BOOSTER DOSE FEE INCREASE | PPE AVAILABLE TO PHARMACIES

Dear Service Provider,

This email provides information about a range of matters relevant to participating pharmacies in the COVID-19 Vaccination in Community Pharmacy Program (CVCP), as follows:

- Booster Dose Fee Increase
- Personal protective equipment available to pharmacies

Booster Dose Fee Increase

The Australian Government has announced **a temporary booster incentive payment** which will be made available to all primary care providers through their existing payment mechanisms. The introduction of this payment will be effective **from 23 December 2021 and will cease on 30 June 2022.**

From 23 December 2021 all primary care providers will be able to receive:

- **a $10.00 incentive payment per booster vaccine** administered through a General Practice (GP), Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS), Commonwealth Vaccination Clinic (CVC) or Community Pharmacy (CP) under the COVID-19 Vaccine Program.
- any boosters already administered will not attract this additional incentive, as payment will not be retrospective.
- GPs will be able to claim the $10 booster incentive payment through the Medicare Benefits Schedule.
- Community pharmacies and CVCs will receive an equivalent payment through existing arrangements.

For Pharmacies participating in the COVID-19 Vaccination in Community Pharmacy (CVCP) Program:

- This fee increase has been announced in recognition of the significant contribution of community pharmacies to the national COVID-19 vaccine rollout.
- The $10 incentive payment is on top of the payment for the booster dose, this means that payment for boosters will be **$26 for pharmacies in metropolitan areas (MMM 1), $29 for pharmacies in regional, rural and remote locations (MMM 2-7) in total.** This is for booster and third doses only.

These arrangements are updated in the CVCP Program Rules, available here.

Personal protective equipment available to pharmacies

Pharmacies participating in the CVCP program can now access personal protective equipment (PPE) from the National Medical Stockpile. Pharmacist immunisers (not broader staff) will have **access to P2/N95 respirators and eye protection.**

PPE supplies are made available to ensure key staff have adequate PPE to provide protection. Given the emerging Omicron variant in local communities, immunisers and staff are encouraged to follow clinical guidelines and wear protective equipment while administering COVID-19 vaccinations where required.

Arrangements have been made with PHNs for the administration of PPE supplies across primary care sites, including GPs and pharmacies. **PHNs will support the ordering process, distribution and logistics of the PPE supply.** The arrangements to access PPE are in effect until 31 March 2022.

Pharmacies are required to:

- **Use PPE for its intended purpose** – in support of the administration of COVID-19 vaccinations to patients.
- **Request PPE supply based on need** – taking into consideration pharmacists immuniser numbers, and the volume of vaccinations administered.
- **Order PPE through their PHN** – orders can be placed by submitting a PPE Supply Form.

Please contact your local PHN for their preferred arrangement in placing PPE orders. You can find your PHN by visiting [here](.).

Importantly:

- PPE must be used according to product specifications
- PPE stock is limited to products available from the National Medical Stockpile
- Brand preference for PPE items in not guaranteed
- PPE supply should <u>not</u> be obtained from the National Medical Stockpile if other arrangements are already in place – such as from a State government or local hospital.
- Under no circumstances are pharmacies to on-sell any PPE items provided under these arrangements.

PPE supplies can be ordered from your local PHN, noting deliveries in most areas will commence from early January 2022.

Updates and further information about arrangements for PPE supplies will be available at the PPA website.

Kind regards,

Pharmacy Programs Administrator