

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



Thursday, 4 August 2022

HALF A MILLION VICTORIANS RECEIVE FREE FLU VACCINE

More than half a million Victorians have received a free influenza vaccine to protect themselves and their loved ones this flu season, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's investment in making the flu shot free.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced that more than 500,000 Victorians received a vaccine from more than 2,150 GPs and pharmacies that participated in the Labor Government's \$33 million free flu vaccine program between 1 June and 10 July this year.

As a result of the program, almost 580,000 more Victorians have received a flu vaccine compared to 2021, bringing the total to almost three million people vaccinated for influenza – a 22.2 per cent increase from last year.

The cold weather also serves as a timely reminder to make sure your family is up to date with all their vaccinations, including their COVID-19 jabs. There is no interval required between receiving a COVID-19 and flu vaccine.

While flu rates in the Victorian community have declined from their peak in June, it remains a risk this winter and it is never too late to receive a flu vaccine.

With high levels of COVID-19 in the community, it is important for Victorians to continue to protect themselves and the community against the flu. This is particularly important in infants and children aged six months to five years, who can access the vaccine for free under the National Immunisation Program.

Anyone with cold and flu symptoms should get tested for COVID-19 and remain at home until their symptoms have cleared – regardless of whether it turns out to be COVID-19 or flu. People who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate for seven days from the date of their result.

For more information on how to stay well this winter, visit: betterhealth.vic.gov.au/stay-well-this-winter.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"By removing as many barriers as possible, hundreds of thousands more Victorians rolled up their sleeves for a flu vaccination this year and helped protect their loved ones and our health system."

"Victorians have helped their families stay safe this winter by getting vaccinated for both the flu and COVID-19, getting tested if you have any symptoms, and staying home while unwell."

"Even though rates of flu have declined from their peak, it's still not too late to receive your flu vaccination."