



Queensland
Government

Metro North Health

File number: J21/9551

General Practitioners (GPs) Metro North Health Catchment

Dear Doctors

We thank you for your continued service and support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are writing to you to draw your attention to issues that Metro North Health vaccination services have identified in relation to medical exemptions for COVID-19 vaccination. Within Metro North Health (MNH), medical exemptions are generally limited to medical contraindications to COVID-19 vaccination.

There are very few medical contraindications for COVID-19 vaccination. General Practitioners are strongly encouraged to refer to the ATAGI advice located here <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/08/covid-19-vaccination-atagi-clinical-guidance-on-covid-19-vaccine-in-australia-in-2021.pdf>

Please note before giving exemption letters the only medical contraindications to Pfizer (Comirnaty) and Moderna (Spikevax) vaccines are:

- Anaphylaxis to a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Spikevax or Comirnaty) is a contraindication to further doses of either vaccine;
- Anaphylaxis to any component of the vaccine, including Polyethylene Glycol (PEG);
- Myocarditis and / or Pericarditis attributed to a previous dose of either Comirnaty or Spikevax;
- any other serious adverse event attributed to a previous dose of Comirnaty or Spikevax (and without another cause identified) that has been reported to state adverse programs and / or the ATAGI Clinical Guidance on COVID-19 Vaccine in Australia_v7.0 Date: 19 August 2021 19 TGA, and, has been determined following review by, and / or on the opinion of, an experienced immunisation provider / medical specialist taking into account whether repeat vaccine doses would be associated with a risk of recurrence of the serious adverse event*

Assessment of adverse events following immunisation requires detailed information on the event, a determination of the likelihood of a causal link with vaccination, as well as the severity of the condition. Serious adverse events are generally defined as those which require hospitalisation (e.g. Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia following the first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca); are medically significant (e.g. Immune Thrombocytopenia Purpura, Myocarditis), are potentially life threatening (e.g. Anaphylaxis) and / or result in persistent or significant disability (e.g. Guillain-Barre Syndrome). These reactions do not typically include expected local or systemic reactions known to occur within the first few days after vaccination. Attributing a serious adverse event to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine may require discussion with the individual's GP, local immunisation service or relevant medical specialist.

Temporary medical exemptions may be considered for:

- Those with a documented history of COVID-19 infection in the last six months - in which case the laboratory test result confirming COVID-19 infection should be submitted as evidence.

People with a history of any of the following conditions can receive Comirnaty or Spikevax but advice should be sought from a GP, Immunisation Specialist or Cardiologist about the best timing of vaccination and whether any additional precautions are recommended:

- Recent (i.e. within the past six months) inflammatory cardiac illness e.g. Myocarditis, Pericarditis, Endocarditis;
- Acute Rheumatic Fever (i.e. with active myocardial inflammation) or acute Rheumatic Heart disease;
- People aged 12 - 29 years with Dilated Cardiomyopathy;
- Complex or severe congenital heart disease including single ventricle (Fontan) circulation;
- Decompensated heart failure;
- Cardiac transplant recipients.

The following are not contraindications to Comirnaty or Spikevax vaccines:

- pregnancy, planning pregnancy
- breastfeeding
- fertility treatment
- immune compromise.

If you have any questions or wish to clarify a particular circumstance please not hesitate to email Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook at CMO-MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au or contact on telephone 3647 9589.

Yours Sincerely



Adjunct Professor Jackie Hanson
Acting Chief Executive
Metro North Health

27 / 09 / 2021



Dr Elizabeth Rushbrook
Chief Medical Officer
Metro North Health

27 / 09 / 2021

CC: MN EOC Vaccination Medical Team
Queensland Adult Specialist Immunisation Service, RBWH
Metro North COVID-19 Vaccination Exemption Committee