



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Aboriginal sector communication update #20

Friday 28 May 2021 14:00 Hours

COVID-19 is a continually changing situation, please check the latest information and updates to find the most current public health advice, please go to wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus and healthy.wa.gov.au/COVID-19

This regular statewide communication update is to keep health professionals abreast of the state-wide public health messages and resources that have been developed by Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) for the Aboriginal community and health professionals for COVID-19.

COVID-19 case numbers

- As of **28 May 2021**, there are **1017** confirmed cases, **90** historical cases and **2** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **1006** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **1,179,183** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **406,648** total vaccine doses have been administered, including **53,268** people have received both doses and are fully vaccinated.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#) & [Vaccination dashboard](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status](#) & [Australia's vaccine rollout](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#) & [WHO Dashboard](#)

National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights **#17**, data as of date **9th May 2021**:

- **0.52% (153 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**29,710**) notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people – (an increase of **3** cases since the last update).
- Of the total **153** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **75% (115 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **24% (36 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **1% (2 persons)** acquired their infections from interstate and **1% (1 person)** had an unknown source of infection or is under investigated.
- Of the total **115** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **81% (93 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **13% (15 persons)** acquired the infection in an inner regional area, **5% (6 persons)** acquired the infection in an outer regional area, and **1% (1 persons)** acquired the infection in a remote area.
- Of the **36** Aboriginal people who acquired the infection overseas (including few cases from WA), **39% (14 persons)** were linked to cruise ships.
- The majority (**129 cases or 84%**) of Aboriginal positive cases resided in major cities, and only about **8 (5%)** positive cases resided in outer regional and remote areas.
- From January 2021 to March 2021 there were no new cases notified amongst Aboriginal people.

- Between July to December 2020, there were no new overseas-acquired cases notified in the NNDSS, while no new locally-acquired cases recorded in the NNDSS between September and October 2020.
- 10% (16 cases) of Aboriginal cases required hospital admission, while 90% (134 cases) required quarantine/isolation. No deaths were recorded among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases is 31.5 years; compared to 36 years for non-Aboriginal people.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as at 15 May 2021 there are around 284 SARS-CoV2 or COVID-19 candidate vaccines (an increase of 12 candidate vaccines from the last update) being developed across the world, with total of 100 candidate vaccines (an increase of 8 candidates from the last update) are already progressed into Phase 1, 2, 3 or 4 of clinical trials. There are currently 6 candidate vaccines that have been recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Latest updates

Victorian situation

Based on the newest public health advice, Western Australia has reintroduced its hard border with Victoria following the developing situation and outbreak. Victoria will now be classified a 'medium risk' state under WA's controlled border arrangement, effective 10:00am Thursday, 27 May. WA's border with Victoria has been strengthened to reduce the risk of the virus coming into the WA community. The WA Premiers announcement can be found [here](#).

Travel to WA from Victoria will no longer be permitted, unless you are exempt, and conditions apply to recent travellers from Melbourne. The full list of travel exemptions for Victorian arrivals into WA can be found [here](#).

The following conditions apply to anyone that has arrived into WA from Victoria (or who was in Victoria) between the 16 May and 10:00 am 27 Ma, 2021:

- get tested for COVID-19 within 48 hours and self-quarantine until they return a negative result,
- wear a mask when presenting for testing;
- anyone who has visited any of the Victorian exposure [sites](#) during the times indicated must get tested immediately for COVID-19 and self-quarantine for 14 days from their date of exposure;
- those who have visited an exposure site must get a COVID-19 test on day two and day 11 of their 14-day self-quarantine.

WA Police will be in contact with any recent Victorian travellers through the G2G app with any new advice.

Close and casual contacts of the Victorian outbreak in WA, are being followed up and monitored by WA's Public Health Operations team. Any arrivals should monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop. Any recently returned travellers from Victoria should continue to regularly monitor the Victorian Health [website](#) for any updates to the list of exposure sites.

With the Victorian outbreak in mind, it is important we remain vigilant for ourselves and others. The COVID-19 symptoms to look out for include:

- a fever of 37.5°C or above OR a fever in the last few days;
- coughing, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose; and
- loss of smell or taste.

