

MEDIA RELEASE

May 4, 2021

Gold Coast residents 50 and over able to get their COVID-19 vaccination

From May 3, 2021, local residents aged 50 and over have begun receiving their COVID-19 vaccination, as part of the expansion of the national COVID-19 rollout, in line with advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), prioritising the AstraZeneca vaccine for people aged 50 years and over.

On the Gold Coast, people aged 50 years and over can access their AstraZeneca vaccine from GP respiratory clinics. In addition, participating general practices will start vaccinating this group from May 17, 2021, although some practices are coming on board earlier.

Kalwun CEO, Kieran Chilcott, said the Kalwun/Nerang GP respiratory clinic was available to provide the AstraZeneca vaccine for a wide range of patients from age 50 upwards, which was particularly important for the higher risk groups including the elderly, those with chronic conditions and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community.

“GP respiratory clinics are available to vaccinate any eligible patients, particularly for those people that may not have a regular GP, don’t have a Medicare card or don’t have a general practice that is participating in the vaccine rollout,” Mr Chilcott said.

“Most of our GP respiratory clinics at Nerang, Hope Island, Upper Coomera or Burleigh don’t have long waiting lists at this stage, so it’s a good opportunity to book in.”

Gold Coast Primary Health Network CEO, Matt Carrodus, said it was important residents discussed their COVID-19 vaccination with a GP or medical expert.

“We know from seeing news reports overseas, the devastation of COVID-19, particularly on our more vulnerable populations. If people do contract COVID-19, they can become seriously ill or die, with the risk percentage increasing in every decade of age.

“While we’ve managed the pandemic in Australia really well, it’s not over yet.

“Vaccination remains the best way to protect against severe illness and death from COVID-19 and is a core element of the pandemic response, and while we shouldn’t sweep risks under the carpet, we know that those risks are rare.

“It’s important people discuss the benefits and risks of the COVID-19 vaccination with their GP, who is a trusted source to provide personalised advice, based on their medical history,” Mr Carrodus said.

Mr Carrodus, said the Australian Government’s [Vaccine Eligibility Checker](https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au) (<https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au>) was the best way for residents to locate their nearest GP respiratory clinic or general practice participating in the COVID-19 vaccination program. On the Gold Coast, the AstraZeneca vaccine is available from 120 participating general practices and four GP respiratory clinics.

“Once you complete the eligibility checker, and you are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination, it will then allow you to view COVID-19 vaccination clinics in your area and book an appointment online or via the phone,” Mr Carrodus said.

“If you prefer not to use the online option, you can call the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on 1800 020 080.”

“Given we are also coming into the cooler months, we should ensure that we continue to practice good hygiene, physical distancing, adhering to local restrictions, get tested immediately if we feel unwell and stay home until we receive our results.

“As we are also coming into flu season, residents are also reminded to talk to their GP about getting the flu vaccination which needs to be two weeks prior to, or after, a COVID-19 vaccination,” Mr Carrodus said.

For those wanting to know more about the COVID-19 vaccine program, the [Australian Government Department of Health website](#) has accurate, evidence-based answers to questions about COVID-19 vaccines, and information is available in a [range of languages](#).

Information about Gold Coast vaccination options are available at:
<https://gcphn.org.au/community/covid-19/getting-the-covid-19-vaccine>

Media inquiries: GCPHN Communications Manager, Christine Bain **M** 0417 779 345