



seasonal

Influenza

Residential aged care communication

April 2021

Seasonal Influenza – are you ready?

PROTECT

VACCINATE
staff and
residents

- Actively promote the benefits of annual influenza vaccination to staff, residents, volunteers and regular visitors.
- Ensure all staff and visitors are vaccinated against influenza and aim to achieve at least 95% vaccination coverage in residents prior to the start of each influenza season.
- Develop and maintain separate influenza vaccination registers for staff and residents.

PREVENT

Infection control
SAVES LIVES

- Provide annual infection control training to all staff.
- Ensure handwashing facilities or alcohol-based hand rub are used by staff and visitors at points of direct care and entrances to the facility and resident wings.
- Ensure staff use appropriate personal protective equipment to prevent spread of influenza.
- Isolate ill residents and exclude all ill staff and visitors from the facility.

RESPOND

Notify
outbreaks
EARLY

- Actively monitor staff and residents for influenza and influenza-like-illness (ILI).
- Notify your local public health unit (PHU) as soon as you suspect three (3) or more cases of ILI in staff or residents within a 72-hour period.
- An early and rapid outbreak response reduces the number of ill residents and staff.
- Your local PHU can provide advice and resources for managing an outbreak.

Be prepared for the 2021 influenza season.

From 30 May 2021, everyone entering a residential aged care facility needs to be vaccinated against influenza. This applies to staff, visitors, health practitioners, volunteers and others such as cleaners, tradesman, gardeners and maintenance staff. Influenza vaccination protects staff and provides an additional layer of protection for high-risk residents.

Staff vaccination strategies:

Strategies associated with successful staff vaccination programs include:

- providing free influenza vaccine
- providing vaccinations onsite
- ensuring all staff working all shifts are able to access free vaccine
- actively promoting individual and public health benefits by providing education and written information
- providing staff information that clearly links staff vaccination policies to broader infection control policies and staff health programs
- providing appropriate incentives and recognise vaccinated staff

Resources for residential aged care facilities

[Communicable Diseases Network Australia–Guidelines for the Prevention, Control and Public Health Management of Influenza Outbreaks in Residential Care Facilities in Australia](#) (includes planning resources and templates)

- [Queensland Health–Disease prevention in residential care facilities](#)
- [Australian Department of Health–Mandatory Influenza \(flu\) vaccination program for residential aged care providers](#)
- Contact details for [public health units](#)