Key resources for testing include:

- [All testing locations in WA](#)
- [Self-isolation information after getting tested for coronavirus](#)
- [Where to get tested for COVID-19 in regional and remote WA](#)

COVID Clinic testing hours have been extended to 6pm from 27 May, and a GP referral or pathology form is not currently required at a private pathology clinic. COVID Clinic information can be found [here](#).

More information for interstate travel and the current category of each state and territories can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 vaccination program

The Western Australian Government encourages every eligible Western Australian to get vaccinated as soon as possible. It is the safest and easiest way to protect yourself, loved ones and the community with getting very sick from the COVID-19 virus.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has released a weekly COVID-19 safety [report](#) on the AstraZeneca vaccine. A joint statement from ATAGI and the Thrombosis and Haemostasis Society of Australia (THANZ) has been released last week. This advice highlights that the list of health conditions for which [Comirnaty \(Pfizer\)](#) is the preferred vaccine has been expanded to include people with a past history of:

- cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST),
- heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT),
- idiopathic splanchnic (mesenteric, portal and splenic) venous thrombosis, and
- anti-phospholipid syndrome with thrombosis.

A full list of the conditions that are not likely to increase the risk of TTS is provided in the [joint statement](#); people in these groups can receive the [COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca](#).

There is also no change to their statement made on the 23 April reinforcing their [recommendations](#) on the use of COVID-19 vaccines.

The WA COVID-19 Vaccine Myths and FAQ factsheet has now been updated and can be found [here](#).

A new [resource](#) has been released to help patients make informed decisions about receiving the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine.

The [Roll up for WA](#) COVID-19 vaccination campaign has commenced to encourage West Australian's to get vaccinated to protect themselves, their loved ones and community from COVID-19. The campaign features real frontline workers and volunteers, including Ronda who is a Nyikina woman from the Kimberley region who shares why she got vaccinated against COVID-19. Read more of Ronda's story [here](#).

As part of Phase 1b, Aboriginal people aged 50 years and over can now book in to receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine at their local Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) OR at a state-run COVID-19 vaccination community clinic or regional public hospital-based vaccination clinics, by calling 13COVID (13 26843) or by booking online at [VaccinateWA](#). Alternatively, you can find a participating AMS or GP clinics by using the Vaccine Eligibility Checker [here](#). For all up to date information about COVID-19 vaccination please visit [HealthyWA](#).

- A new online COVID-19 booking system has opened for people in Phase 1b cohort, to book in to confirm vaccination appointments at community and hospital-based vaccination clinics in WA. The user-friendly platform can be accessed at [Roll Up for WA](#). See announcement [here](#).

- A new state-run community vaccination clinic has opened up at Lakeside [Joondalup Shopping City](#) to offer the AstraZeneca covid-19 vaccine for adults 50 years and over.
- A new vaccination [dashboard](#) is also now live to check regular updates on WA's COVID-19 vaccination rollout.

As at 17 May 2021, a total of 3,183,324 doses of the two vaccines have been administered across Australia through a combination of GP clinics, GP-led respiratory clinics, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, state and territory-run vaccination clinics, and via 'in-reach providers' for residential aged care and disability care facilities.

Priority COVID-19 health messages for Aboriginal people

Aboriginal health professionals and sector representatives are encouraged to promote and reinforce the following key messages to Aboriginal clients and community. Remember to:

- continue to physical distance where possible
- continue to practise good hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- stay at home if unwell and rest to stay strong
- if unwell with flu-like symptoms, get tested (make sure to self-isolate until you receive your test result)
- make sure your family gets the flu vaccine
- keep attending your regular health checks, especially for chronic illnesses
- download and use the free [SafeWA app](#) for your phone
- look after your mental health and social emotional wellbeing during this time
- get a COVID vaccine as soon as you are eligible

Statewide Aboriginal resources

A suite of statewide Aboriginal tailored resources has been developed by the Department of Health WA for the community and health professionals, to promote awareness and provide up-to-date COVID-19 information that is culturally safe.

