



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

# Aboriginal sector communication update #16

**Thursday 1 April 2021 15:00 Hours**

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.

## Early vaccination snapshot

The ACCHO sector have commenced delivery of the vaccine in the North West with great success, so far delivering it in Broome, Beagle Bay & Bidjyangana (starting Thursday). A number of on site information sessions have been coordinated by WACHS and the Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service have also begun to roll out the vaccine in the metro area.

You may want to share the following facebook posts –

<https://www.facebook.com/100876411578659/posts/280305036969128/?vh=e&d=n>

<https://www.facebook.com/100876411578659/posts/279077313758567/?vh=e&d=n>

## COVID-19 case numbers

- As of **1 April** 2021, there are **944** confirmed cases, **60** historical cases and **17** active cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Western Australia (WA). **918** people have recovered from COVID-19 in WA. There have been **9** deaths from COVID-19 in WA.
- To date **947,084** 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 **#15**, data as of **14 March** 2021:

- **0.52% (150 cases)** of all COVID-19 positive (confirmed) cases (**29,051**) notified in the Australian *National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System* (NNDSS) were recorded as Aboriginal people.
- Of the total **150** Aboriginal COVID-19 positive cases, **76% (114 persons)** acquired their infection locally, while **23% (34 persons)** acquired their infections overseas, and **1% (1 person)** acquired their infections from interstate and **1% (1 person)** had an unknown source of infection or is under investigated.
- Of the total **114** Aboriginal persons who acquired their infections locally, **80% (91 persons)** acquired the infection in a major city, **14% (16 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.

## Latest updates

### COVID-19 vaccination program

Western Australia continues to roll out COVID-19 vaccinations, prioritising those who are at highest risk of contracting COVID-19. These eligible workers have been invited, via their employers, to book in for a COVID-19 vaccination:

- Phase 1A eligible populations who have been invited for a COVID-19 vaccination include quarantine and border workers, frontline health care workers.
- Other health care workers, and groups of critical and high-risk workers including police, fire and emergency staff, have already received an invitation to be vaccinated.

The vaccination rollout is affected by the availability of both imported and locally manufactured vaccines, however as more doses become available newly eligible groups will receive updated information about where they can receive their vaccine as part of the overall phased plan coordinated by the Australian Government. From Monday 22 March, the below groups will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine via general practices, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and GP-led respiratory clinics as part of Phase 1B:

- Adults aged 70 years and over
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 55
- Adults with an underlying medical condition, including those with a disability
- Other health care workers
- Critical and high-risk workers

If you have not received an invitation to be vaccinated via your employer, and believe you are eligible, please use the Australian Government's [COVID-19 vaccine eligibility checker](#) to check your eligibility and make an appointment or register your interest via the Australian Government's GP vaccination program.

If you are an employer, you may be wondering about your and your employees' rights and responsibilities in relation to the vaccine. The Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) have published workplace information about the COVID-19 vaccine [FAQs](#) on their website. These FAQs provide general information only. It is important that businesses and employees seek appropriate advice about their specific circumstances.

For the most up-to date information on the COVID-19 Vaccination Program, please visit the trusted sources below:

- **HealthyWA** - [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (for consumers) including [new FAQs](#) for the WA community about the COVID-19 vaccination program.
- **WA Health** - [COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#) (for health professionals) including targeted information for WA health providers and how to [subscribe](#) to the WA COVID-19 Vaccine Update. [health.wa.gov.au](http://health.wa.gov.au)

- **The Australian Government - [COVID-19 Vaccines hub](#)** including the latest news and information about the development, approval process and rollout plans for the COVID-19 vaccines.
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- **Eligibility checker:** <https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility>
- **Aged care toolkit:** <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/information-for-aged-care-providers-workers-and-residents-about-covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-aged-care-readiness-toolkit>
- **Translated resources:** <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/translated>

## WA Health advice for Queensland and New South Wales travelers

Anyone who has arrived in WA from Queensland and New South Wales who has visited any of the affected [Queensland exposure sites](#) and/or [New South Wales exposure sites](#), during the relevant times, should:

- get tested immediately for COVID-19;
- quarantine at a suitable premises for 14 days from the date of attendance at the high-risk location; and
- get tested for COVID-19 on day 11.

Queensland transitioned from '**very low risk**' to '**low risk**' at 12.01am Saturday, **March 27**.

Queensland transitioned from '**low risk**' to '**medium risk**' at 12.01am Tuesday, **March 30**.

Under the 'medium risk' category, travel is not permitted into WA, unless you are an exempt traveler.

The exemption list is limited to:

- certain senior Government officials;
- certain active military personnel;
- a member of the Commonwealth Parliament;
- a person carrying out functions under a law of the Commonwealth;
- a person responsible for transport freight or logistics; and
- anyone who is given approval by State Emergency Coordinator or an authorised officer.
- compassionate reasons

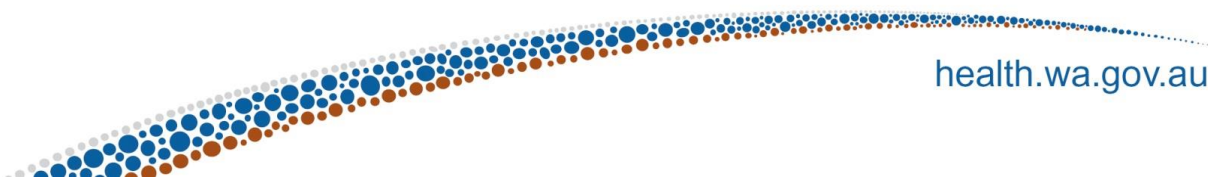
Exempt travellers from Queensland arriving into WA from 12.01am Tuesday, 30 March 2021 must:

- self-quarantine in a suitable premise for 14 days;
- present for an initial COVID-19 test on arrival at Perth Airport;
- present for a COVID-19 test if any symptoms develop during quarantine;
- present for a COVID-19 test on day 11 after arrival in WA (if still in WA).

## State-by-state risk rating

All **other** jurisdictions **except Queensland** are considered 'very low risk' and are permitted to enter WA without COVID-19 testing or self-quarantine requirements.

They are still, however, required to complete a G2G PASS declaration and undergo a health screening upon arrival into WA.



For more information, see the WA Government's controlled interstate border [webpage](#).

## 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](mailto:pheoc@health.wa.gov.au)) for further information.**

## New resources for the Aboriginal sector

COVID-19 vaccine myth buster/FAQ sheet available on the HealthyWA website

## 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 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 has developed a myth buster/factsheet to address the concerns of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout for the Aboriginal community.
  - [Vaccination Mythbusters and frequently asked questions](#)

## 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](tel:1800313223) (Note: **NOT** for GP referred testing or private pathology clinic tests)
- **COVID-19 WA Public Information Line:** [132 6843 \(13 COVID\)](tel:1326843)
- **COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Exemption Application:** Visit the [G2G PASS](#) website or complete the [exemption application form](#)
- **COVID-19 WA Police Line:** [131 444](tel:131444) to report breaches of: self-isolation, business closures, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions.

Last updated **1 April 2021**

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

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