

Queensland Health

Free Influenza Vaccination Program

Stakeholder toolkit – April 2024



Queensland
Government

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Introduction

This stakeholder kit has been developed to assist in communicating important information about the 2024 free influenza vaccination program.

It includes key messages and communication materials that may assist you to share messaging through your own communication channels.

By utilising your channels and networks, you are helping to increase and broaden the reach of audiences who will hear about the free influenza vaccination program.

Background

Influenza, or the flu, is a highly contagious viral infection that infects your upper airways and lungs. You're more likely to get the flu in winter, but in tropical and subtropical areas like Queensland, it can be present all year round. Flu cases usually peak in the winter months.

Most people get better within a week, but sometimes a cough and tiredness can last longer. A small number of people get pneumonia, inflammation of the heart muscle or have neurological problems. Although it's rare, some get encephalitis, life threatening brain inflammation.

The best way to protect yourself is to get vaccinated every year and practise good hygiene. You need a vaccine every year because the strains can change each year. The best time to get vaccinated is before the flu season starts. Flu vaccinations are free for all Queenslanders 6 months of age and older until 30 September 2024.

Target audience

Primary audience:

- Queensland adults aged 18+

Secondary audience:

- Those at higher risk of developing complications from ARIs, including pregnant people, First Nations people, those with underlying medical conditions or a disability, older people, and parents of young children under 5 years of age.

Key messages

General

- Flu is highly contagious and can have serious health impacts.
- The flu vaccine is easy to access and free for all Queenslanders in 2024.
- Vaccination is a safe and effective way to help prevent the spread of flu and reduce the risk of severe illness.

- The flu vaccine can be given at the same time as other recommended vaccines such as whooping cough and COVID-19.
- Don't be complacent. Book your free flu vaccination today.
- Good hygiene habits are an important part of reducing the spread of flu.
- Wash your hands, stay at home if you're sick and cover coughs and sneezes.

Signs and symptoms

- Flu is the most common vaccine-preventable disease in Australia. Although it can be a mild disease, it can cause very serious illness in otherwise healthy people. It can require hospitalisation and can even lead to death.
- Flu is most often caused by type A or B influenza viruses that infect the upper airways and lungs.
- Flu symptoms usually appear 1 to 3 days after being infected and include fever, dry cough, muscle and joint pain, tiredness or extreme exhaustion, headache, and sore throat. In the elderly, fever may be absent, and the only signs of flu may be confusion, shortness of breath or worsening of a chronic condition. Children are more likely to have gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea).

Who can get vaccinated?

- The flu vaccine is safe for Queenslanders 6 months of age and older.
- You can get the free flu vaccine if you live in Queensland, even if you do not have a Medicare card.
- Those people at greatest risk of severe disease should prioritise being vaccinated, including:
 - Children aged 6 months to less than 5 years
 - Pregnant people at any stage of pregnancy
 - Persons 65 years or older
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 6 months of age and older
 - People 6 months of age and older with a medical condition or disability which increases their risk of severe influenza and its complications
- The flu vaccine is safe for breastfeeding individuals.
- Babies under 6 months cannot be vaccinated against flu, but having the flu vaccine during pregnancy will offer some protection during their first 6 months.

Where to get vaccinated

- You can get vaccinated at your doctor (GP) or medical clinic, a community pharmacy, and other vaccination service providers (e.g. council clinic).
- Culturally safe vaccination services and practices are available through many health care providers.

Additional support

- If you have questions about vaccination, you can call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).
- It's free for you to ask for an interpreter when you talk to a GP, pharmacist or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

- People with disability can call the Disability Gateway Helpline on 1800 643 787 for support. They can make a booking for you.
- For new arrivals into Australia, the Federal government provides a free service to translate Immunisation Passports, and previous vaccinations documents. For more information, go to the Department of Home Affairs Translating Service or call 1800 962 100.

Calls to action

- Book your **free influenza vaccination** at your local GP or pharmacy before 30 September 2024.
- Make a plan to **get your free influenza vaccination in April or May** to ensure you're protected through the winter months when flu season is at its peak.
- **For more information, visit** <https://www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/>

Communication materials

Communication materials are available for download from the **Queensland Health Asset Library** to support communication activities and help you share this important information through your own communication channels.