The aim of providing culturally-appropriate communications is to increase awareness and reduce anxiety and fear in our communities. We encourage Aboriginal health professionals to demonstrate leadership when working with the Aboriginal community by:

- Being "on message"
- Reinforcing and encouraging people to 'stay vigilant' and 'don't get complacent'
- Using positive strength-based messaging and language
- Ensure consistent, accurate and timely communication is provided, based on the official public health messages and health information issued by the Chief Health Officer from the Department of Health.

Refer to the Department of Health COVID-19 website for up-to-date information

Health services are welcome to tailor and localise Department of Health COVID-19 Aboriginal resources to meet community needs.

Please reference the Department of Health WA and contact PHEOC (pheoc@health.wa.gov.au) for further information.

Updated resources for the Aboriginal sector

- [COVID-19 vaccine mythbusters and FAQs](#)
- [COVID-19 visit your doctor](#)

All resources for the Aboriginal sector

[WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector](#) provides:

- **Aboriginal sector communication updates**
- **Aboriginal health professionals**
- **External stakeholder resources**
- **Remote and rural planning**

[HealthyWA - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) for Aboriginal People](#) provides:

- **Vaccination**
- **Fact sheets**
- **Posters**
- **Video/radio messages**
- **Other resources available**
- **GPs and other support phone lists**

Getting a COVID-19 test

- **WA Department of Health COVID-19 Resources for Aboriginal people**

The WA Health Department has developed a suite of culturally-appropriate resources to support the Aboriginal community and health services in being COVID-19 safe and informed. They are found [here](#).

 - [COVID Clinics location in WA](#)
 - [Where to get tested for COVID-19 in regional and Remote WA](#)
 - [Self-isolation information after getting tested for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- **Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council**

QAIHC have been developing [culturally appropriate resources](#) to keep ACCHOs and their community informed and protected against COVID-19.

 - [How are you tested for COVID-19?](#)
- **Getting the COVID-19 test: Story books**

The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency has developed two easy-to-understand story books to help children understand what a COVID-19 test is and what will happen during the process.

 - [Getting the COVID-19 test at the testing station or hospital](#)
- **AHMRC's COVID-19 Testing Resources.**

The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales has provided various resources on their website <https://www.ahmrc.org.au/coronavirus/> to support their member services across NSW during a COVID-19 outbreak and to minimise the impact on Aboriginal communities. Below are some resources on COVID-19 testing.

 - [Getting ready for a COVID-19 test](#)
 - [Do what's best. Get a COVID-19 test](#)
- **#swab4mob**

The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of New South Wales has initiated the #swab4mob campaign to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to get tested and protect their families and communities by getting a COVID-19 test if they feel unwell. You can find a link to the video below.

 - [#swab4mob campaign](#)

Crisis hotlines

- **Brother to Brother 24 hour crisis hotline** (1800 435 799) for Aboriginal men to provide extra support during the pandemic.
- **1800RESPECT** (1800 737 732) for advice concerning sexual, domestic or family violence.
- **Women's Domestic Violence Helpline** (1800 007 339) for support and referral for women experiencing domestic violence (incl referrals to women's refuges)
- **Crisis Care** (1800 199 008) if you require emergency accommodation.
- **National COVID-19 Older Persons Support Line** (1800 171 866)
- **Kids Helpline** (1800 55 1800)
- **Beyond Blue** (1300 224 636)
- **Lifeline** (13 11 14)
- **Suicide Call Back Service** (1300 659 467)

Who to contact for more information

- **COVID-19 Clinic ONLY Test Results Enquiry Line:** [1800 313 223](tel:1800313223) (Note: **NOT** for GP referred testing or private pathology clinic tests)
- **COVID-19 WA Public Information Line:** [132 6843 \(13 COVID\)](tel:1326843)
- **COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Exemption Application:** Visit the [G2G PASS](#) website or complete the [exemption application form](#)
- **COVID-19 WA Police Line:** [131 444](tel:131444) to report breaches of: self-isolation, business closures, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions.

Last updated **28 May 2021**

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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