

MEDIA RELEASE

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First Nations community encouraged to step up and get the jab!

In collaboration with our partners, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service and North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health, Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN has developed a suite of short videos to encourage uptake of the COVID-19 vaccination within the First Nations community.

The suite of videos, filmed locally on the Sunshine Coast aims to increase awareness of COVID-19 vaccinations within the First Nations community, increase confidence and trust in vaccinations and increase vaccination rates, specifically for the 20–29-year-old cohort.

Featuring local members of the First Nations community, the videos were filmed at the Buranga Centre Gardens at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs campus.

Current data¹ indicates that vaccination rates for First Nations people in Queensland, particularly in the Sunshine Coast region are lagging, compared to other regions in Australia. According to data from the Australia Government Department of Health, only 47.4% of Indigenous people in the Sunshine Coast region aged 16 years or over have more than two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination (as per data dated 5 July 2022).

Gordon Browning, Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health at Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN said, “The suite of videos has been developed to address misinformation within the First Nations community surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine and highlight that the vaccine is safe and free and community members have a choice regarding vaccination and need to make an informed decision based on trusted information.”

“Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is a safe and effective way of protecting yourself, your family, your elders and community from getting really sick from COVID-19. We want to encourage the First Nations community to take the first step and talk to their GP or Aboriginal Health Worker about the COVID-19 vaccine if they have any concerns”, he said.

The COVID-19 vaccination provides extra protection for community members from getting very sick if they get COVID-19. It will also help protect community members who may be more vulnerable, like Elders and those who have health problems.

Vaccinations can be arranged by visiting a GP or Aboriginal Health Worker or by booking online through the Queensland Government vaccine bookings website:
<https://www.vaccinebookings.health.qld.gov.au/>

The suite of videos encouraging our First Nations community to get vaccinated, can be accessed on the Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN YouTube channel [here](#).

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¹Data source: Australian Government Operation COVID Shield - LGA Vaccination Rates (AIR Indigenous Population) - 6 July 2022