

# Seasonal Influenza

## Residential Aged Care

No 1 2019

### VACCINATE staff and residents

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

### 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 ill staff and visitors from the facility.

### 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 detect 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 2019 influenza season

The Australian Government recommends that residential aged care facilities have an influenza vaccination policy for staff and residents and to ensure it is implemented each year.

Influenza vaccination protects staff and provides an additional layer of protection for high-risk residents.

### Staff vaccination strategies

Strategies associated with successful vaccination programs include

- provide free influenza vaccine
- provide vaccinations onsite
- ensure staff working all shifts are able to access free vaccine
- actively promote individual and public health benefits by providing education and written information
- clearly link vaccination policies to broader infection control policies and staff health programs
- provide 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 vaccination program for residential aged care providers](#)
- Contact details for [public health units](#)