The following assets are included in this stakeholder kit:

- Posters
- Newsletter banner
- Screensaver
- Social tiles
- Web content
- Fact sheets
- Translated resources

ASSET LIBRARY: [Download Stakeholder Kit](#)

Posters

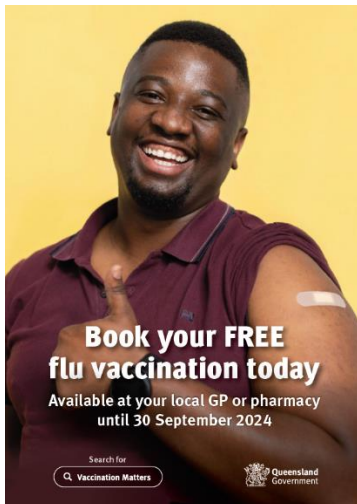
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Newsletter banner

This newsletter banner is compatible with Vision 6 software and can be included in any newsletters that are distributed.

Recommended newsletter text:

Free influenza (flu) vaccinations are now available to all Queenslanders 6 months of age and older. Make a plan to get vaccinated in May to ensure you're protected through the winter months when flu season is at its peak. The free flu vaccine is available until 30 September 2024 from your GP, pharmacies and other vaccination service providers.

The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu and other infectious diseases, like COVID-19, is to get vaccinated. This makes it less likely you'll suffer serious illness and need to be hospitalised. Make sure you are up to date with your flu and COVID-19 vaccines and stay safe this winter.

[Download here](#)



Screensaver

[Download here](#)



Social media tiles

Recommended social media post text:

Free influenza (flu) vaccinations are now available to all Queenslanders 6 months of age and older. Make a plan to get vaccinated in May to ensure you're protected through the winter months when flu season is at its peak.

The free flu vaccine is available until 30 September 2024 from your GP, pharmacies and other vaccination service providers.

The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from the flu and other infectious diseases, like COVID-19, is to get vaccinated. This makes it less likely you'll suffer serious illness and need to be hospitalised.

Make sure you are up to date with your flu and COVID-19 vaccines and stay safe this winter.

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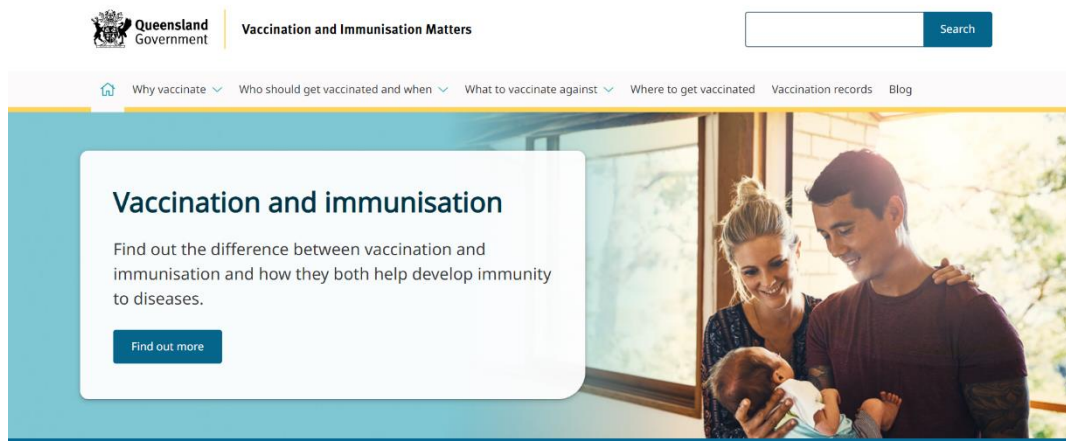


[Download here](#)



Web content

The Queensland Health website <https://www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/> contains the latest updates and information about influenza and the free influenza vaccination program.



Translated fact sheets

These [fact sheets](#) have been translated into different languages and talk about influenza and how to protect you, your family and the wider community from this serious illness.

Easy Read resources

The following fact sheets explain the importance of immunisation in Easy English and other languages. There are fact sheets for:

- [parents](#)
- [young adults](#)
- [older people](#)

Contact us

If you have any questions about the contents of this toolkit, please contact Queensland Health via email at: strategiccommunications@health.qld.gov.au