

## COVID-19 TALKIT

A communique for all people living with HIV in NSW

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### FEEDBACK & COMMENTS

[contact@positivelife.org.au](mailto:contact@positivelife.org.au)

## Friday 22 October 2021

Now that NSW has passed the 80% double vaccination target, restrictions will ease and by 1 December, will be extended to people who are not vaccinated. This gradual move back into pre-COVID interaction, can cause some 're-entry anxiety'. In this edition, we offer some tips to consider to make this time a little easier.

With talk of COVID-19 vaccination boosters, and some people being eligible for a third COVID-19 vaccine, some discussion about the promising evidence on the next page might offer some thoughts to inform your own plans.

As more and more of us are being asked to show vaccination evidence, if you need any support in working out how to get your [COVID-19 Digital Certificate](#) onto your mobile devices (smart phone, ipad, tablet etc), you can contact a Positive Life peer support officer to guide you through this process of navigating the process to make this easier.

The season of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is upon us. All Positive Life NSW members are [invited to attend our AGM on Thursday 9 December from 6pm](#) via Zoom teleconference. As an online event, please ensure you RSVP via email, so we can send you the zoom link.

Positive Life [peer support officers](#) (Peer Navigators) continue to check in with community members currently enrolled in our [Housing Support](#), [WorkReady](#) or [Ageing Support](#) programs. If you'd like to hear from us at any time, or would like a call, please drop us an email on [contact@positivelife.org.au](mailto:contact@positivelife.org.au) or leave a message on (02) 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677.

– Positive Life NSW



## BOOSTER? OR THIRD SHOT?

Wondering what's the difference between a COVID-19 vaccine booster and a third COVID-19 vaccine shot?

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation ([ATAGI](#)) are advising people to are immunocompromised to receive a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine [two to six months after their second dose](#), to boost their protection against COVID-19.

### WHO IS IMMUNOCOMPROMISED?

[Up to approximately 500,000 people in Australia](#) are immunocompromised and this includes people who are being actively treated for cancer, organ failure, or being treated with a range of immunosuppressive or biologic therapies including people who are on high dose corticosteroid treatment equivalent to >20 mg/day of prednisone for ≥14 days in a month; and [people who have advanced or untreated HIV with CD4 counts <250/μL](#) or those with a higher CD4 count unable to be established on effective antiretroviral therapy.

A third dose is [not required for people living with HIV](#) who are [taking antiretroviral medication with CD4 counts ≥250/μL](#).

### BOOSTERS AND THE EVIDENCE

A booster dose is given approximately [six months after the second dose, which is normally](#) when a person begins experiencing waning immunity.

As of the date of publishing, it is expected that [ATAGI will hand down advice on booster shots for the general population by the end of October](#).



There's been a variety of international responses [from Israel](#), [United States](#) and the [United Kingdom](#). Early [evidence evaluating the impact](#) of a third dose or booster programme were published last week in the [New England Journal of Medicine \(NEJM\)](#). The [study draws on Israeli medical data](#) for 4,621,836 individuals, comparing rates of infection, severe disease and death between those who have had a booster and those who had received only the initial two doses of Pfizer.

It cites infection [rates that were up to 10-fold lower in the booster group](#) compared to the non-booster groups, with severe illness rates also showing a dramatic fall in the 40–60 and over-60 age groups..

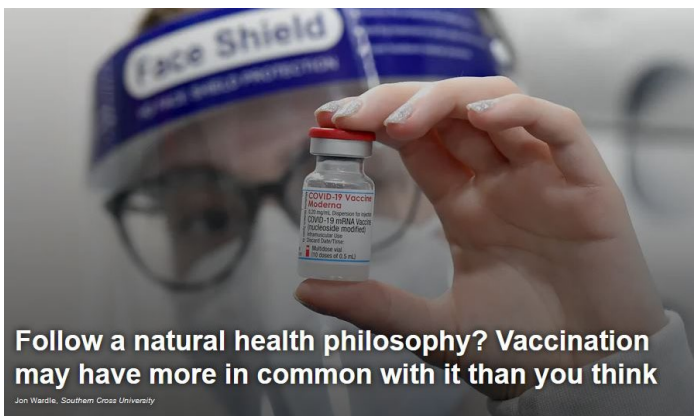
While vaccines are our best defence against COVID-19, other safety measures to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 remain: such as physical distancing, hand washing, wearing a face mask, and following other public health measures.

With over 151 million Pfizer, Novavax and Moderna vaccines already secured for supply into the future, Australia is well prepared to provide booster doses if they are recommended by the medical experts.

It's normal to have questions or concerns, and possibly feel a little hesitant about getting a COVID vaccine. When you're looking for more information to answer your questions or allay any concerns you might have, check out this NSW Health webpage to help you make an informed decision – [IS IT TRUE?](#)







Follow a natural health philosophy? Vaccination may have more in common with it than you think

Jon Wardle, Southern Cross University



What are gender pronouns and why is it important to use the right ones?

