

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality
Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services



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HIGH-RISK WORKERS TO RECEIVE FIRST VACCINE IN VICTORIA

Workers most likely to come into direct contact with a suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) case will be the first Victorians vaccinated under the Commonwealth's COVID-19 vaccination program.

Following arrival of the vaccine, from Monday, trained Victorian health professionals will start delivering doses of the Pfizer vaccine to hotel quarantine and health hotel workers, airport and port workers, high-risk frontline health staff and public sector residential aged care staff and residents.

Public health services operating hospital vaccination 'hubs' will administer the Pfizer vaccines at dedicated hospital facilities, hotel quarantine settings, Melbourne Airport, or through mobile outreach teams.

Austin Health, Monash Health and Western Health hubs will deliver the initial vaccines to Victoria's most at-risk workers. Alfred Health will also work with the Monash Health hub to deliver vaccines.

Hubs will deliver the vaccine to public sector residential aged care patients and workers, with the Commonwealth responsible for providing the vaccine to residents and workers in private sector aged care and disability care.

The Barwon Health hub will begin its public sector residential aged care program from next week, trialling an outreach model to be implemented across regional Victoria. Barwon Health will also vaccinate port of entry workers in Portland.

Hubs at Albury-Wodonga Health, Ballarat Health Services, Bendigo Health, Goulburn Valley Health, and Latrobe Regional Hospital will begin operating in the coming weeks.

The Commonwealth has allocated 12,000 initial doses of the Pfizer vaccine for use at the hospital vaccination hubs in the first week of the program, with the Commonwealth set to provide 59,000 doses of the vaccine to Victoria over the first four weeks.

The Pfizer vaccine was the first COVID-19 vaccine to receive Commonwealth regulatory approval from the TGA in Australia. It meets high safety, efficacy and quality standards. Two doses of the vaccine will be provided at least three weeks apart. The vaccine must be stored and transported at -70°C.

The AstraZeneca vaccine was approved by the TGA on 16 February. The first doses of this vaccine are expected to be available for use in March. As Victoria receives increased vaccine supplies of both the Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines, the rollout will progress through to phase 1b, 2a and 2b priority groups. Victoria continues to work with the Commonwealth on options for delivery of these doses, such as more suburban and regional hubs, community-based settings and outreach models. More information about additional vaccination centres will be provided over the coming weeks, as details are confirmed.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Our priority is to support the Commonwealth to make sure that the vaccine is administered to workers at the highest risk of contracting COVID-19 as quickly and safely possible."

"Whether they work in hotel quarantine, at the airport, or a specialist COVID ward – we need to keep Victorians most at risk of infection safe, while they continue to keep Victorians safe."

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