

# Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for the Disability Sector

## *NDS's policy regarding national rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine is as follows:*

NDS considers that, wherever possible, all those living in Australia should be vaccinated against COVID-19.

NDS prioritises the safety of all people with disability and the disability workforce. Accordingly, NDS strongly urges all Australian Governments – Federal, State, and Territory - to take all necessary action to ensure COVID-19 vaccine(s), once approved by the TGA, are mandatory for all disability support workers working directly with people with disability, regardless of the setting and circumstances of this work. Mandatory vaccinations should, of course, be subject to any legislative exemptions.

NDS calls on all Australian Governments to support roll-out of the vaccine(s) to the sector with a comprehensive and accessible community education program, with appropriately targeted information for:

- Providers
- Disability support workers
- People with disability
- Carers and family members
- Suppliers/contractors.

NDS will support disability service providers to achieve high vaccination take-up in the sector to provide safety of their workforce and people with disability by advocating for:

- Priority access for the sector to national stocks of the vaccine(s), particularly the most effective of vaccines.
- The development of public health information about the vaccine(s) that is available and in easily accessible forms and languages with an emphasis on resources to assist people with intellectual disabilities.
- All staff (paid and volunteer) to have access to education programs about the vaccine and the importance of having it

NDS strongly urges all Australian Governments to:

- provide the legislation and resources which will support the objectives set out in this statement including actions taken by providers which aim to keep their employees and participants safe from the impacts of COVID 19
- provide support to employers to manage the risks of any exemptions to vaccination may pose to their clients and other employees
- support the vaccination program with a comprehensive and accessible community education campaign, developed in consultation with NDS and other industry parties and peak bodies.

NDS is committed to taking an active role in supporting the sector to have access to the best possible information regarding vaccination and to supporting best practice approaches to ensuring that any vaccination program is undertaken in the best interests of employers, employees and contractors, clients and the community, who are working collaboratively to this end.

NDS will reconsider this policy position in light of any further advice provided or decisions made by Australian Governments and/or their Chief Health or Medical Officers.