



Public Health Unit	4221 6700; AH 4222 5000 (Wollongong hospital - ask for Public Health Officer on call)
Statewide PHU number	1300 066 055

<p>COVID-19 cases, local transmission, and testing announcements. UPDATED</p>	<p>Please find attached the Public Health Unit’s weekly epidemiological report for the Illawarra Shoalhaven, and NSW reports here and here</p> <p>The Illawarra-Shoalhaven local health district has recorded 0 new cases of COVID-19 in the last week. With “Close the Gap” day just passed we also take time to reflect on how to better service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in our district.</p> <p>Local testing rates continue to be low, with the 7-day average at less than 500 tests per day. Please test anyone with even mild symptoms, as it is the only way to track community transmission.</p>
<p>Vaccination updates from: Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and the Department of Health (DoH) UPDATED</p>	<p>Phase 1B of the vaccination campaign started on the 22nd March. The March 17th and 18th GP webinars from the DoH, are a great resource for practices during this intensive period.</p> <p>The TGA, ATAGI, and the secretary of the DoH have noted that, as with many other vaccines, there is a correlation to low platelet counts in some people, however, they support the findings of the European Medical Agency review which has found that the AstraZeneca vaccine is not associated with an increase in the overall risk of blood clots. Read the media release here and here. ATAGI has stated that the benefits of vaccination in protecting people in Australia from COVID-19 outweigh the rare potential risk of cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (18 cases from 20 Million vaccinations) and disseminated intravascular coagulation (7cases from 20 Million vaccinations), and supports the continued rollout of the AstraZeneca vaccine in Australia.</p> <p>All practices delivering the vaccine should be stocked with adrenaline in the case of such an event, and monitor all patient for 15 minutes following administering the vaccine. Those with a previous anaphylactic reaction to any substance should be monitored for 30 minutes. Currently the only contraindications to vaccination are a history of anaphylaxis to a previous dose of the vaccine, or a component within the vaccine.</p>
	<p>The rate limiting step for provision of vaccines is the supply from overseas manufacturers. The TGA has approved manufacture of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine (ChAdOx1-S) in Australia by CSL – Seqirus, which promises to provide millions more doses to Australians once fully operational. See here.</p>
	<p>High volumes of calls, and pressure on practitioners and administrative staff has been seen across the board. Head to Health is a one stop shop to help support those suffering with stress, anxiety or mental health strains, it is one way to offer support to those working around your practice, as well as the current increase in mental health presentations to general practice.</p>
<p>Vaccine Links: information, decision making tools, educational instruments for you and your patients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illawarra-Shoalhaven: Health Pathways COVID-19 Vaccination Information • COVID-19 vaccination: information for health providers in NSW • Communication tools to talk about vaccinations with patients • FAQ: COVID-19 vaccines: Frequently asked questions NCIRS • Fact sheets for NSW healthcare workers from NSW Health



NEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine Eligibility Checker: Find here • Questions about vaccination? Answers to many questions patients ask
Screening staff and patients UPDATED each week	All staff and patients should be screened every day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact with COVID-19 case? or return from overseas (incl NZ)? • Cold or flu-like symptoms, or loss of smell/taste • visited any COVID-19 case locations, on dates/ times indicated?
RACGP resources	Subscribe to weekly national COVID-19 updates for GPs here Access RACGP COVID-19 portal here
Testing locations	Find COVID-19 testing clinic locations here
ISLHD visiting hours	11am-1pm & 5-7pm in general wards. See ISLHD website for more information on visiting hours and conditions here . Two adult visitors are allowed in each visiting session for each patient.

COVID-19 new research, evidence and guidance

Community Health Pathways	A central, comprehensive resource list and a series of “living documents” on all things related to the management of COVID-19, in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven local health district. Click here.
National & NSW	
National and NSW COVID-19 Guidelines	CDNA National COVID-19 Guidelines here and NSW Appendix here . Guidelines for Aboriginal communities here .
Department of Health UPDATED	Webinar series to update GPs and other primary care practitioners here .
COVID-19 clinical evidence taskforce	Evidence-based ‘living guidelines’ and flowcharts on clinical management here
Australian Commission of Safety and Quality in Health Care	Links to COVID-19 evidence and guidance from organisations in Australia and across global community here
Aboriginal Health	National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) - COVID-19 clinical and promotional resources and advice here
APPRISE – Infectious Diseases Research	Evidence reviews and research papers, dashboards and tools, here
NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation	Links to the Critical Intelligence Unit for evidence-based advice here
Clinical Excellence Commission	Infection Prevention and Control resources page for NSW health workers here
NSW self-isolation guidance	When to self-isolate for all at-risk persons found here
International	
University of Oxford	COVID-19 Evidence Service page compiled by the Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine includes links to evidence reviews, data analysis and more here
World Health Organization	The WHO COVID-19 Health Systems Response Monitor (HSRM) collects and organises information on how countries’ health systems are responding here