



The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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FIRST PFIZER VACCINE DOSES ARRIVE IN AUSTRALIA

More than 142,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech COZVID-19 vaccine have arrived at Sydney airport in a major milestone in Australia's response to the pandemic.

This is the first shipment of 20 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine the Government has secured as part of Australia's COVID-19 Vaccine and Treatment Strategy.

The doses have been securely transported from the airport. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) will batch test the vaccines to ensure they meet Australia's strict quality standards.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the country was on track for the first and most vulnerable Australians to start receiving the vaccine from 22 February.

"The vaccine has landed and we're stepping up our fight against the pandemic," the Prime Minister said.

"Once the final safety checks are completed we can start rolling out the vaccine to our most vulnerable Australians and to our frontline border and health workers.

"The hard work of Australians has meant we're in an enviable position in our fight against the pandemic so we've been able to take the time to properly assess our vaccine decisions and give our world-class regulator the time they need to review the safety of the jabs.

"While we're taking the time to get the rollout right, I am confident all Australians who wish to be vaccinated against COVID-19 will receive a vaccine this year."

Approximately 80,000 doses will be released of the Pfizer vaccine in the first week. Approximately 50,000 vaccines will be made available for the states and territories for hotel quarantine and border workers and frontline healthcare workers. Approximately 30,000 vaccines will be made available for the Commonwealth vaccine in-reach workforce to aged care and disability care residents.

It is expected that of these, at least 60,000 will be administered by the end of February with others to be continually administered thereafter.

Subject to TGA approval and shipping confirmation of the international AstraZeneca vaccine, it is expected these numbers will double from early March. Phase 1a remains on track for first round doses to be delivered within a six week period.

In lessons learnt in rollouts around the world and on the advice of experts, approximately 60,000 vaccines will be provisioned to ensure consistent supply and sufficient stock for second doses. The second dose of the vaccine will be administered at 21 days after the first dose.

The Phase 1a priority groups will ensure our quarantine and border workers, frontline healthcare workers and aged care and disability care residents and staff that the most vulnerable will receive priority access to the vaccine.

Minister for Health and Aged Care Greg Hunt said, “The Pfizer vaccine will save lives and protect lives.”

“Australians can be reassured this vaccine has gone through rigorous, independent testing by the Therapeutic Goods Administration to ensure it is safe, effective, and manufactured to a high standard,” Minister Hunt said.

“These vaccines will now go through further batch testing to further check for quality and efficacy, ensuring all Australians have confidence in the vaccines they receive.”

The Pfizer vaccine will be delivered through hospital ‘hubs’ across Australia, and in residential aged care and disability care facilities.

Logistics company DHL has been engaged to support the distribution of the Pfizer vaccine across Australia.

The company, along with a network of 200 ultra-low temperature portable freezers, will ensure Australians across the country, including in rural and remote areas, are able to access the Pfizer vaccine, which needs to be stored at minus 70 degrees.

By following the medical advice, Australia has maintained a diverse portfolio of vaccines, and are constantly engaging with international counterparts and vaccine sponsors to access the best available information on vaccine developments worldwide.

Pending TGA approval, the Government has also secured 53.8 million AstraZeneca vaccine doses and 51 million doses of the Novavax vaccine. Each is sufficient to vaccinate every Australian who chooses to be vaccinated in 2021.

The Australian Government has also signed up to the international COVAX facility, which provides access to a range of vaccines to immunise up to 50 per cent of the Australian population.

The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is the first vaccine to receive provisional approval for use in Australia by the TGA. The TGA bases such decisions on the safety, efficacy and quality of the vaccine candidates.

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