

Chief Executive Update

Chief Executive Update – 23 February 2022

As of today, we have:

- 46 COVID-19 positive inpatients
- 48 employees with COVID-19
- 76 employees in precautionary quarantine
- 50 employees who are primary close contacts and working under public health exemption

In this update, we cover:

- Celebrating the milestones – one year of COVID-19 vaccination
- Resuming clinical service priorities
- Public health measures updated
- Clarifying when to use RATs and PCRs
- Negative Flow Units strengthen path to COVID-normal
- Nominations are now open for the 2022 NAMAS
- Patient Visits during COVID-19 procedure
- A look inside our new ED
- Novavax COVID-19 vaccine
- Walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations now available for children
- Give life to your old uniform
- Update on Enterprise Bargaining Agreements
- Make every step count – Walking Challenge 2022
- Our internal emergency number is now 22 22

Celebrating the milestones – one year of COVID-19 vaccination

We have now marked one year since Professor Rhonda Stuart became the first person in Victoria to have the COVID-19 vaccination, the start of our vaccination program, and an incredibly successful plan to vaccinate Victorians. Congratulations to everyone who has been involved in the vaccination program and contributed to Victoria's double dose vaccination rate of 93%.

Through Monash Health sites alone, we've administered 920,922 vaccinations. And today, we'll reach 1.4 million vaccinations delivered by the South East Public Health Unit partners. These impressive numbers have formed a critical piece of Victoria's pandemic response, as we start to see some elements of community life return to normal.

Resuming clinical service priorities

COVID-19 numbers in the community and our hospitals continue to trend downwards, allowing us to plan a careful resumption of services that have been paused. This will happen progressively and managed with patient and employee safety as the number one priority.

We continue to balance our service priorities to ensure we have the right people in the right numbers available as we move into the next phase of the pandemic.

This week, and in line with a reduction in COVID-19 positive inpatients and COVID-19 cleared numbers, we will begin to resume some additional Category 1 and 2 elective surgeries, starting with Category 2 day surgery.

From Monday 28 February 2022, we will recommission additional theatre capacity at Clayton, Dandenong and Casey as part of a steady start to manage Category 1, acute and unplanned surgery.

We understand that pausing some services has been difficult for those waiting for care. We will communicate with our patients and share with them that while we are working hard to provide care in a timely way, ensuring we do so safely must be front and centre.

Public health measures updated

The Victorian government has announced [changes to public health measures](#) that will impact those in the community from 11:59pm Friday, but we are working with a different set of circumstances in healthcare.

We'll continue to work through the changes and bring you updates in the coming days, but please see in the Key Messages below, some initial advice about working remotely, mask-wearing in the health service and face-to-face meetings and training.

Thank you for your patience and support as we enter the next stage of our pandemic journey.

Andrew Stripp
Chief Executive

Key Messages

Public health measures updated – your questions answered

Do I need to return to the office? Who makes that decision?

Monash Health has developed a clear policy in relation to working remotely. It is expected that working remotely will continue to be an option, noting that this will be alongside regular attendance on-site for team and individual meetings, among other requirements.

The decision and profile of work are at the discretion of your manager and require a Working Remotely Agreement to be in place. Refer to our [Working Remotely Procedure in PROMPT for details](#).

Are there any changes to mask/PPE use?

There are no changes to PPE use at Monash Health at this time.

If you are in a patient-facing area, continue to wear an N95 mask and face protection. In a non-patient-facing area, continue to wear a surgical mask.

Are we changing the face-to-face meeting policy or face-to-face training and education?

Face-to-face training and education can occur in person if desired, as long as all public health measures are taken (mask use, distancing).

Please see the [COVID 19 Training Checklist on PROMPT for details](#).

Clarifying when to use RATs and PCRs

We've moved to clarify the most appropriate COVID-19 testing method and frequency for different patient and employee groups, to help ensure accurate and timely results.

[Please see the table published here.](#)

Rapid Antigen Tests are best used and most likely to be accurate when people are symptomatic. Otherwise, a PCR should be used for greater accuracy.

It's important to note that a PCR should not be used for 30 days after someone has been COVID-19 positive and is released from isolation, as viral shedding may continue to show a positive result even when someone is not infectious.

Negative Flow Units strengthen path to COVID-normal

As part of our reviews of our model of care, 136 negative flow units (NFUs) are being installed across Monash Health throughout February and March to support the transition to a COVID-normal environment. The use of NFUs reduces the need for COVID-specific wards and means less movement for patients and employees.

