



Vaccine Update 508- COVID-19 vaccine transition the National Immunisation Program, updated 2026 Annual WA Immunisation Update eLearning module, adolescent immunisation reminders, Japanese Encephalitis Virus, vaccine eligibility and 2027 RSV Beyfortus Program ended

07/10/2026

COVID-19 vaccine has transitioned to the National Immunisation Program

As of 1 October, COVID-19 vaccines are funded under the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#). The National COVID-19 Vaccine Program (NCVP), established during Australia's COVID-19 pandemic response, is no longer active. The eligibility criteria has changed. NIP funded COVID-19 vaccines are only available for the following people at the highest risk of severe disease from COVID-19:

- all adults aged 75 years and over (two doses per year, approximately six months apart)
- adults aged 65–74 years (one dose per year)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50–74 years (one dose per year)
- adults aged 18–64 years with severe immunocompromise (one dose per year)

The Western Australian (WA) [immunisation schedule](#), and resources have been updated to reflect this change. The 2026 Annual WA Immunisation update module has been updated with the latest COVID-19 program information. It is recommended that all providers administering the COVID-19 vaccine complete this update. For those working under the [Structures Administration and Supply Arrangements \(SASAs\)](#), these modules need to be completed annually.

People who are not eligible for a government funded COVID-19 vaccine may choose to purchase the vaccine privately based on discussions with their healthcare provider.

For more information and for resources to support this transition, visit the Department of Health, Disability and Aging [NIP COVID-19 Webpage](#).

Adolescent immunisation reminders

With school holidays underway, it is an ideal time for immunisation providers to remind families about the importance of checking their [adolescent's immunisation](#) status. While the [School-based Immunisation Programs \(SBIP\)](#) provides an important opportunity for adolescents to receive recommended vaccines, not all students receive their vaccinations through this program.

Immunisation providers are encouraged to use the school holiday period as an opportunity to review adolescent vaccination records and offer any overdue or [catch-up vaccinations](#). Checking the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) can help identify any missed doses and determine whether an adolescent is up to date with vaccines recommended under the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#). These include:

- [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\)](#)
- [Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis \(dTpa\)](#)
- [Meningococcal ACWY](#)

Every healthcare encounter presents an opportunity to check, recommend, and vaccinate where appropriate.

Japanese encephalitis virus vaccine eligibility changes

Until 31 October 2026, the Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) vaccination continues to be temporarily expanded for eligible persons within the Kimberley and Pilbara. The following individuals are currently eligible to receive a JEV vaccine:

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- all residents in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions aged 2 months and over
- workers for mining companies with sites in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions
- travellers to the Kimberley and Pilbara regions aged 2 months and older.

From 1 November 2026 the JEV vaccine expanded program will conclude and eligibility will return to the following individuals:

- Kimberley residents:
 - Aboriginal residents of the Kimberley (aged 2 months or older)
 - non-Aboriginal residents of the Kimberley (aged 2 months or older) residing outside the suburbs of Broome, Cable Beach, Djugun, Minyirr and Bilingurr
 - non-Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness residing in Broome
- Pilbara residents (aged 2 months or older):
 - Residents of postcode 6753 including Newman
 - Residents of postcode 6762 (Western Desert)
- Persons living and/or working in an eligible suburb or postcode for at least a 30-day period who spend significant time (at least 4 hours per day) outdoors for unavoidable work, recreation, education or other essential activities. This excludes those working in the mining industry.
- Persons who work directly with mosquitoes, and indirectly through sentinel animal surveillance systems in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions (for example, environmental health officers, entomologists, environmental consultants involved in mosquito management, rangers and park staff, and depot workers).
- Diagnostic and research laboratory workers who are likely to handle live JEV.

Ordering limits apply to ensure sufficient stock is available to eligible persons. The ordering [Onelink](#) system for government-funded vaccines is updated regularly with current information on ordering instructions.

2026 RSV Beyfortus statewide program ended

The WA statewide [RSV infant immunisation \(Beyfortus\) program](#) runs each year from 1 April to 30 September. It is available year-round in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions due to continuous [RSV](#) circulation in these areas.

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In line with the above timelines and if residing in the Kimberley or Pilbara regions, the following infants and children under 2 years of age, are eligible for Beyfortus if:

- their mother was not vaccinated in pregnancy, or received Abrysvo less than 2 weeks prior to delivery
- they have a medical risk condition
- their mother was immunosuppressed while pregnant
- they are Aboriginal and/or have a medical risk condition born after 1 October and are entering their second RSV season, regardless of their mother's Abrysvo vaccination status.

Beyfortus can be safely administered at the same time as other routine childhood vaccines, including the birth dose Hepatitis B vaccine.

For further information on RSV immunisation eligibility see the [program information](#) and [RSV immunisation decision aid](#).

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