



Media Release – Country to Coast, Queensland (CCQ).

12 June 2023

## **Be prepared for the 2023 Flu Season – help protect our kids and loved ones against influenza**

With the winter season now arriving, a noticeable nip is in the air as we go about our daily lives. Country to Coast, Queensland is encouraging the community to get their flu shot and protect their family against influenza.

Influenza can have a significant impact on vulnerable members of our community. This includes the elderly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, pregnant women and young children who can all get their 2023 flu shot for free.

Julie Sturgess, Country to Coast, Queensland CEO is encouraging the community to be prepared by getting their annual influenza vaccine.

“Each year the statistics and seasons vary, however we’ve seen flu seasons prior to COVID lock downs with anywhere from 200,000 to 300,000 cases, of which 8.9 per cent of those end up in Hospital.”

“Getting your flu shot in Queensland has never been more convenient. 2023 Flu vaccinations are available for Queenslanders aged 6 months and above at your nearby GP or participating pharmacy,” Julie said.

Dr Jon Harper, Country to Coast, Queensland GP and General Practice Liaison Officer, said, “The flu is familiar to all of us, it’s so common in our community, we forget how serious it can be.”

“Our concerns are for the vulnerable groups in the community, reported data shows not only cases of Influenza but how low vaccination rates are in the region, especially in children under 5, and they’re one of the most vulnerable groups, along with the over 65s.”

“Flu shots are government-funded for these cohorts, as well as pregnant women, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, we can all roll up our sleeves and get protection.”

Florence Tan, Live Life Pharmacist, has also noticed prevalence of flu in the community explaining, “As temperatures cool, respiratory virus thrive, and pass more easily between families, and residents of aged care.”

“Getting the flu vaccine helps in a number of ways. It helps to reduce the risk to you getting the flu, it can reduce the severity of flu symptoms (if you do get it), it is cost-effective-

meaning it can help reduce time off work or time/costs in getting treatment or seeing the doctor/hospital, and it helps to protect those close to you like older people and immunocompromised people.”

“Queenslanders from six months and above can get their flu shot at their GP, or with us at a Pharmacy, and at our clinic you can book a convenient time online,” Florence said.

You can use: [findapharmacy.com.au](http://findapharmacy.com.au) to find your local pharmacy administering the flu vaccination.

Health professionals also recommend washing your hands regularly, coughing into your elbow and staying at home if you're unwell.

#### **Resources:**

You can also find a useful set of FluFAQs: <https://c2coast.org.au/ccqflufacts/> - these will provide answers to any questions you may have about the flu shot.

View the number of reported flu cases this year across our region:

<https://c2coast.org.au/flu-tracker-2/>

Queensland Health Influenza data:

[https://www.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/1220400/influenza-rsv-qld.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1220400/influenza-rsv-qld.pdf)

#### **Drop Box:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ydkywaddffbd048wxi3xj/h?dl=0&rlkey=b3z7tvz3mzzd2d7c hac2tj2uo>

#### **ENDS**

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