Negative Flow Units will allow COVID-19 patients to be cared for within a general ward, reducing the demand on COVID-specific wards. Installation is anticipated to be completed by mid-May 2022. [Read more.](#)

Nominations are now open for the 2022 NAMAS

The annual Nursing and Midwifery Awards and Scholarships are an excellent chance to highlight some of the many achievements of our nurses and midwives.

Head to the [STAR Portal](#) to nominate a deserving nurse or midwife by Sunday 13 March 2022.

Patient Visits during COVID-19 procedure

Visitor restrictions have been updated to limit the spread of the virus while also providing compassionate patient and family centred care. You can find details in the new [Patient Visits During COVID-19 procedure on PROMPT](#).

A look inside our new ED

After opening our new Emergency Department at Monash Medical Centre, we spoke with Dawn MacRae to talk about her experience as the Emergency Department Nurse Manager.

Dawn has been the Nurse Manager at Monash Medical Centre Emergency Department for the past two years and describes her role as being "a jack of all trades", responsible for managing and leading our emergency department nurse employees.

[Read about Dawn and our new Emergency department here.](#)

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine

As of 21 February 2022, the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is available for the primary course of COVID-19 vaccination in people aged 18 or older in Victoria.

Novavax, a protein-based vaccine, can be used for the primary course of COVID-19 vaccination in people aged 18 or older. Two doses of the vaccine are recommended, at least three weeks apart.

Novavax is **not** currently approved for use as a third dose (booster) vaccine or for people under the age of 18. However, people who are severely immunocompromised are eligible to receive a third primary dose of Novavax as part of their three-dose primary course schedule.

Monash Health is offering pre-booked Novavax vaccination appointments at our Sandown Racecourse Vaccination Centre, which can be done [online](#) or by calling 1800 675 398.

For more information, please read our [Novavax iNews article](#).

Walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations now available for children

Monash Health is now offering walk-in vaccinations for children aged 5 to 11 and people aged 12 years and above at our Sandown and Cranbourne vaccination centres.

Employees can now walk in with their children, in addition to household members aged 12+ years, at any of the below vaccination clinics and receive priority access to a COVID-19 vaccination:

- Sandown Racecourse Vaccination Centre, seven days a week from 9am to 4pm
- Cranbourne Turf Club Vaccination Centre, seven days a week from 9am to 4pm
- Dandenong Plaza Vaccination Clinic, seven days a week from 9am to 4pm

COVID-19 vaccination bookings are also available at Clinic D, Monash Medical Centre for household members, including families and children, of employees.

More information is [available here](#).

Give life to your old uniform

Monash Health is partnering with south-east Melbourne based recycling organisation, Upparel, to run a pilot uniform recycling initiative at Kingston Centre.

The uniform recycling initiative recently won funding as part of the Baxter Sustainability Challenge Grant. This funding will go towards the purchase of collection boxes, transporting old uniforms to the recycling facility, and processing them into new products. [Read more](#).

Update on the status of our Enterprise Bargaining agreements

Several Enterprise Agreements that impact Monash Health employees are currently in various stages of bargaining – here's a [quick update on each one](#). Keep an eye out for an upcoming Employee Forum on this topic.

Registrations now open – Walking Challenge 2022

Registrations for the 2022 Walking Challenge are now open and close on Saturday 5 March 2022. The Challenge is FREE for all employees, their families, and friends to join.

The Challenge starts on Sunday 6 March 2022 and runs for four weeks, until Saturday 2 April 2022. The Challenge is a great opportunity to connect with your colleagues and loved ones, clear your head after a busy day, and enjoy time outdoors, all while staying active. [Read more](#)

In an emergency, dial 22 22

A reminder that our new internal number for emergencies, 22 22, is now live across all Monash Health sites.

This change has been made as directed by the Department of Health to **standardise internal emergency numbers across Victoria**. Having one internal emergency number improves healthcare worker awareness,

particularly for those who work across multiple health services and hospitals and reduces the risk of a delayed emergency response.

Visit our website for [more information on the change, including FAQs](#).

All managers are requested to share these updates with their teams and discuss at stand-ups and handovers. Please print a copy and display it in communication books and on employee noticeboards.

As advice and information evolve, please consult the latest updates and visit the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) and [Monash Health COVID-19 website](#) for employees regularly for the latest.