Glen Hosking, Victoria University



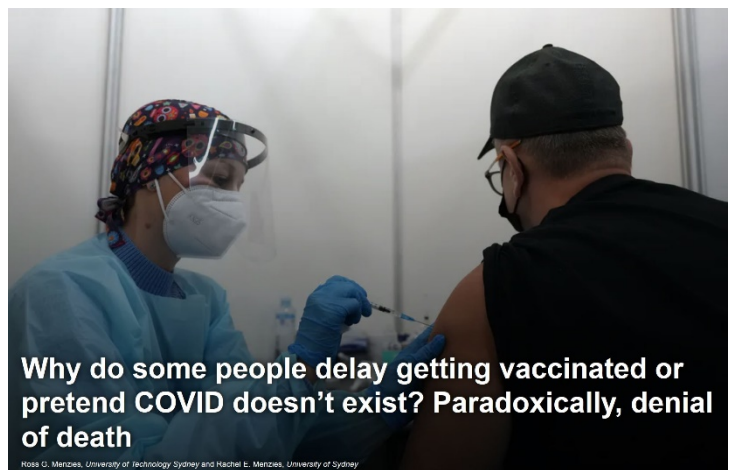
I live in an apartment. How can I cut my risk of getting COVID?

Geoff Hanmer, University of Technology Sydney

## NEPEAN-BLUE MOUNTAINS PFIZER VACCINATION CLINICS

The Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District is offering walk-in Pfizer vaccination clinics for anyone over the age of 12.

- ✓ Monday, 25 October 2021 (8:00am to 3:30pm) at **Orchard Hills Rural Fire Brigade**, 58 Castle Road, Orchard Hills.
- ✓ Tuesday, 26 October 2021 (8:00am to 2:30pm) at **Saint Peter's Anglican Church**, 79 Great Western Highway, Mount Victoria (car park off Ailsa Street).
- ✓ Wednesday, 27 October 2021 and Thursday, 28 October 2021 (8:00am to 3:30pm) at **Koolyangarra Aboriginal Child and Family Centre**, 1-2 Kingston Place, Cranebrook.



Why do some people delay getting vaccinated or pretend COVID doesn't exist? Paradoxically, denial of death

Ross G. Menzies, University of Technology Sydney and Rachel E. Menzies, University of Sydney



Why do we wake around 3am and dwell on our fears and shortcomings?

Greg Murray, Swinburne University of Technology

## FEELING ANXIOUS AS COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS EASE?

Now that NSW has reached 80% double-dose vaccination, [restrictions are easing for people who are fully vaccinated](#). These will be [extended to people who are not fully vaccinated](#) by 1 December 2021.

Some of us are [experiencing 're-entry anxiety' about the 'return to normal'](#). These anxieties range from socialising, returning to the workplace and navigating public transport once again; to fears of contracting COVID-19 or interacting with unvaccinated family members or loved ones; to dealing with everyday life while keeping up with government advice and making sense of it for themselves.

It's [normal to look forward to restrictions easing and also feel anxious](#) at the same time. The Black Dog Institute says, [even if you're not a typically anxious person](#), it's common to feel some concerns during these times of significant change and uncertainty.

### Some Tips:

- ✓ [Take it slowly and give yourself time to readjust.](#)
- ✓ [Talk about your fears](#) with some trusted friends or a supportive work colleague.



- ✓ Remember the [things you've missed during lockdown and haven't been able to do](#). Note down [the things you're looking forward to doing again](#).
- ✓ Reflect on your experience. Rather than 'going back' to your previous way of life, consider what positive changes you can take forward. [Have you realised you want to work less, exercise more, make more effort to spend time with friends and family?](#)
- ✓ Consider your boundaries. It's okay to still prefer to avoid physical contact. Think [what you're comfortable with and need, and also how you can respectfully communicate](#) what you do or don't want from others.
- ✓ Discuss what [working adjustments are available to support your move back into the workplace](#).

## GET IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FROM BEYOND BLUE 24/7



Call 1300 22 4636

24 hours / 7 days a week



Chat online

11am - 12am AEST / 7 days a week



Email us

Get a reply in 24 hours



Online forums

24 hours / 7 days a week



## COVID-19 RELIEF PAYMENTS UPDATE



### Once NSW reaches 80% fully vaccinated:

#### **COVID-19 Disaster Payment**

The automatic renewal will stop and recipients will need to reapply on a week to week basis if they are still out of work or lost hours/wages.

