



Primary Care Vaccine Rollout

Provider Bulletin

7 December 2021

Bulletins provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccination Program.

Key Messages

TGA UPDATES

The TGA provisionally approves Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children

On 5 December 2021, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) provisionally approved the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine for use in individuals aged 5 to 11 years.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) is considering this regulatory approval and it is anticipated it will provide its recommendations on the use of this vaccine for those aged 5 to 11 shortly.

The National COVID Vaccine Taskforce (Taskforce) will provide further advice on the implementation of vaccine for this age group within the COVID-19 Vaccination Program (Program) once the Australian Government has had the opportunity to consider ATAGI's recommendations.

The TGA is also currently evaluating an application from Moderna Australia for its COVID-19 vaccine, Spikevax (Moderna), be used in children aged 6 to 11.

More information is available on the TGA's [website](#).

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

Ordering

With Christmas and the New Year fast approaching, practices are encouraged to commence planning for the number of vaccines needed from **mid-to-late December 2021** to **mid-January 2022**. When ordering, please consider the additional stock and consumables needed to meet demand over the holiday period.

When should I place vaccine orders over the Christmas and New Year period?

The table below provides key dates for ordering and deliveries over the Christmas period:

End of ordering cycle	Requested Delivery Date (RDD)
10 December	24 December
17 December	7 January
24 December	7 January
31 December	14 January
7 January 2022	21 January

Orders placed from:

- **Saturday 4 December to Friday 10 December 2021** will be delivered in the week ending RDD **24 December 2021**, and
- **Saturday 11 December to Friday 17 December 2021** will be delivered in the week of RDD **7 January 2022**.

Please note that:

- the RDD that will appear in the COVID-19 Vaccine Administrative System (CVAS) for any orders placed between **11 and 17 December 2021** will be incorrect and automatically **changed** to RDD **7 January 2022**; and
- no orders will be delivered in the week ending RDD **31 December 2021**.

To ensure practices are able to order enough vaccines to meet demand over this period, **any practice that places an order between 11 December and 15 December can request** to have its delivery brought forward to RDD **24 December by contacting the Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC) on 1800 318 208 by 10pm (AEDT) 15 December**.

When will normal ordering resume?

The normal ordering cycle will resume in the week ending RDD **31 December 2021**, with orders placed this week being delivered in the week ending RDD **14 January 2022**.

Practices that are closed in the week of 25 December (week ending RDD 31 December 2021) can place an order between 1 January and 5 January, and request to have its delivery brought forward to RDD 14 January 2022 by contacting the VOC on 1800 318 208 by 10pm (AEDT) 5 January 2022.

CONSENT REFUSAL

A number of practices have reported that individuals are presenting at practices for vaccination but then do not provide informed consent, and in some cases, display aggressive and threatening behaviour. **Staff safety is a priority and staff do not have to tolerate aggressive behaviour.**

To support you and your teams, please see the attached factsheet which provides guidance and talking points for how to handle consent refusal.

NO FAULT COVID-19 CLAIMS SCHEME

Reduction in threshold

The Australian Government has reduced the claim threshold of the No Fault COVID-19 Vaccine Claims Scheme from \$5,000 to \$1,000 for COVID-19 claims related to the administration of a TGA-approved COVID-19 vaccine delivered through the Program.

Individuals who suffer injury and loss of income due to their COVID-19 vaccine can register their intent to claim [online](#).

More information is available on the Department of Health's [website](#).

REMINDERS

Transfer Policy

The Taskforce continues to receive a number of enquiries regarding vaccine transfers.

Practices are free to transfer vaccines to other sites that are enabled for the same vaccine, without seeking approval from the Taskforce or Primary Health Network (PHN). More information about the transfer policy is available on the Department of Health's [website](#).

Excess doses

The Taskforce is continuing to actively work with vaccination providers to manage excess vaccine stock on hand, and we encourage you to continue reaching out to your local networks to assist with identifying and transferring excess vaccines to sites that are able to use them.

If you are unable to relocate excess doses locally, please contact the **Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC) from 7am to 10pm (AEDT)** or email covid19vaccineoperationscentre@health.gov.au for assistance.

In some instances, the VOC may be able to arrange collection of excess doses for redistribution to another site. Proposed collection orders will be assessed for suitability, taking into consideration shelf life, time in transit, and clinic location. Practices will need to provide the VOC with details about excess stock, including batch numbers, expiry dates and number of excess doses, to be considered as part of this assessment.

When assessing the suitability of stock for collection, please note that the VOC can only accept:

- 20 vials or more of Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca);
- 10 vials or more of Pfizer; and
- 10 vials or more of Moderna.

While every effort will be made to collect or redistribute excess vaccines, it is not possible to collect and redistribute them in all circumstances, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

Pfizer and Moderna – thaw use-by date vs manufacture expiry date

It is vital that sites are aware of the differences between the **thaw use-by date** and the **manufacture expiry date** for the mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer):

- The manufacture expiry date on the vial indicates the expiry for the vaccine vial.
- The thaw use-by date commences at the time the vials are removed from the freezer or ultra-low storage to commence thawing.

Whichever date is earliest is the last date the vaccines should be administered to a patient. All sites should have clearly labelled and visible **thaw use-by dates** for each vial – noting these will be different for subsequent deliveries. **Both the thaw use-by dates and the manufacture expiry date should be checked prior to every vaccine administration.**

Please ensure your site has clear processes to identify and action these dates to prevent vaccine administration errors.

Thaw use-by date

Moderna

An unopened thawed vial of the Moderna vaccine can be kept at 2° to 8°C for 30 days. The thaw date label is visible on the vial packaging or on the box containing the vials for Moderna when delivered and the thaw use-by date is calculated from then.

Pfizer

An unopened thawed vial of the Pfizer vaccine can be kept at 2° to 8°C for 31 days. The thaw date label is visible on the vial packaging for Pfizer when delivered and the thaw use-by date is calculated from then.