

Date: Friday, 8 October, 2021  
To: All Western Health Employees  
From: Russell Harrison Chief Executive Officer  
Subject: Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination direction for health care workers

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As I and other colleagues in Western Health have advised in a number of forums and communications, the Chief Health Officer (CHO) has released a [direction on mandatory vaccination for healthcare workers](#).

This email provides further information about what you need to do prior to the **15 October 2021 deadline**.

The CHO direction provide three clear dates:

- By **15 October 2021**, all employees must: have received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, or provide proof of a vaccination booking to occur by 29 October 2021.
- By **29 October 2021**, all employees must: have received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and provide proof of a second vaccination booking by 15 December 2021.
- By **15 December 2021**, all employees must: have received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

If you do not meet the requirements listed above, you will not be able to continue working in a Victorian health service unless you have a valid medical exemption.

#### **WHO DOES THIS ADVICE APPLY TO?**

This direction applies to all employees; clinical and non-clinical, casuals, administrative teams, volunteers, students, contractors, those working from home, and those on long-term leave (who will need to be vaccinated before returning to work).

#### **WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?**

If you haven't been vaccinated against COVID-19, you must either:

- **Visit a Western Health clinic and receive your first dose before 15 October 2021**

You do not require a booking to attend a Western Health Clinic, just bring your employee identification and Medicare card with you. Check the <https://cvms.powerappsportals.com/> for bookings.

- **Visit a non-Western Health vaccination clinic and receive your first dose before 15 October 2021.**

If you receive your vaccination at a non-Western Health clinic, General Practitioner or Pharmacy, you must complete this Western Health Vaccination Declaration form [Western Health Vaccination Declaration](#) before 15 October 2021.

- **Make a booking to receive your first dose by 29 October**

You can make a booking via the online portal: <https://cvms.powerappsportals.com/>

If you have trouble securing a booking before the 29 October deadline, please call the Employee COVID-19 Employee Hotline on 1800 675 398.

If your booking is after 15 October 2021 (but before 29 October 2021) you must complete the [Western Health Vaccination Declaration](#) before 15 October 2021.

A text message is being sent this week to all staff who we do not have records of receiving a first or second dose of vaccination. This text will allow staff to either give consent to Western Health to access their Australian Immunisation Register record to allow us to update their records; or alternatively the staff member can update their vaccination status through the provision of information in a survey.

You may be supported with time off without loss of pay to receive your COVID-19 vaccination.

If you experience side effects from your vaccination and need to take leave, paid special leave is available.

#### **If you have been fully vaccinated (2 doses) at Western Health**

If you have been fully vaccinated (2 doses) at a Western Health clinic whilst being a Western Health employee, you do not need to take any further action at this stage.

If you were vaccinated at a Western Health clinic before commencing employment with us, you must make a declaration by completing the [Western Health Vaccination Declaration](#) before 15 October 2021.

#### **If you have been fully vaccinated (2 doses) elsewhere**

If you were not vaccinated at Western Health you must make a declaration using the [Western Health Vaccination Declaration](#) before 15 October 2021.

#### **If you've had your first vaccine dose only**

You must receive your second dose before 15 December 2021.

If you have not received your first vaccination dose by 15 October 2021 (but have a declared booking), you can continue to work and attend the Western Health campus you work on, but you must wear appropriate PPE at all times that includes, at a minimum, a surgical mask and eye protection in all public places and conform to the PPE policy in other areas as per current Western Health policy, unless working from home.

### **If you are seeking a medical exemption from vaccination**

The grounds for a medical exemption for the COVID-19 vaccination are very limited.

We encourage you to speak to your medical practitioner or to seek expert advice from the [Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services \(VicSIS\)](#) to identify which vaccination is most suitable for you.

If you receive a medical exemption you must provide evidence to Western Health via your manager detailing the reason for the exemption. This can be in the form of a medical certificate or letter from an authorised medical practitioner. To support this process Western Health has a [COVID-19 Vaccination Contraindication form](#) which may be utilised, which outlines the recognised contraindications for each vaccine. The Western Health Vaccination Review Team will review each medical exemption received, which will include an expert clinical assessment. As part of this process only evidence from an authorised medical practitioner as outlined in the Directions will be accepted for medical exemption. You can read more about the criteria for exemption on the COVID-19 [microsite](#) for employees.

### **If you intend not to be vaccinated**

If you do not meet the requirements listed above, as per our instruction under the Direction, you will **not** be able to continue working in a Victorian health service unless you have a valid medical exemption.

As healthcare workers, we strive to set an example to protect each other and the community. We hope you will continue this journey with us.

### **More information**

Detailed FAQ's are available on our [microsite](#).

If you have any other questions regarding the COVID-19 Vaccination Program, please do not hesitate to speak with your manager. Alternatively, you can contact the COVID-19 Employee Hotline on 1800 675 398.

Thank you for taking this important step in caring for yourself, your loved ones and our wider community.

**Russell Harrison**

**Chief Executive Officer**