

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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VICTORIAN HEALTH SERVICES READY FOR VACCINE ROLLOUT

The first stage of the Commonwealth's coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination program will be ready to be rolled out in Victoria for high-risk, priority people at nine suburban and regional health services across the state as soon as a vaccine is available.

Victorians at greatest risk of COVID-19 will be provided with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine at Victorian public hospital vaccination hubs at Western Health, Austin Health, Monash Health, Barwon Health, Goulburn Valley Health, Latrobe Health, Bendigo Health, Ballarat Health and Albury-Wodonga Health.

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is the first COVID-19 vaccine to receive Commonwealth regulatory approval in Australia, undergoing a complete assessment and approval process and meeting high safety, efficacy and quality standards. Two doses are provided at least three weeks apart and the vaccine must be stored and transported at -70°C.

The Commonwealth advises the first doses of the Pfizer vaccine are expected to arrive and be rolled out in mid-to-late February.

Australia's COVID-19 vaccines will be available in phases, as defined by the Commonwealth's schedule, with the Commonwealth prioritising groups based on expert medical and public health advice.

People eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine as part of Phase 1a include:

- Quarantine and border workers and all staff working in the hotel quarantine program
- Frontline at-risk health care workers including hospital staff working in COVID and suspected COVID wards, emergency department and ICU staff, staff at GP respiratory clinics and COVID-19 testing facilities, ambulance staff and paramedics
- Aged care and disability care staff and residents.

Further roll-out of other vaccines, including the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, will depend on the Commonwealth's regulatory approval, volume and timing of doses becoming available. Work is underway to identify sites across Victoria with the aim of ensuring all Victorians can easily get vaccinated.

To see the latest information and advice about the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine in Victoria, please visit: coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine or health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"The vaccine is safe, effective and free – and it will be provided first to those Victorians who are most at risk of infection or serious illness, such as people in aged care and our frontline health staff."

"Our priority is to make sure that any vaccine which becomes available can be administered to Victorians as quickly and safely as possible."

"Getting Victorians who are most at risk of infection vaccinated as soon as possible will protect the health of those vaccinated, as well as their families and the whole community."

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