



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**
VICTORIAN BRANCH

Newsflash

COVID-19 information for private and not-for-profit aged care members

Sunday 30 May 2021

Coronavirus update Private and not for profit residential aged care

Member update: COVID-19 positive case in private aged care facility highlights the urgent need for testing and vaccine access

ANMF has been notified by the Department of Health today regarding a positive COVID-19 case in an aged care facility in Melbourne's west. We understand that an aged care worker in the facility has tested positive and the facility is in lockdown and widespread testing is underway with support from Western and Melbourne Health.

This outbreak is a stark reminder of the importance of getting tested at the onset of symptoms and the urgent need for a strong and well-coordinated vaccination rollout for all residents and staff in private aged care across Victoria.

We are asking all aged care members to please complete a brief survey regarding the COVID-19 vaccine <https://anmfvic.asn.au/vaccsurv2>

Where can I get tested?

Please get tested even with the slightest of symptoms. To find where to get tested, check the Department of Health Coronavirus website for a map of testing sites:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19>

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (Victorian Branch) offices:

Ballarat Bendigo Geelong Melbourne Morwell Shepparton Swan Hill Wangaratta Warrnambool

Exposure site tiers explained

Tier 1 exposure sites

Anyone who has visited a Tier 1 exposure site during the times listed must immediately isolate, get a coronavirus (COVID-19) test, and quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. You should also contact the Department of Health at 1300 651 160.

Tier 2 exposure sites

Anyone who has visited a Tier 2 exposure site during times listed should urgently get a test and isolate until they receive a negative result. You should also contact the Department of Health at 1300 651 160.

Tier 3 exposure sites

Anyone who has visited a Tier 3 exposure site during times listed should monitor for symptoms - If symptoms develop, immediately get tested and isolate until you receive a negative result.

To find a testing location visit <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19>

Am I eligible for the COVID vaccine?

Yes, all aged care workers are considered eligible under phase 1a to receive a COVID vaccine.

I don't know where to get a vaccine, what should I do?

Some private aged care workers are receiving their COVID vaccine in their workplace in the event there is vaccines left over after vaccinating residents.

However, despite the initial plan from the Commonwealth Government, we know that many aged care workers are yet to receive the first dose of the vaccine and have had to source their own vaccine.

Please complete the ANMF's vaccine survey so that we can continue to advocate on your behalf to ensure the Federal Government provides equitable access and prioritisation of the vaccine rollout for aged care nurses and personal care workers.

In the event that the government won't do that, they at least need to provide the state system with enough vaccines so that they can make it happen at the vaccination hubs and centres across the state.

Take the survey here <https://anmfvic.asn.au/vaccsurv2>

All members working in aged care are eligible and can get a vaccine immediately.

If you are over 50 years of age, you can receive a COVID vaccine from a participating general practice (GP) or at the state vaccination centres.

If you are under the age of 50 years, you can make an appointment to receive a vaccine by calling 1800 675 398 and attend a state-run vaccination centre.

Read the Federal Government's latest advice on how to access the vaccine via <https://bit.ly/2SJ1Wlp>

Vaccine information

ANMF strongly encourages aged care nurses and personal care workers to have the vaccine to protect themselves, their family, their residents and the community.

The vaccinations provide protection against severe illness and death if you contract COVID-19.

The state clinics will have Pfizer vaccine supplies for priority 1a and 1b staff aged under 50 years. However, you must book in advance to ensure supply is available at your closest clinic.

Staff aged 50 and over should receive the AstraZeneca vaccine.

The rare but serious clotting disorder (thrombosis with thrombocytopenia) affects approximately six people out of one million (estimated to be 20-40 cases per million in those under 50 years). [Source Federal Government <https://bit.ly/3eAGztR>]

Members are encouraged to read Professor Allen Cheng's article 'Why we decided to put Pfizer vaccine ahead of AstraZeneca for under-50s' (*The Age*, 9 April 2021) via <https://bit.ly/3f1BW8N>

Prof Cheng is an infectious disease physician and director of the Infection Prevention Epidemiology Unit at Alfred Health. He also is the Victorian Deputy Chief Health officer and a member of the Australian Technical Advisory Group advising the Federal Government on the COVID-19 vaccines.

Read more about the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine <https://bit.ly/3eAGztR>

Read more about the Pfizer vaccine <https://bit.ly/32Vry0w>

Bookings and location information visit bit.ly/3aJLGHk

Book an appointment - call the Victorian Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398.

A translator is available - if required by pressing option 0.

Single site employment

As previously advised to members in our newsflash dated 28 May, the Federal Government declared **Greater Melbourne** a COVID-19 hotspot. This means that from 27 May, private aged care employers could access the Support for Aged Care Workers in Covid-19 (SACWIC) funding to implement single site employment (SSE) which means that an aged care employee works at only one site where they ordinarily work their greatest number of hours, for an agreed period of time, whilst the funding is in place.

Read more in our COVID-19 aged care newsflash sent to members on Friday 28 May <https://bit.ly/3uFmdpC>

How to access ANMF support

ANMF is here to support our members in aged care during this challenging period. Representation and advice are available.

For general inquiries members are encouraged to complete an online Member Assistance inquiry form via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance>

If you feel that you are being disadvantaged by single site employment direction, please contact ANMF via this form: anmfvic.asn.au/dualemployment.

Personal protective equipment concern?

Members with concerns about PPE access, supply or level should:

1. **raise and submit OHS incident reports with your employer** as well as speaking directly with your manager
2. **involve your Health and Safety Rep** if you have one
3. contact ANMF via anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance (include your report and response if applicable) for further support and advice if after you have raised your concerns they are not addressed by your employer.

\$450 test and isolation payment

The Victorian Government provides a \$450 test and isolation payment to workers required to isolate between taking a COVID-19 test and don't have access to paid leave. This is for private aged care workers too.

More information, eligibility, and applications <https://bit.ly/3fWygqQ>

\$1500 disaster leave payment

The Federal Government provides a \$1500 disaster leave payment if you tested positive or were identified as a close contact and have to isolate for 14 days. Private aged care workers are eligible for the payment if you do not have access to paid leave during your isolation period.

Call 180 22 66 to make a claim.

More information, eligibility, and applications <https://bit.ly/3bWnfXG>

Emergency accommodation for healthcare workers

The Victorian Government provides the 'frontline accommodation program' for health care workers if they need support to quarantine or isolate safely.

Private aged care nurses and personal care workers are eligible to access this program.

For details <https://bit.ly/2X6cABJ>

Got a colleague not receiving ANMF emails?

If you have an ANMF colleague who is not receiving these newsflash emails, please pass this on and let them know they can re-subscribe via anmfvic.asn.au/resubscribe

Encourage your colleagues to join ANMF

Please invite your aged care nursing and personal care worker colleagues to join their union so they have access to support, advice and information about their employment. Let them know they can join via anmfvic.asn.au/join