

## Free Flu vaccines for all Norfolk Islanders

The Queensland Government has today announced a free flu vaccine initiative.

- This is in response to high rates of influenza B and low influenza vaccination uptake.
- The initiative aims to encourage as many community members as possible to come forward to be vaccinated and will operate similar to last year's free flu blitz.

All Norfolk Island residents aged six months and older will be eligible to receive a free flu vaccine from **Saturday 22 July until Thursday 31 August 2023** (inclusive).

### Key Messages

- Flu vaccinations are now free for all Norfolk Islanders aged six months and over.
- The Queensland Government has made the influenza vaccine free and is encouraging everyone to take it up to protect themselves and their community.
- The free vaccine, which provides protection against influenza A and B, comes amid a spike of influenza B cases across Queensland.
- It is particularly important for children, those over 65 years, vulnerable Norfolk Islanders and pregnant women to be vaccinated.
- Influenza B is known to be associated with more severe disease in children, many of whom would never have been exposed to influenza because of COVID-19 restrictions over the past three years.
- Influenza B is now the dominant flu strain in the community and is causing severe illness in otherwise healthy people, particularly young people.
- Queensland has recorded 15,039 influenza B cases in 2023. The last outbreak of the B strain was in 2019 when 12,950 cases were reported.
- The spike in flu cases in the past six weeks, particularly in Queensland children younger than five-years-old, highlights the importance of getting vaccinated.
- The best protection for your family is to get vaccinated; and remember to stay home if you're sick and wash your hands regularly with soap and water.
- If you are unwell with symptoms of the flu please contact your GP.
- The vaccine is safe, effective and recommended for children six months and over.

### [FLU VACCINATION CLINIC](#)

NIHRACS GP Clinic are taking bookings!

Please phone 22091 to reserve your free flu vaccination today!

**Clinic Location:** St Johns Ambulance Shed

**Appointments:** Via Hospital

**Clinic Dates:** Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August