

Tuesday, 23 February 2021

Local frontline health care workers among the first in Australia to receive the COVID-19 vaccine

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) staff will be among the more than 35,000 critical staff in NSW who will be the first in Australia to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

The initial three-week vaccination phase, which commenced yesterday, Monday 22 February, will see all hotel quarantine workers offered the Pfizer vaccine - including security guards, NSW Police officers, cleaners, those screening arrivals at the airport, and health staff working in quarantine facilities.

Health care workers who have the greatest exposure to potential COVID-19 patients will also be included in the first round of jabs, which will be rolled out progressively.

These workers include COVID-19 clinic workers, emergency department workers, NSW Ambulance clinical workforce including patient transport workers, COVID ward workers, and critical care workers including support staff and COVID pathology lab staff.

The vaccinations are being provided at three initial vaccination hubs at Westmead, Liverpool and Royal Prince Alfred Hospitals.

As the initial supply of the vaccine is limited, invitations for Phase 1a vaccination will be sent to eligible staff in stages, and each invitation will be unique to the individual.

ISLHD Chief Executive, Margot Mains said more than 50 staff members are scheduled to receive the COVID-19 vaccine during the first week of the rollout.

“Local staff will travel to the Liverpool Hospital vaccination hub from Wednesday, 24 February. This initial group includes staff from the Wollongong and Shellharbour COVID Assessment Clinics and the Wollongong Hospital Emergency Department, Ms Mains said.

As further hubs are opened and outreach programs come online, vaccination will be available closer to where staff live and work.

Staff receiving the vaccine will be provided with all relevant information including appointment details and a detailed COVID-19 vaccine information sheet. The LHD is also coordinating transportation for staff travelling to Liverpool for the vaccine.

“The District will continue working with the NSW Ministry of Health in the coming weeks to schedule additional ISLHD frontline health care staff to receive the vaccine as part of the staged rollout,” she said.

More information will be provided in the coming weeks about further rollouts of both the Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccines, including expanded access to the vaccine through regional vaccination sites.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District

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