

## **We are happy to announce the arrival of Novavax COVID-19 vaccine to Norfolk Island earlier this week**

Staff at Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) have been working closely with the Australian Government to make available the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine (Nuvaxovid) vaccine for our residents.

Novavax has been provisionally approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for use in a primary course (first or second dose) of vaccination in people aged 18 years and older.

Novavax has been demonstrated to be highly effective in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 in adults in a primary schedule (first or second dose).

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) have released a statement involving recommendation for the use of Novavax

- The recommended schedule for administration is 2 doses (first or second dose), a minimum of 3 weeks apart.
- Novavax can be administered to pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Novavax can be administered to people with a prior history of SARS-CoV-2 infection
- Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is not currently recommended for use as a booster vaccine.
- Novavax COVID-19 vaccine can be co-administered with other vaccines if required.

The following groups are eligible to phone NIHRACS GP Clinic on 22091 during business hours to book in:

- All residents aged 18 or older who have not yet received a primary course (first or second dose) of COVID-19 vaccine
- People with severe immunocompromise to receive 3 primary doses of COVID-19 vaccine (Novavax can be administered as part of a mixed primary schedule to people who have received one or more doses of another COVID-19 vaccine, including as a third dose for people with severe immunocompromise).

**A NIHRACS drive-through clinic will be held by appointment only on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

For further information on Novavax COVID-19 vaccine (Nuvaxovid), please see

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/atagi-statement-on-the-use-of-novavax-covid-19-vaccine-nuvaxovid>

## **News from the NIHRACS Social Work Service**

NIHRACS is at Tier 3 and we are asking all residents returning from Australia to delay bringing in your NIPTAAS claim forms to NIHRACS until 7 days post returning. If after 7 days your NIPTAAS claim form is complete and correct please hand into the staff at the front door to be given to the administration team. For complex patient travel matters, please book an appointment with the social worker Maria McCann by phoning 23478 or 50593. Please note you will be required to complete a Rapid antigen test prior to your appointment.

## **Healthy Cooking Demonstration with Carli Christian**

Unfortunately due to the current situation with COVID-19, we will be postponing the Healthy Cooking Demonstration with Carli. No date has been set as yet, we will advise once we have a date scheduled.

## **Norfolk Health Practitioners Network**

On Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March, the inaugural meeting was held, chaired by Dr Sam Jones to explore the potential of a local Norfolk Island community health practitioner's network. The objective of this network is to create a better connected group of health practitioners on Norfolk Island. If you are practicing in the health field and would like to be involved in the network or would like more information, please call the Health & Wellbeing office on 22687. Please RSVP by Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May to Karen Innes-Walker on email [karen.walker@hospital.gov.nf](mailto:karen.walker@hospital.gov.nf) if you would like to attend. The meeting will be via zoom link on Tues 10<sup>th</sup> May @ 4.30pm.

## **Country Line Dancing**

Due to the current situation with COVID-19, we will be cancelling Country Line Dancing on Mon 16<sup>th</sup> May. The next scheduled session will be Mon 30<sup>th</sup> May at SDA Hall from 5.30pm.

# NIHRACS COVID-19 Update



Current as at 06/05/2022

## Important COVID-19 Update from NIHRACS

NIHRACS has developed a COVID-19 Response Plan to guide how services are provided in response to different levels of community transmission of the COVID-19 virus, in line with other Health Services across Australia.

There are 5 tiers of response and these are driven by one or more of the following factors:

- Staffing levels at NIHRACS
- Community transmission levels
- Hospitalisation levels
- Capacity of various areas within NIHRACS to function safely

As of 28 April, NIHRACS has moved to Tier 3, driven by the reduced level of available essential staff and a rise in transmission rates.

This means changes to the NIHRACS model of health-care delivery, with a greater use of non-face to face care services for outpatients. It is very important to understand that NIHRACS is still opened. NIHRACS is not locked-down, services are being delivered via telephone, primarily as staff have to work from home. Urgent cases will still receive face to face services. We ask that you understand if a different way of providing your health care services during this period is offered. We will provide regular updates on the situation. The tiered response is reviewed twice per week by NIHRACS.

## Changes to Close Household contacts isolation

As of 6pm Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, close house hold contacts will be required to quarantine for 5 days instead of 7. Close house hold contacts will be booked for a drive through RAT on day 5 at NIHRACS prior to release from isolation.

You are a close contact if you live with a person that has COVID-19 and have had more than four hours contact with them in the household setting.

You are a close household contact from the date the person diagnosed with COVID-19 took the test that returned a positive result.

You are not a close household contact if you have had COVID-19 in the past 12 weeks.

## COVID VACCINATION WINTER DOSE

Flu season is almost here with Australia already seeing thousands of cases of flu viral infection.

With COVID-19 circulating in the community and the additional risk of influenza, we are pleading with people to get their COVID-19 winter dose and flu shot to reduce the 'life-threatening' risk of contracting both at the same time.

The winter dose is recommended for people who are at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19, 4 months after their first booster.

**At risk groups are:**

- adults aged 65 years and older
- residents of aged care or disability care facilities
- people aged 16 years and older with severe immunocompromise (as defined in the [ATAGI statement on the use of a 3rd primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine in individuals who are severely immunocompromised](#))

## FLU VACCINATION

The 2022 Flu vaccination has arrive on Island and we will be taking bookings shortly. With flu season almost here, amid the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, you can protect yourself and your family from both illnesses by physical distancing, frequent and thorough hand washing, coughing into the crook of your elbow, staying home when sick, limiting contact with people who are infected and keeping up to date with your vaccinations.

**NIHRACS will advertise when clinics will be held**