

# Lockdown and maintaining immunisation coverage rates

**The ACT is in Lockdown – high childhood immunisation rates more important than ever?**

The ACT Government announced that the current lockdown will be extended to 11.59pm on Friday, 15 October 2021 with a mid-point review after two weeks. The Chief Minister also released the [Plan for the ACT's pathway forward](#), which outlines the principles and public health considerations that will underpin future decision making. Although daily case numbers have remained relatively stable, there is still a high number of cases that have been in the community for at least part of their infectious period.

The importance of maintaining high vaccination coverage rates for all vaccine preventable diseases in these difficult times is paramount. Some of the reasons for late or no vaccinations of children is the fear of catching COVID 19, redistribution of health workers and interruption to the vaccine supply chain. The World Health Organization (WHO) are concerned that the preventable diseases that many consider words in a medical book will now be seen within our hospitals, "What we fully expect is these diseases will come roaring back...And what that means... is that we're going to see deaths of children in numbers that are unprecedented in recent times" (Kate O'Brien, WHO, [www.bbc.com/news/health-52911972](http://www.bbc.com/news/health-52911972)).

Vaccinating on time is an important part of managing preventable disease and reviewing a child's records to see if their immunisations are up to date is vital.

You can review a child's immunisation status by accessing the [Australian Immunisation Register \(AIR\)](#) for a record of vaccines administered. In the ACT vaccines are also recorded in the child's [Immunisation Record Card for Children](#) which can be found in the child's Personal Health Record (blue book).

## In this issue

- ❖ Lockdown and immunisation coverage rates
- ❖ Vaccine Management Unit during lockdown
- ❖ Process for second dose COVID-19 vaccine change
- ❖ Adverse Event Following Immunisation reporting
- ❖ Transcribing overseas vaccinations
- ❖ Influenza uptake
- ❖ Reminders

## Contact us

### Health Protection Service Immunisation Unit

Phone: (02) 5124 9800

Fax: (02) 5124 9307

Email:

[immunisation@act.gov.au](mailto:immunisation@act.gov.au)

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Phone: (02) 5124 9213

Fax: (02) 5124 9306

Email: [cdc@act.gov.au](mailto:cdc@act.gov.au)

# Vaccine Management Unit (VMU) during lockdown

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The VMU **will continue** to provide National Immunisation Program (NIP) vaccines to its providers on their scheduled delivery dates. **Please ensure that orders are placed 48 hours prior to your delivery date and that you are ordering sufficient stock to last until your following delivery.**

It is important to note, however that:

- Urgent deliveries may take longer than usual to deliver

**Please continue to contact the Immunisation Unit on 5124 9800 or by email**

**[immunisation@act.gov.au](mailto:immunisation@act.gov.au) for all cold chain breaches that involves NIP stock.** These will be attended to as required.

These measures have been put in place only temporarily and may change. If any providers decide to temporarily close their practice, it would be greatly appreciated if you could please inform VMU.

Thank you for your assistance during these trying times and collaboratively we will all ensure that immunisation remains a high priority for Canberrans.

# Process for second dose COVID-19 vaccine change

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ATAGI recommends using the same COVID-19 vaccine for the two doses of the primary vaccination course, **unless** there are specific medical reasons not to do so, or the same vaccine brand is not available in Australia. The advice can be found below:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccination-clinical-advice-on-the-use-of-a-different-covid-19-vaccine-as-the-second-dose>

This advice explains:

- the medical contraindications and serious vaccine-attributable adverse events after dose 1 of a COVID-19 vaccine that warrant using an alternative vaccine brand for dose 2
- the medical conditions that mean that Comirnaty is recommended over COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca
- the recommendations for completing the primary vaccination course for people who have received dose 1 with a vaccine that is not available in Australia.

All recommendations are to be sent to the ACT Health COVID Vaccine Clinical inbox by **Fax: 02 5124 3222** or **Email: [covidvaccine.clinical@act.gov.au](mailto:covidvaccine.clinical@act.gov.au)**.

The referral must include:

- medical history
- confirmation an AEFI report has been made, and the content of that report
- the rationale for the request for an alternative vaccine.

More information at <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine/information-about-the-covid-19-vaccination-program-for-act-clinicians>

## Adverse Event Following Immunisation Reporting

An Adverse Event Following Immunisation (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected event that follows vaccination that may be related to the vaccine itself, its handling or administration, or may occur by coincidence. AEFIs are notifiable conditions in the ACT.

In the ACT, suspected AEFI should be reported to the Immunisation Unit, Health Protection Service using the [Immunisation Adverse Event Reporting Form \(online form\)](#), or by contacting the Health Protection Service, Immunisation Unit on [\(02\) 5124 9800](tel:0251249800). The new online form makes it much more convenient for staff or patients to report adverse events to the Immunisation Unit. If you would prefer to print out a form to fax or email to us, please [click here](#) or for AEFI related to COVID-19, [click here](#).

