



Aboriginal sector communication update #17

Monday 19 April 2021 15:00 Hours

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 **19 April 2021**, there are **975** confirmed cases, **66** historical cases and **25** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **941** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **988,693** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#) & [WHO Dashboard](#)

National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights **#16**, data as of **28TH March 2021**:

- **0.51% (150 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**29,192**) notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people – (**no change** in the total number of the accumulative cases since the last update).
- Of the total **150** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **75% (113 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **23% (34 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **1% (2 person)** acquired their infections from interstate and **1% (1 person)** had an unknown source of infection or is under investigated.
- Of the total **113** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **81% (91 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 **34** Aboriginal people who acquired the infection overseas (including few cases from WA), **41% (14 persons)** were linked to cruise ships.
- 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.
- **11% (16 cases)** of Aboriginal cases required hospital admission, while **89% (134 cases)** required quarantine/isolation. **No deaths** were recorded among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases is **31** years; compared to **37** years for non-Aboriginal people.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as at **16 April 2021** there are around **272** SARS-CoV2 or COVID-19 candidate vaccines (an increase of **8** candidate vaccines from the last update) being developed across the world, with total of **88** candidate vaccines (an increase of **6** candidates from the last update) are already progressed into Phase 1, 2, 3 or 4 of clinical trials. (Please see the attachment for more details).

Latest updates

COVID-19 vaccination program

There have been changes to the advice around the COVID-19 vaccines for adults aged under 50 years. On new advice from the [Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation \(ATAGI\)](#), the national COVID-19 vaccination rollout is being reviewed because of concerns that the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine may be linked to an extremely rare disorder involving blood clots.

The Western Australian (WA) vaccination program has paused use of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccination for people under 50 years old. For adults aged 50 years and above, the AstraZeneca vaccine is still considered safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 symptoms, disease and hospitalisation.

People who have already had their first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine and who did not experience any severe side effects should receive their second dose when eligible, including those under 50 years.

All Australians, including Aboriginal people, are encouraged to receive an appropriate COVID-19 vaccine when eligible.

To view the latest newsletter and a longer story on AstraZeneca:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/key-updates-for-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-communities-13-april-2021>

- **HealthyWA** - [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (for WA community) including [FAQs](#)
- **WA Health** - [COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#) (for health providers)
- **Small Business Development Corporations (SBDC)** – [workplace information about the COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#) (general information for businesses and employers)
- **The Australian Government** – [COVID-19 Vaccines hub](#)

As new advice is given, the Department of Health works hard to ensure that information on the website is updated as quickly as possible. Listed below are pages that have updated information:

- [Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [About the Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Information for COVID-19 vaccination providers](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine – Clinical considerations](#)
- [What happens after I am vaccinated?](#)
- [Which COVID-19 vaccine will I receive?](#)
- [Provider guide to obtaining informed consent for COVID-19 vaccine](#)

Controlled border review

Following recommendations from the Chief Health Officer to the WA Government, **'low risk'** jurisdictions can now transition to a **'very low risk'** jurisdiction after 14 days of no community transition rather than 28 days.

This review involved careful consideration of analysis into previous outbreaks and instances of transmission in the community, the successful use of the border control strategies and the requirement to complete 14 days of quarantine if travellers have been in high-risk areas.

Further information can be found in the [announcement](#) and on the WA Government Border [FAQ page](#).

New Zealand to join WA's controlled border arrangement

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/announcements/wa-government-welcomes-quarantine-free-travel-new-zealand>

The Australian Government has announced two-way quarantine-free travel between Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, as part of the review of the controlled interstate border, the WA Government recently announced that New Zealand will be included as a jurisdiction in the WA controlled border program.

This means that New Zealand, pending no outbreaks, will be classed as a **'very low risk'** jurisdiction as of 12.01 Monday April 19. After this time, travellers will be able to move to WA from New Zealand without a requirement to quarantine, and be subject to the same conditions of other **'very low risk'** jurisdictions. These conditions include:

- Completion of a mandatory G2G PASS registration and declaration prior to travel;
- On arrival at Perth Airport, complete a health screening;
- Scan your G2G PASS to exit the airport.

Travellers arriving from international locations to New Zealand (excluding Australia) will be required to quarantine for 14 days, like arrangements in place for international arrivals into Australia.

Further information can be found on the WA Government [website](#).

WA Health advice for Queensland travellers

Based on the latest health advice and pending no further outbreaks, Queensland safely transitioned from **'low risk'** to **'very low risk'** at 12:01am Monday, April 19. Further information regarding the requirements for travellers entering the state from Queensland can be found in the [announcement](#).

Until Queensland transitions, travellers will be required to meet the conditions of arriving from or through a **'low risk'** jurisdiction.

Travellers who have travelled from or through a **'low risk'** jurisdiction need to:

- apply for and receive an approved [G2G PASS](#) prior to travel;
- scan your G2G PASS at Perth Airport or at the border if arriving by land;
- self-quarantine in a suitable premise for 14 days;
- present for an initial COVID-19 test on arrival at Perth Airport;
- present for a COVID-19 test if any symptoms develop during quarantine;
- present for a COVID-19 test on day 11 after arrival in WA (if still in WA).

For more information, see the WA Government's controlled interstate border [webpage](#).

Venue capacity regulation changes

Since 12.01am Saturday 10 April 2021, certain indoor and outdoor fixed seating venues can operate at 100 per cent capacity.

This means more people can support local businesses and jobs by attending community, cultural, sporting and entertainment events.

The 100 per cent fixed seating capacity includes auditoriums and amphitheatres, theatres, concert halls, cinemas, comedy lounges and performing arts centres. Places of worship can have 100 per cent of capacity of a space being used for formal worship.

Seated hospitality venues such as restaurants, cafes, food courts and bars remain at 75 per cent capacity. This is based on the latest public health advice, due to their higher risk of increased mixing and face to face interactions.

The 2 square metre rule continues to apply to all other venues with a mixture of seating and standing, unfixed seating or standing alone, including community facilities, function centers, casinos, nightclubs and funeral parlours.

Remember, SafeWA and contact registers are still mandatory for contact tracing purposes should they be required.

Additional information can be found at the [COVID-19 venue capacity FAQs](#).

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.

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.

New resources for the Aboriginal sector

- [New advice](#) on the AstraZeneca vaccine for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about COVID-19 vaccines can be found at the [here](#).
- A [poster](#) that can be printed and displayed in clinics.

- A [video](#) featuring Dr Lucas de Toca summarising recommendations regarding AstraZeneca and the change in the vaccination rollout.
- Social media content including [two new social tiles](#) that ACCHOs can use in promoting the new information to their followers/patients, as well as some suggested captions to use alongside them.

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**

COVID-19 vaccine FAQs

- **National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)**
NACCHO have developed a booklet with information about COVID-19 vaccines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - [Information about COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- **Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS)**
KAMS have developed a list of FAQs to assist the community with the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.
 - [Frequently Asked Questions page](#)
- **Department of Health South Australian (SA Health)**
SA Health have developed an FAQ Sheet to assist Aboriginal communities during COVID-19 vaccine rollout.
 - [COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#)
- **Australian Government Department of Health**
The Federal Health Department has collated common questions and answers about COVID-19 vaccines suitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
 - [COVID-19 vaccine common questions](#)
- **Western Australian Department of Health (WA Health)**
WA Health has developed a FAQs page to answer questions and concerns of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout for the WA community.
 - [COVID-19 FAQs](#)

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 **19 April 2021**

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

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