

29 March 2021

Local Penrith general practices join the fight against COVID-19

Last week, general practices in the Nepean Blue Mountains region start the staged roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations under [Phase 1b of the Federal Government's Vaccination Roll-out Strategy](#).

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, has been working closely with the Department of Health to support local healthcare providers to prepare for the roll-out, which will take a staged approach over the next four weeks.

[Phase 1b includes](#) vulnerable groups, such as older people aged over 70, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples aged over 55, critical and high risk workers including healthcare, defence, police, fire, emergency services, meat processing and people with certain underlying medical conditions.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay said, "We are proud that so many general practices in our region have agreed to be COVID-19 vaccine providers and that they are rising to the many challenges of this unprecedented national roll-out."

"We have 12 practices in Penrith now delivering the vaccine including **Astley Medical Centre, Cambridge Park Doctors, Cranebrook Doctors, Derby Street Family Medical Centre, Emu Plains Medial Centre, First Care Medical Centre Cranebrook, Glenmore Park Mediclinic, Mt Pleasant Medical Practice, Penrith Medical and Fitness Centre, Southlands Family Doctors, St Clair Medical Practice and Werrington County Medical Centre,**" said Ms Reay.

In addition to general practices, the region's three COVID-19 GP-led Respiratory Clinics, that have been conducting testing over the past year, will also be offering vaccinations. The Penrith Clinic, located at **Our Medical Home Penrith**, 2227 Wolseley Street, Jamisontown and operated by Cornerstone Health, is commencing vaccinations on **Monday 29 March**.

"As the cornerstone of healthcare in the community, GPs are critical to the success of the COVID-19 immunisation program," explained clinical lead GP at Our Medical Home Penrith, Dr Harry Pope.

"Each recipient will be screened and assessed prior to their vaccination and we are focused on ensuring adequate monitoring for any reactions afterwards."

Ms Reay added, "We ask the community to be patient with practices, and particularly practice staff, when trying to book an appointment. There will be more opportunities for vaccination as additional GPs gradually come on board over the next 2-3 weeks."

"The Federal Government has committed to making sure that every Australian who wants a vaccine, will be able to be vaccinated. However, given the gradual upscaling of practices in the



region, and the current limited supply of vaccines nationally, not everyone will be able to secure an appointment immediately,” she said.

Federal Member for Lindsay, Melissa McIntosh said local General Practises would ensure people in Lindsay have access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines.

“The vaccines are the next, crucial step on the road out of this pandemic – and it’s the one step that we can all take to protect ourselves, our families and our communities,” said Ms McIntosh.

“We are committed to making sure that everyone in our community, and across Australia, that wants a vaccine will be able to be vaccinated.

“Our local GP’s are such an important part of the health and wellbeing of our community. Now, they will play a vital role in the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.”

People eligible for vaccination under Phase 1b of the roll-out will be able to find vaccination providers through the national [Eligibility Checker](#) located on *healthdirect*. This tool enables people to locate their nearest provider and link through to their online booking system or phone number to make the appointment. Appointment availability will increase as more general practices come on board and establish their systems and vaccine supply.

Frequently Asked Questions

How to I know if I am eligible under Phase 1b

Go to Department of Health website. Using the [Eligibility Checker](#) and answering the prompted questions, you can find out which phase of the roll-out you are eligible for. If you **are not yet eligible**, you will be able to register your interest so that you can be notified when you are able to book.

How do I book an appointment of vaccination?

If the [Eligibility Checker](#) finds that you are **eligible under Phase1b**, it will show you vaccination providers close to your postcode where you can book an appointment online or via phone.

Will I be able to choose where I can book?

You will be able to view and select practice locations based on the postcode you enter. More vaccination locations will come on board progressively over the next four weeks.

What happens if there are no clinics or appointments in my area?

A list of Commonwealth vaccination clinics, participating general practices, and state and territory vaccination clinics will be updated and made available as they progressively come on board over the next few weeks.

Do I have to use the Eligibility Checker in order to book?

The [Eligibility Checker](#) is a simple way to find out if you are currently eligible and to book an appointments, or help you register to be notified if you are part of a later phase. If you prefer to book appointments directly at a participating general practice or Commonwealth state vaccination clinic, you can contact them directly to do so.



Useful links

National COVID-19 Roll-out Strategy (Department of Health):

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/01/covid-19-vaccination-australia-s-covid-19-vaccine-national-roll-out-strategy.pdf>

Priority groups for COVID-19 Vaccination Program Phase 1b (Department of Health):

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/03/priority-groups-for-covid-19-vaccination-program-phase-1b.pdf>

National Eligibility Checker (Department of Health via *healthdirect*):

<https://covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility>

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