



2022 GOVERNMENT-FUNDED INFLUENZA IMMUNISATION PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR PROVIDERS

Thursday, 10 March 2022

KEY MESSAGES

- Annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent influenza and its complications.
- All vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).
- An increase in influenza disease rates is anticipated with international borders now open.
- Government-funded influenza vaccines will be available to order from mid-April 2022.
- The adjuvanted influenza vaccine (Fluad® Quad) is preferentially recommended over standard quadrivalent vaccine (QIV) for adults aged 65 years and over.
- Eligibility for government-funded influenza vaccines in WA is unchanged from 2021 and includes all Aboriginal persons aged 6 months and over.
- Providers are highly recommended to review the 2022 Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) *Statement on the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2022* (link provided below)
- It is advised that influenza vaccination clinics should be scheduled after your service has received enough vaccine doses.

Seasonal influenza vaccination in 2022

Key points

- Annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent influenza and its complications. Influenza vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over.
- Vaccination providers are required to [report](#) all influenza vaccinations administered to the AIR, including both National Immunisation Program (NIP) and private vaccines.
- Vaccination against influenza may be even more important this year. The last two years have seen lower circulation of influenza viruses and lower levels of influenza vaccine uptake in 2021 compared to previous years. With borders now open, these conditions may lead to a resurgence of influenza activity in 2022.
- Individuals who are planning international travel should ensure they have had a 2022 influenza vaccination before departure.
- ATAGI has released important advice to support vaccination providers ahead of the 2022 influenza season; see: [Statement on the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2022](#).
- Whilst it is acceptable to co-administer Fluad® Quad and Shingrix on the same day if necessary, given the lack of data on co-administration of these adjuvanted vaccines, it is recommended to separate their administration by a few days.

Information for pregnant women

- For women who receive the influenza vaccine before becoming pregnant or during 2021, revaccination with the 2022 influenza vaccine is recommended during pregnancy to maximise the protection of the mother and the infant in the first six months of life.
- Influenza vaccine can be safely given at the same time as a pertussis vaccine and/or COVID-19 vaccine for pregnant women.

Influenza and COVID-19 vaccination

- ATAGI has advised that influenza vaccines can be co-administered (on the same day) with a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Subject to the availability of influenza vaccines, COVID-19 vaccine booster appointments could be an opportunity for co-administering an influenza vaccine.

Influenza vaccine strains included in the 2022 Southern Hemisphere seasonal influenza vaccines

Egg-based influenza vaccines	Cell-based influenza vaccines
A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus	A/Wisconsin/588/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
A/Darwin/9/2021 (H3N2)-like virus	A/Darwin/6/2021 (H3N2)-like virus
B/Austria/1359417/2021-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus	B/Austria/1359417/2021-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus
B/Phuket/3073/2013-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus	B/Phuket/3073/2013-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus

2022 Government-funded influenza vaccination program

Eligible groups

The following individuals in WA are eligible to receive government-funded vaccine:

- individuals 65 years or older
- children 6 months to less than 5 years
- primary school-aged children (from 5 years to students in year 6)
- pregnant women (any trimester)
- Aboriginal people 6 months and older
- individuals 6 months and older with medical conditions that place them at risk for complications of influenza, including:
 - cardiac disease
 - chronic respiratory conditions
 - chronic neurological conditions
 - impaired immunity
 - diabetes and other metabolic disorders
 - renal disease
 - haematological disorders
 - children aged 6 months to 10 years receiving long-term aspirin therapy.

For further information, see the [WA Immunisation Schedule](#).

Vaccine brands available

The table below indicates the various vaccine brands available for the eligible cohorts.

2022 Government funded influenza vaccines (WA)						
Cohort	Program / Brand	Vaxigrip Tetra	Fluarix Tetra	Afluria Quad	FluQuadri	Fluad Quad
All children 6 months to <5 years	NIP	✓	✓	-	-	-
All primary school children ≥ 5 years	State	-	-	-	✓	-
At risk persons 5 to <65 years	NIP	✓	✓	✓	-	-
All adults ≥ 65 years	NIP	-	-	-	-	✓

Review the WA Immunisation Schedule (at risk persons includes ATSI, pregnant women, MRC)
All government funded vaccines have no latex present. All are needless presentation except Fluarix Tetra.

Ordering and distribution vaccines

- Influenza vaccines funded under the NIP will become available to providers once the vaccines are released for distribution by the manufacturers and the Australian Government.
- The timing of the availability of NIP influenza vaccines may differ to that of privately-purchased influenza vaccines.
- There will be sufficient quantities of vaccine for all persons eligible for a government-funded influenza vaccination in WA.
- It is advised that influenza vaccination clinics should be scheduled after your practice has received enough vaccine doses.
- Government-funded influenza vaccines will be available to order by mid-April 2022.
- Providers should review their storage capacity for 2022 influenza vaccines and determine if additional storage needs to be arranged. Vaccines should be stored between + 2°C and + 8°C and in their original packaging to protect them from light and temperature changes, in accordance with the [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'](#).

Reporting cold chain breaches and vaccine wastage

- As a condition of receiving government-funded vaccines, providers must follow the WA cold chain protocol, available on the [WA Health cold chain management website](#).
- Providers must advise their [WA Health public health unit](#) when a cold chain breach occurs or to seek thermal stability advice for other incidents where government-funded vaccines are involved.
- Vaccines discarded for any reason, must be reported to WA health via the Cold Chain Breach (CCB) and Vaccine Wastage Form available on the [WA Health cold chain management website](#).
- All 2021 influenza vaccines have now expired and should be *disposed of immediately* to avoid vaccine administration errors. Please report any government-funded vaccines that are not used before their expiry date to the WA Department of Health using the [vaccine expiry wastage reporting form](#).

Keep up to date with current information

- The Department of Health will keep you updated as key information becomes available. Make sure you have subscribed to Vaccine Updates [email distribution list](#).
- This letter should be read in conjunction with information available in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) and the [WA Immunisation Schedule](#)
- For more information on the 2022 influenza vaccination program, please refer to the Australian Government's [Early advice for vaccination providers](#).

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to protecting Western Australians from influenza.

Dr Robyn Gibbs
MANAGER, IMMUNISATION PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Thursday 10 March 2022