



Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

Provider Bulletin

11 July 2022

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

Key Messages

ORAL TREATMENTS FOR COVID-19

Expanded eligibility criteria for COVID-19 oral antiviral Treatments

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) has expanded the eligibility criteria for Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule (PBS) listed COVID-19 oral antiviral treatments, [Paxlovid](#) (nirmatrelvir and ritonavir) and [Lagevrio](#) (molnupiravir), effective from **11 July 2022**.

This decision is in response to the latest evidence on the effectiveness and safety of the medicines, the rate of uptake since they were made available on the PBS, and the changing epidemiology of the virus.

Eligibility has been broadened to include people who have chronic respiratory issues due to conditions such as COPD, moderate or severe asthma, and there is also increased access for adults living with disability who have multiple medical conditions.

Not being vaccinated has been removed as a risk factor from the criteria for prescription under the PBS.

If a patient tests positive for COVID-19, they may be eligible for antiviral treatments if they are:

- 70* years and older
- 50 years or older with **2** additional risk factors
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 30 years or older and with **2** additional risk factors.

* where treatment is commenced within 5 days of symptom onset, or as soon as possible if you have no symptoms but test positive.

The new eligibility includes updated age limits and risk factors and is summarised in the **attachment**. Additional information can be found in the [PBAC Outcome Statement](#) or at <https://www.health.gov.au/oral-treatments>.

Primary care providers will continue to play a pivotal role as the key contact for patient guidance on eligibility and risk factors and prescribing the best treatment where clinically appropriate.

It is important that **primary care providers** familiarise themselves with the updated criteria and **identify potential patients** before they test positive for COVID-19. Medication options should be explored and included in patient's care plan to expediate treatment within that critical 5-day window from symptom onset (noting those over 70 years may commence treatment while asymptomatic following a positive test).

VACCINE OPERATIONS CENTRE (VOC) UPDATE

Tell Us What You Think - VOC operating hours

Thank you to everyone who provided comments around the proposed changes to VOC operating hours. As the survey has now closed, we will provide advice on post-survey results in the coming days before any changes are progressed.

RESOURCES

ATAGI COVID-19 vaccines and doses poster

The **attached** [ATAGI COVID-19 vaccines and doses poster](#) has been developed to help avoid vaccine administration errors.