

## Influenza Vaccine Statement Form – Residential Aged Care Workers

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- Yearly influenza (flu) vaccination is recommended for all staff in aged care facilities.<sup>1</sup> This includes administrative staff, doctors, nurses, carers, therapists, religious workers, cleaning and kitchen personnel, volunteers, and temporary and part-time workers.
- Influenza is a serious respiratory illness that kills hundreds of people in Australia each year.<sup>1</sup>
- Healthcare workers have a higher risk of getting influenza as they are more likely to come into contact with the virus because of their work.<sup>2</sup>
- Staff of aged care facilities can spread influenza to their residents, family, friends, and colleagues.
- Elderly people, such as residents in aged care facilities, are at increased risk of severe influenza complications including death.<sup>3</sup>
- Even without symptoms, a person can still spread influenza virus to others. Infected individuals are infectious 24 hours before symptoms begin and for five to seven days after becoming unwell.
- Each year a new influenza vaccine is developed. It protects against the strains of influenza which are expected to cause the most illness that year. Also, protection from the vaccine is greatest in the three to four months following vaccination.<sup>1</sup> This is why annual influenza vaccination is recommended.
- Although influenza vaccination does not provide complete protection against influenza, annual vaccination offers best protection against influenza and its complications.<sup>1</sup>

I am eligible to receive the influenza vaccine but do not want to have it for the reason documented below. I acknowledge the above facts about influenza. I am aware that many of the residents in this facility are at increased risk of serious complications from influenza:

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I am not eligible to receive the influenza vaccine because:

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). *The Australian immunisation handbook* 10<sup>th</sup> ed (2017 update). Canberra: Australian Government Department of Health, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Kuster SP, Shah PS, Coleman BL, et al. Incidence of Influenza in Healthy Adults and Healthcare Workers: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *PLoS ONE* 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0026239>.

<sup>3</sup> Li-Kim-Moy J, Yin JK, Patel C, et al. Australian vaccine preventable disease epidemiological review series: Influenza 2006 to 2015. *Communicable Diseases Intelligence* 2016;40:E482-95.

👉 *You can change your mind at any time and get the influenza vaccine. Although the ideal time to be vaccinated is prior to the influenza season, infections occur all year round. **It is never too late to be vaccinated.***

👉 Please note that this form does not need to be returned to ACT Health and is an example of a form a Residential Aged Care Facility may use for their staff and keep for their own records.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). *The Australian immunisation handbook* 10<sup>th</sup> ed (2017 update). Canberra: Australian Government Department of Health, 2017.

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