

COVID-19 Primary Care Update No. 132

General Practice Liaison Network, Healthcare Improvement Unit

Tuesday 25 May 2021

Good afternoon everyone,

Epidemiology

- In the last 24 hours, >5,000 COVID-19 vaccines were administered in Queensland
- Victoria Health confirmed a fifth case of community transmitted COVID-19 today. Exposure sites are regularly updated - <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/contact-tracing#VIC>. Anyone who has been to the sites and are already in Queensland must call 134 COVID (13 42 68) to discuss their circumstances, immediately travel by private transport directly to their home or accommodation, and quarantine until further instruction from Queensland Health.
- TTS remains a rare syndrome. As of 20 May, there has been 21 confirmed and 4 probably cases of Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS) in Australia. Of these, 22 have recovered and been discharged from hospital.

COVID-19 AEFI Templates

- Electronic COVID-19 **AEFI Templates are now available for Best Practice and Medical Director** software packages. They will help improve the efficiency of reporting as they auto-populate some information. Your local PHN will be sharing additional information shortly. In the Gold Coast, the templates are available here: <https://gcphn.org.au/referrals/17269-2/>
- A big thank you to everyone from Queensland Health, the PHNs, and general practice who were involved in designing and testing the AEFI templates.

Community vaccination hubs

- The Queensland Government announced that **14 additional community-based vaccination hubs** will be established across the state to assist our vaccine program.
- The 14 sites will be in addition to the four existing community-based vaccination locations, e.g. Central Queensland University City Campus (Mackay), Bundaberg TAFE, Hervey Bay TAFE, Maryborough City Hall.

COVID-19 vaccine-related developments

- Members of the **general public aged 40-49 can now register to receive a COVID-19 Pfizer vaccination [online](#)**.
- The Joint Statement from ATAGI and THANZ on Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TSS) and the use of the AZ COVID-19 vaccine is attached. The key points on the first page provides a great summary, and includes a list of groups that can receive the AZ vaccine, and guidance about the identification and management of TSS.
- This video by Dr Hajokowicz (RBWH Director of Infectious Diseases) provides a great summary of TTS and is well worth a look - <https://m.facebook.com/QLDHealth/videos/511241953574543/>.
- A one page summary of TTS and AZ vaccine 'talking points' are attached for interest.
- The TGA approved changes to the Pfizer vaccine storage conditions: an increase in the approved storage period of the unopened thawed vial at 2-8°C (i.e. in a normal refrigerator after taking out of deep-freeze conditions) at the point of use from five days up to **one month (31 days)**.

Literature

- Public Health England published 'COVID-19 vaccine surveillance report week 20' recently (attached). It provides further evidence that the Pfizer and AZ vaccines have equivalent effectiveness in 'real world' applications (see pages 4 to 6).
- The monoclonal antibody, Sotrovimab, has been approved by the EMA to treat confirmed COVID-19 in adults and adolescents (>12 and >40kg) who do not require supplemental oxygen therapy: <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/ema-issues-advice-use-sotrovimab-vir-7831-treating-covid-19>. The TGA is now evaluating Sotrovimab for the Australian context - <https://www.tga.gov.au/tga-evaluating-first-monoclonal-antibody-treatment-covid-19-sotrovimab-glaxosmithkline-australia-pty-ltd>.

Educational events

- The Murray PHN is hosting a webinar this Thursday about Long COVID symptoms. There is stellar line-up of speakers. Register here - <https://kapara.rdbk.com.au/landers/ecd2d0.html>.

Indications for Comirnaty (Pfizer) in patients aged 50 and older

- We have received a few queries about patients aged 50 and older that should be considered for the Pfizer, rather than the AZ vaccine. In response, the following list may be helpful. It is provided as a practical guide, with the caveat that it may not be complete and does not substitute for official guidance.
 - A past history of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST)
 - A past history of heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (HIT)
 - A past history of idiopathic splanchnic (mesenteric, portal and splenic) venous thrombosis
 - Anti-phospholipid syndrome with thrombosis
 - People with contraindications to COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, i.e.
 - Anaphylaxis to a previous dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca, or to an ingredient of the vaccine
 - Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia occurring after the first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca
 - Other serious adverse events attributed to the first dose of COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca
- Currently, Queensland Hospitals are reporting that the most common reason for referrals for people >50 for Pfizer vaccines are a prior history of DVT or Factor V Leiden. The latest ATAGI position statement (attached) clarifies that these patients *can* receive the AZ vaccine.

Inspirational thought

'Social media is training us to compare our lives, instead of appreciating everything we are' (Bill Murray)

Best wishes,
Carl

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About this Document:

- This document was an e-mail sent to a wide range of primary care staff and clinicians. The content is related to COVID-19 and the Queensland response and is intended for the free use and wide dissemination by the recipients or anyone else who access this webpage
- Every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate and up-to-date. If you become aware of any issues, please notify us so we can amend our documents
- Please provide any feedback or contact us using our e-mail COVID19-PC@health.qld.gov.au. Please note that the inbox is not continuously monitored, and we may not be able to respond to every message.