



Vaccine Update 507- COVID-19 program transition to the National Immunisation Program, COVID-19 vaccine ordering, diphtheria vaccination reminder and **PRIORIX-TETRA and VARILRIX** updated safety information

30/09/2026

COVID-19 vaccination program transition to the National Immunisation Program

From 1 October 2026, COVID-19 vaccines will be funded under the National Immunisation Program (NIP). Eligibility under the NIP will focus on those who have the highest risk of severe diseases. The COVID-19 NIP replaces the stand-alone National COVID-19 Vaccine Program (NCVP).

Those eligible under the NIP are:

- 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)

In preparation for the transition, the Department of Health, Disability and Aging have distributed the following information and resources for health professionals:

- COVID-19 vaccine NIP transition – Program advice for health professionals

- COVID-19 vaccine NIP transition – Information kit for health professionals
- COVID-19 vaccine NIP transition – Consumer factsheet

These resources and additional information are available on the Department of Health, Disability and Aging [NIP COVID-19 Webpage](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine ordering

COVID-19 vaccines are now available to order via [Onelink](#), ahead of the transition to the NIP.

Providers are encouraged to review anticipated vaccine requirements and order appropriate stock in preparation for the transition.

The WA Health COVID-19 webpages will be made available shortly.

Diphtheria vaccination reminder for Aboriginal people in Perth

After the confirmation of a second [diphtheria case](#) within metropolitan Perth, the Western Australia (WA) Department of Health has issued a [reminder](#) for Aboriginal people living in Perth metropolitan area to check that they are up to date with their diphtheria vaccinations.

The advice is part of WA's ongoing [diphtheria outbreak response](#), which includes free diphtheria boosters for Aboriginal people across the State. WA has recorded 261 cases of diphtheria during the current outbreak which is predominantly affecting Aboriginal people in regional WA. However, the recent cases identified in Perth, including a [case of severe respiratory diphtheria](#), reinforce the importance of vaccination for all eligible people across WA.

All Aboriginal people in WA, and all people living in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Midwest regions, who have not received a diphtheria-containing vaccine in the past five years are eligible for a free booster through participating immunisation providers, including Aboriginal Medical Services and general practice.

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PRIORIX-TETRA and VARILRIX updated safety information

GSK Australia has advised of a temporary discrepancy between pack leaflets supplied with PRIORIX-TETRA® and VARILRIX® vaccines and the current Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)-approved Product Information (PI) and Consumer Medicine Information (CMI).

- PRIORIX-TETRA vaccine 0.5 mL powder for injection vial with diluent syringe (ARTG 107286).
- VARILRIX HSA-FREE varicella vaccine, live attenuated, 0.5 mL injection vial plus diluent syringe composite pack (ARTG 234750).

The TGA has approved a safety information regarding the risk of encephalitis in the PI, CMI and the pack leaflet for both vaccines.

Current vaccine stock will continue to contain the existing pack leaflet which does not yet include the updated safety information. It is estimated that updated pack leaflets will be introduced from quarter 2, 2027.

Until the updated safety information is included, providers are encouraged to refer to the current [TGA approved product information and consumer medicine information](#).

Providers are reminded of the importance of reporting any suspected [adverse events](#) to the WA Vaccine Safety Surveillance System (WAVSS). All reports to WAVSS are sent to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

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