



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Aboriginal sector communication update #19

Wednesday 12 May 2021 12:00 Hours

COVID-19 is a continually changing situation, please check the latest information and updates to find the most current public health advice, please go to wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus and healthy.wa.gov.au/COVID-19

This regular statewide communication update is to keep health professionals abreast of the state-wide public health messages and resources that have been developed by Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) for the Aboriginal community and health professionals for COVID-19.

COVID-19 case numbers

- As of **12 May 2021**, there are **1015** confirmed cases, **87** historical cases and **13** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **993** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **1,128,153** COVID-19 tests have been conducted in WA.
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](https://redcap.link/68q5xwgs)<https://redcap.link/68q5xwgs>
- **National:** [Current National Status](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#) & [WHO Dashboard](#)

National COVID-19 Aboriginal epidemiological profile

Updates on COVID-19 among Aboriginal Australians, key insights **#16**, data as of **28TH March 2021**:

- **0.51% (150 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**29,192**) notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people – (**no change** in the total number of the accumulative cases since the last update).
- Of the total **150** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **75% (113 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **23% (34 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **1% (2 person)** acquired their infections from interstate and **1% (1 person)** had an unknown source of infection or is under investigated.
- Of the total **113** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **81% (91 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **13% (15 persons)** acquired the infection in an inner regional area, **5% (6 persons)** acquired the infection in an outer regional area, and **1% (1 persons)** acquired the infection in a remote area.
- Of the **34** Aboriginal people who acquired the infection overseas (including few cases from WA), **41% (14 persons)** were linked to cruise ships.
- Between July to December 2020, there were no new overseas-acquired cases notified in the NNDSS, while no new locally-acquired cases recorded in the NNDSS between September and October 2020.
- **11% (16 cases)** of Aboriginal cases required hospital admission, while **89% (134 cases)** required quarantine/isolation. **No deaths** were recorded among Aboriginal positive cases.
- The median age of Aboriginal positive cases is **31** years; compared to **37** years for non-Aboriginal people.

- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as at **4 May 2021** there are around **280** SARS-CoV2 or COVID-19 candidate vaccines (an increase of **8** candidate vaccines from the last update) being developed across the world, with total of **96** candidate vaccines (an increase of **8** candidates from the last update) are already progressed into Phase 1, 2, 3 or 4 of clinical trials. There are currently 6 candidate vaccines that have been recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Latest updates

Victorian interstate travellers

The WA Department of Health has issued advice to recently returned travellers from Victoria, following a public health alert issued for parts of Melbourne. Anyone who has visited any of these exposure [locations](#) at the times indicated, should get tested immediately and self-quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. This alert was issued by the Victorian Health Department after a COVID-19 positive case was detected in the Melbourne community. The case was likely to be infectious from 6-10 May. The WA Chief Health Officer said that Victoria Health is in the process of contact tracing and will notify WA Health if any close or casual contacts are found in WA, to allow for the appropriate public health response. Any recent returned travellers from Victoria should continue to regularly monitor the Victorian Health [website](#) for any updates.

Perth and Peel restrictions eased further

Based on the latest public health advice, the current Perth and Peel region restrictions will be further eased from 12:01am Saturday, 8 May until 12:01am Saturday, 15 May due to no community cases of COVID-19. Under these eased restrictions, facemasks will only be required in the following settings:

- Travelling on public transport
- Hospitals
- Visiting aged care and disability homes
- Large events with more than 1,000 attendees.

COVID safe protective behaviors are still encouraged for all Western Australians, including physical distancing where possible, good personal hygiene and getting tested if unwell with COVID symptoms. More information about the further easing of restrictions can be found [here](#).

Weddings and funerals in the Perth and Peel regions can continue to proceed with up to 200 guests (excluding staff), providing there is at least 2 square metres of space available per person and masks must be worn. You will need to seek an [exemption](#) to increase the number of guests beyond 200. Important information on funeral services in the Perth region during the transition period is available [here](#).

Exemptions are only required for weddings and funerals occurring in the Perth and Peel region.

Public exposure sites

It is imperative that everyone follows public health advice and is not complacent during this time of eased restrictions. If anyone has visited one of the listed [locations](#) visited by a confirmed case, they must get tested and self-isolate until they get a negative result. The location list is regularly updated with new locations, dates and times as more detailed information becomes available. It is important to regularly check on this website for updates.

If anyone develops symptoms, even if they haven't been to one of these locations, they should get tested and must self-isolate until they receive a negative result. COVID [clinics](#) have gone back to normal opening hours as of this week.

Anyone who has visited a restaurant or accepted a delivery order from the [list](#) of these low risk food businesses between 29 April and 1 May, should monitor for COVID symptoms. If you develop symptoms within 14 days, you should get tested and isolate until you get a negative result.

As we ease restrictions, it is vital that we keep using the SafeWA app as contact registers are still mandatory for contact tracing purposes should they be required.

NSW interstate travellers

The WA Health Department has issued advice for recently returned travellers from NSW, following a recent public health alert for parts of Sydney. After a new positive case of COVID-19 was identified in the Sydney community, WA's Chief Health Officer advises that anyone recently returned to WA who has visited the [identified locations](#) during the relevant times, must get tested immediately and quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. Any recent returned travellers from NSW should continue to regularly monitor the NSW Health [website](#) for new information. More information on this story can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 vaccination program

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has reinforced previous [recommendations](#) on the use of COVID-19 vaccines following a review of vaccine safety data and benefits. A new [resource](#) has been released to help patients make informed decisions about receiving the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

The [Roll up for WA](#) COVID-19 vaccination campaign has commenced to encourage West Australian's to get vaccinated to protect themselves, their loved ones and community from COVID-19. The campaign features real frontline workers and volunteers, including Ronda who is a Nyikina woman from the Kimberley region who shares why she got vaccinated against COVID-19. Read more of Ronda's story [here](#).