Please remember that as a medical professional, you have an obligation to report an AEFI regardless of whether you were the one to give the vaccination.

For more information:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine AEFI reporting for healthcare professionals \(FACT Sheet\)](#)
- National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance - Vaccine Safety factsheet at <http://www.ncirs.org.au/public/vaccine-safety>
- ACT Health Adverse Event Following Immunisation factsheet at <https://www.health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/Adverse%20event%20following%20Immunisation%20information%20sheet.pdf>
- <https://www.ausvaxsafety.org.au/our-work/covid-19-vaccine-safety-surveillance>

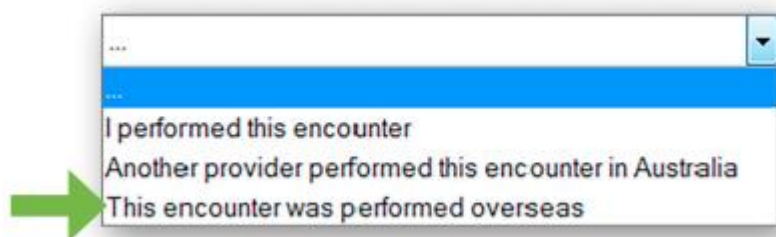
# Immunisation transcriptions from overseas

## COVID-19 vaccine

Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines administered overseas can be entered onto the AIR.

The AIR can only accept information directly from a recognised vaccination provider in Australia, not from a member of the public. Recognised vaccination providers should report to the AIR all vaccinations they give to their patients in Australia. They should also record those given overseas if they have appropriate documentation. <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/health-professionals/using-the-australian-immunisation-register#recording-vaccines-given-to-your-patients>

Overseas immunisation records can be recorded onto an individual's AIR record using the AIR encounter screen. On the 'Record Encounter' screen, select 'This encounter was performed overseas' or 'Another provider performed this encounter in Australia' in the drop-down box .



It is important to sight written documentation to determine previous vaccination. Make every effort to confirm previous vaccination and obtain documentation. If previous vaccination cannot be confirmed, assume that the person has not received the vaccine(s) they need.

The AIR has education modules on entering overseas data which can be found at <http://medicareaust.com/HTML/AIR/AIRM05.htm>

## Childhood vaccines

To ensure childhood coverage rates are accurate and family payments continue overseas immunisation histories should be entered onto the AIR.

ACT Health staff can transcribe overseas records if there are no other options, the vaccines are recognised by the Therapeutic Goods Association (TGA) and if the child is less than 10 years of age. Parents can request a transcription of their child's vaccination records by completing the [Request for Transcription of Immunisation Records](#) online form or contacting the Immunisation Unit on 5124 9800. **The Immunisation Unit will not transcribe vaccines for those older than 10 years of age. This responsibility remains with the usual immunisation provider of the patient.**

## Reminders

### Influenza vaccination and data

Although spring has sprung, that does not mean it is too late to vaccinate against Influenza. This year we have noticed a drop off in demand for the flu vaccine in comparison to previous seasons.

Immunisation providers are required to provide data to the ACT Health Immunisation Unit on government funded vaccines administered. This helps with stock control, program evaluation and ascertainment of coverage rates. The Influenza Vaccine Record Form and General Practice Staff Influenza Program Data should be completed and sent each fortnight to the Immunisation Unit. If you require any further information, please contact the Vaccine Management Unit on 5124 9800.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia will submit an electronic report on behalf of its members who use compatible software for recording vaccination events. **Those pharmacies who are not part of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia will need to submit the Influenza Vaccine Record Form.**

Fax (02) 5124 9307

Email [immunisation@act.gov.au](mailto:immunisation@act.gov.au)

### ACT Immunisation mailing list

Please sign up to the immunisation mailing list to receive all the latest news from ACT Health immunisation using this [link](#).



### PRODA

To access Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) providers must use a PRODA account starting July 2021. To create a personal PRODA use the following link: [www.humanservices.gov.au/proda](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/proda). PRODA (provider digital access) is an online identity verification and authentication system. It lets you securely access government online services. To access available services using PRODA, you need to register as an individual to get your own account. To access a PRODA on behalf of an organisation, you may need to register the organisation in PRODA. The service will let you know if you need to register your organisation.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person identification

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are eligible for additional NIP funded vaccines to protect against preventable diseases. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children up to two years of age are eligible to receive funded Meningococcal B vaccine (Bexsero®).

Identification as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is therefore important for delivering holistic health care. This disclosure is voluntary and identification questions should be asked respectfully and in private.