following the below process.

COVID-19 vaccine providers in **Queensland** must report COVID-19 AEFIs using the [COVID 19 Adverse Event Following Immunisation Reporting Form](#) and send to COVID_AEFI@health.qld.gov.au.

If you follow this process you did not need to complete a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) AEFI form, this will be done automatically by QLD Health.

More information can be found on the [Queensland Health Website – adverse event following immunisation](#).

Information in this document is current as of 14/3/2021 however is subject to change due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 vaccine phase 1b roll-out.