As part of Phase 1b, Aboriginal people aged 50 years and over can now book in to receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine at their local Aboriginal Medical Service, at participating GP's and GP respiratory clinics, OR at a state-run COVID-19 Vaccination clinic, by calling 13COVID (13 26843). Alternatively, you can find a participating GP by using the Vaccine Eligibility Checker [here](#). For all up to date information about COVID-19 vaccination please visit [HealthyWA](#).

The Commonwealth Government has released [resources](#) for Aboriginal community vaccine providers to download, print and utilise in clinics. After vaccination, use the COVID-19 vaccine [symptom checker](#) if you have any concerns about any symptoms.

In other news, as of the 28 April 2021, more than 2 million people have received their first COVID-19 Vaccine dose in Australia, including more than 28,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organization (NACCHO) leaders Pat Turner and Dr Dawn Casey both [received](#) their COVID-19 vaccination at a local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service earlier this month. Watch Aunty Evelyn get her COVID-19 vaccine [here](#) and [watch](#) Dr Mark Wenitong talk about getting the facts about the vaccine. Also [watch](#) Dr Lucas de Toca talk about why children cannot currently get vaccinated for COVID-19.

Priority COVID-19 health messages for Aboriginal people

Aboriginal health professionals and sector representatives are encouraged to promote and reinforce the following key messages to Aboriginal clients and community. Remember to:

- continue to physical distance where possible
- continue to practise good hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- stay at home if unwell and rest to stay strong
- if unwell with flu-like symptoms, get tested (make sure to self-isolate until you receive your test result)
- make sure your family gets the flu vaccine

- keep attending your regular health checks, especially for chronic illnesses
- download and use the free [SafeWA app](#) for your phone
- look after your mental health and social emotional wellbeing during this time.

Statewide Aboriginal resources

A suite of statewide Aboriginal tailored resources has been developed by the Department of Health WA for the community and health professionals, to promote awareness and provide up-to-date COVID-19 information that is culturally safe.

The aim of providing culturally-appropriate communications is to increase awareness and reduce anxiety and fear in our communities. We encourage Aboriginal health professionals to demonstrate leadership when working with the Aboriginal community by:

- Being “on message”
- Reinforcing and encouraging people to ‘stay vigilant’ and ‘don’t get complacent’
- Using positive strength-based messaging and language
- Ensure consistent, accurate and timely communication is provided, based on the official public health messages and health information issued by the Chief Health Officer from the Department of Health.

Refer to the Department of Health COVID-19 website for up-to-date information

Health services are welcome to tailor and localise Department of Health COVID-19 Aboriginal resources to meet community needs.

Please reference the Department of Health WA and contact PHEOC (pheoc@health.wa.gov.au) for further information.

Updated resources for the Aboriginal sector

- [Guide for Funerals and Sorry Business](#)

All resources for the Aboriginal sector

[WA Department of Health – Aboriginal Sector](#) provides:

- **Aboriginal sector communication updates**
- **Aboriginal health professionals**
- **External stakeholder resources**
- **Remote and rural planning**

[HealthyWA - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) for Aboriginal People](#) provides:

- **Vaccination**
- **Fact sheets**
- **Posters**
- **Video/radio messages**
- **Other resources available**
- **GPs and other support phone lists**

COVID-19 vaccine FAQs

- **National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)**
NACCHO have developed a booklet with information about COVID-19 vaccines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - [Information about COVID-19 vaccines](#)

- **Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS)**
KAMS have developed a list of FAQs to assist the community with the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. [Frequently Asked Questions page](#)
- **Department of Health South Australian (SA Health)**
SA Health have developed an FAQ Sheet to assist Aboriginal communities during COVID-19 vaccine rollout. [COVID-19 vaccine FAQs](#)
- **Australian Government Department of Health**
The Federal Health Department has collated common questions and answers about COVID-19 vaccines suitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. [COVID-19 vaccine common questions](#)
- **Western Australian Department of Health (WA Health)**
WA Health has developed a FAQs page to answer questions and concerns of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout for the WA community. [COVID-19 FAQs](#)

Crisis hotlines

- **Brother to Brother 24 hour crisis hotline** (1800 435 799) for Aboriginal men to provide extra support during the pandemic.
- **1800RESPECT** (1800 737 732) for advice concerning sexual, domestic or family violence.
- **Women's Domestic Violence Helpline** (1800 007 339) for support and referral for women experiencing domestic violence (incl referrals to women's refuges)
- **Crisis Care** (1800 199 008) if you require emergency accommodation.
- **National COVID-19 Older Persons Support Line** (1800 171 866)
- **Kids Helpline** (1800 55 1800)
- **Beyond Blue** (1300 224 636)
- **Lifeline** (13 11 14)
- **Suicide Call Back Service** (1300 659 467)

Who to contact for more information

- **COVID-19 Clinic ONLY Test Results Enquiry Line:** [1800 313 223](#) (Note: NOT for GP referred testing or private pathology clinic tests)
- **COVID-19 WA Public Information Line:** [132 6843 \(13 COVID\)](#)
- **COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Exemption Application:** Visit the [G2G PASS](#) website or complete the [exemption application form](#)
- **COVID-19 WA Police Line:** [131 444](#) to report breaches of: self-isolation, business closures, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions.

Last updated **12 May 2021**

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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