



COVID-19 VACCINATION

Practice incentive payment – in-reach residential aged care and disability support worker COVID-19 vaccination

Information as at 3 August 2021

COVID-19 vaccination of residential aged care workers will become mandatory from 17 September 2021. It will be a condition of employment to have received a minimum first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for all people who work in a residential aged care facility.

Primary care vaccination providers are one of a number of available vaccine access points, and they have an important role in ensuring that aged care and disability support workers are vaccinated.

On 29 April 2021, primary care vaccination providers were advised that they may administer in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics for residential aged care and disability support workers upon request by residential aged care providers or the Primary Health Network (PHN).

Primary care vaccination providers include:

- general practices
- Commonwealth Vaccination Clinics (CVCs)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS)

To support primary care vaccination providers to conduct in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics, additional funding will be available to primary care vaccination providers who administer an in-reach clinic in a residential aged care or disability care setting from 29 April 2021 until 31 October 2021.

What additional funding is available to primary care vaccination providers to support in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics?

To support the administration of in-reach vaccination clinics to aged care and disability support workers, primary care vaccination providers can access additional payments until 31 October 2021. This funding is only available for vaccinations that are provided via a dedicated **in-reach service** for residential aged care or disability support workers.

Funding includes:

- A \$1,000 payment once a minimum threshold of 50 unvaccinated residential aged care or disability support workers (cumulative) have been provided a COVID-19 vaccination (1 dose) at an in-reach clinic.
- \$20 for every dose provided to an unvaccinated residential aged care or disability support worker thereafter (with a maximum payment of \$40 per worker for two doses).

These payments are provided to vaccination providers in addition to the per patient fees payable in line with existing funding arrangements (Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) COVID-19 Vaccine Assessment items and practice incentive payments, or equivalent for CVCs).

Additional funding is only available where an **in-reach service** is conducted and not when aged care or disability support workers attend a general practice, CVC or ACCHS.

If fewer than a cumulative total of 50 COVID-19 vaccination doses are administered as part of in-reach clinics between 29 April 2021 and 31 October 2021, no additional payment is available.

The additional payment is permitted to be backdated to 29 April 2021 where sufficient evidence of in-reach vaccination clinics can be provided to support the claim. **Payments can be claimed until 31 October 2021.**

Can we get the additional payment for aged care resident vaccinations?

The focus of the additional payments is to give residential aged care and disability support workers every opportunity to access a COVID-19 vaccine before the requirement to be vaccinated becomes mandatory for residential aged care workers on 17 September 2021.

We absolutely encourage the vaccination of residents during these in-reach clinics. While this will not accrue an additional incentive, the relevant MBS COVID-19 vaccine items or equivalent CVC payments can still be claimed

Will primary care providers have access to additional COVID-19 vaccine allocation to administer in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics?

There is a dedicated allocation of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to support vaccination of residential aged care and disability support staff. If you need additional Pfizer doses to conduct an in-reach clinic, your Primary Health Network (PHN) can facilitate additional Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses to be provided for your clinic. Please contact your PHN to discuss and coordinate.

These additional Pfizer doses can also be used to vaccinate residents who are not yet vaccinated or who require a second dose while you are on site.

How will this work?

PHNs will connect residential aged care facilities with local primary care vaccination sites that can deliver COVID-19 vaccination services, using the dedicated Pfizer vaccine supply. If you have capacity to support in-reach clinics, please contact your PHN to coordinate. Priority consideration may be given to practices that have an existing relationship with a residential aged care facility.

Both the facilities requesting in-reach clinics and the primary care provider willing to deliver the vaccination clinics **must** engage with the local PHN before and after any in-reach clinic to report:

- the planned date of in-reach vaccination clinic
- confirmation the clinic was delivered, and
- the number of staff vaccinated.

Disability workforce in-reach clinics may be coordinated directly between disability support providers and primary care providers. In this case it is not a requirement for the PHN to coordinate and report.

How is the payment provided?

To be eligible to receive the payments, primary care providers must report the relevant details for each facility visited through the COVID-19 Vaccine Administrative System (CVAS). Functionality will be available in CVAS **from Thursday 12 August 2021.**

These reports can be submitted retrospectively and backdated from 29 April 2021.

Vaccination sites **will need to ensure accurate information on the number of doses provided to residential aged care and disability support workers is recorded in CVAS** and retain all relevant records relating to the administration of the vaccine. Payments will be made based on the number of doses provided by the primary care vaccination provider as part of an in-reach clinic.

For general practice/ACCHS:

Payments for general practices and ACCHS will occur through the Practice Incentive Program. Participating PIP practices will be eligible for the payment without the need to further apply with Services Australia.

PIP Payments will be made in November 2021 for services provided from 29 April 2021.

General practices are also reminded to ensure that general practitioners providing MBS assessment items are linked to the practice approved for PIP.

For CVCs:

Payment will be made on receipt of an invoice that includes the number of doses administered to residential aged care and disability support workers as part of an in-reach clinic. The information on the invoice must match information on the number of doses provided to residential aged care and disability support workers as recorded in CVAS.

All other payments for vaccination services remain the same.

Delivery of in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics

In delivering in-reach vaccination clinics, primary care vaccination providers are responsible for ensuring:

- an **appropriate model of care** and clinical governance for vaccine delivery, that includes:
 - determining the patient's clinical suitability to receive the COVID-19 vaccine on this date, including identification of any precautions or contraindications, as well as vaccination history which should include checking the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)
 - obtaining or confirming informed consent
 - appropriate post-vaccination observation periods, and
 - clinical escalation processes for any vaccine-related adverse events including reporting to the appropriate organisation (where required).
- all **reporting requirements** are met, such as uploading administration data into the AIR, and maintaining appropriate medical records per vaccination assessment/administration (including ensuring CVCs provide data through the App).
- maintenance of vaccine **cold-chain integrity** during transport and at the site of administration to ensure vaccine potency. *For information on AstraZeneca storage please refer to the COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca Product Information and ATAGI clinical guidance on COVID-19 Vaccine in Australia 2021. Please also review the specific advice issued by ATAGI on drawing up the AstraZeneca vaccine. **Chapter 7 of the Strive for 5 guidelines** has specific information on transport of vaccines for use in an in-reach clinic.*
- that the in-reach clinic set up has adequate **infrastructure for clinical safety** to be maintained. This includes consideration of the relevant minimum requirements.

Vaccination providers should also:

- maximise the available doses to avoid wastage (i.e. plan to utilise all doses within a vial where possible)
- bring all required vaccine administration consumables and equipment as required
- plan for the individuals who receive the vaccination to have access to a second dose.

For more information on administering an in-reach vaccination clinic: Contact your PHN.