

Media Release

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



Friday, 11 February 2022

VACCINATORS REPORTING FOR DUTY

More than 1,000 Victorians have applied to help vaccinate people across the state as part of a push to expand the vaccination workforce to include health students, retired nurses and other trained workers.

As the state edges closer to 50 per cent of adults protected with a third vaccine dose, 130 additional vaccinators have completed training to administer vaccinations, while more than 700 others are being trained - in order to boost vaccination rates and free up health workers like nurses to return to their normal duties.

The new vaccinators, many of whom have previous healthcare or vaccinating experience, are joining nurses, allied health professionals, and other health workers in state-run centres.

They will be supported and lead by a Supervising Authorised Immuniser provided by health services with relevant skills and experience in vaccination. The vaccinators are not responsible for establishing patient consent and will administer vaccines only to people aged 18 and over.

The vaccinators have completed the mandatory Commonwealth and Victorian COVID-19 vaccination skills and competencies training - equivalent to the requirements for other emergency authorised vaccination workforces. Their other duties may include patient support, such as mobility assistance, general duties and infection control.

The training surge comes as the state prepares to end its coordinated Pandemic Code Brown on Monday, 14 February, following a steady reduction in hospitalisations and fewer staff furloughs.

The measure has been in place for just over three weeks and led to immediate short-term relief across stretched public hospitals and ambulance services during the Omicron peak.

The Department of Health will work closely with health services to lift the coordinated Code Brown, while continuing to support individual hospitals as needed.

A further increase to non-urgent elective surgery will also begin from Monday, 14 February – including private hospitals being able to perform up to 50 per cent of all elective surgery in metropolitan Melbourne and up to 75 per cent of all elective surgery in regional areas.

Public hospitals in regional Victoria will be able to resume all category two elective surgery, dependent on workforce availability.

The Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and the Royal Eye and Ear Hospital will be able to resume all Category 2 procedures, while all other public hospitals in Melbourne will continue to be restricted to emergency and urgent elective surgery.

The Minister will consider further easing next week provided that we continue to see hospitalisations and infections reduce, pending an assessment of staff availability and furloughs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

“A third dose of the vaccine provides the strongest protection from this virus and we now have hundreds more trained staff who are able to help you get a jab.”

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“By helping Victorians in relevant fields get the training they need to support our vaccination program, we’re ensuring health workers can return to their usual jobs and provide care for Victorians in hospitals.”

“Victoria’s first ever Pandemic Code Brown has been an extraordinary system-wide effort which allowed us to prioritise care in the face of significant pressure – providing much needed support for our exhausted healthcare workers. As that pressure continues to ease, now is the right time to lift it.”