### Once NSW reaches 80% fully vaccinated:

Disaster relief payments will reduce over a two week period:

- Week 1: \$450
- Week 2: \$320
- Week 3: \$0.00 – Ends

#### **Centrelink Welfare Boost**

People receiving income support or any government benefits who have lost work can still claim the \$100 boost

Week 1: \$100

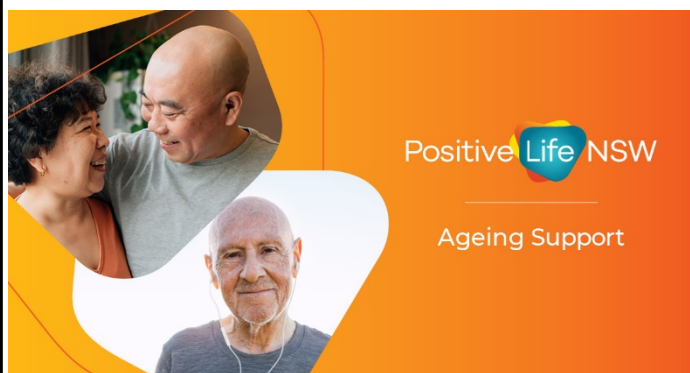
Week 2: \$0.00 ends

#### **Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment**

- If you test positive and are ordered to isolate or self-quarantine for two weeks you may be eligible.
- Need to apply for the payment immediately through Service NSW
- A lump sum payment of \$1500 to cover the entire two weeks.

## POSITIVE LIFE AGED CARE SUPPORT

Living with HIV in NSW, over 45 years and want a hand to make life a little easier? Call (02) 9206-2177 or 1800 245 677 (freecall) or email [contact@positivelife.org.au](mailto:contact@positivelife.org.au)



Positive Life NSW COVID-19 Toolkit

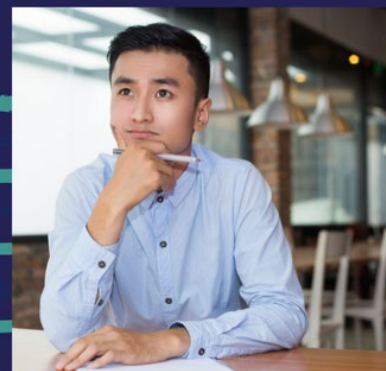
## CAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WITH A WORK VISA GET THE COVID-19 DISASTER PAYMENT ?

Yes! the COVID-19 Disaster Payment is an exceptional payment because it is payable to people who are in Australia with a temporary visa giving them the right to work.

If you're on a temporary visa giving you the right to work you'll need to ring Services Australia on 180 22 66.

If in doubt, you can claim providing full details to Centrelink and they will assess your eligibility. If you think they have unfairly knocked back your claim, you can contact the **Welfare Rights Centre NSW** for free legal advice on **1800 226 028**.

## Can international students with work rights get COVID-19 Disaster Payment?



Welfare  
Rights  
Centre

## No equipment? No worries!



### Mail order NSP available NOW

If you're self isolated or quarantined and need injecting equipment, don't put yourself at risk by reusing or sharing equipment. Instead, contact NUAA — we will mail you out however much you need of all sorts of injecting equipment (including speciality gear like wheel filters). Visit our website for more info about how COVID-19 might affect you as a person who uses drugs.

Ph: (02) 8354 7300 or freecall 1800 644 413 | visit [nuaa.org.au](http://nuaa.org.au)



# LOW COST & FREE MEALS DIRECTORY

Online Directory covering suburbs from the Inner West and Eastern Suburbs, to Western and South-Western Sydney:

**Marrickville, Newtown, Petersham, Ashfield, Surry Hills, Kings Cross, Bondi, Kensington**

**Auburn, Granville, Silverwater, Parramatta, Westmead, Mt Druiett, Penrith**

**Canterbury, Bankstown, Fairfield, Cabramatta, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Bargo**

## Low Cost and Free Meals Directory

South-West Sydney

Canterbury – Bankstown – Fairfield – Cabramatta – Liverpool – Campbelltown – Bargo



Organisation & Service Type	Address & Phone Number	Day / Time Open	Cost or conditions	Public Transport Options
<b>Anglicare Campbelltown</b> Food parcels	Shop 1 & 2/31-35 Chamberlain Street, Campbelltown (02) 4621 6666	Call to arrange	Need to call to be assessed & register Free	15-minute walk from Campbelltown Station Bus routes: 870, 872
<b>Nagle Centre Family Care and Support Service</b> Food vouchers	22 Lolanthe Street, Campbelltown (02) 4628 2928	Call to arrange	Area residents only Free	9-minute walk from Campbelltown Station Bus routes: 870, 871, 872, 877, 880
<b>South West Multicultural &amp; Community Centre</b> Food hampers	4 Surrey Street, Minto (02) 9603 2500	Tuesday 3.30-5pm	\$10 Call in advance as demand is high	4-minute walk from Minto Station Bus routes: 873, 874, 875
<b>Tallwood Community Centre</b> Takeaway meals	2 Littimer Way, Ambarvale 02 4625 7333	Every 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 12.30-1.30pm	Free	Bus routes: 887, 888
<b>Ambarvale/Rosemeadow Community</b> Fruit and veggie box	6 Macbeth Way, Rosemeadow 0472 912 558	Thursday 11.30am	\$2	Bus Routes: 887, 888
<b>Whole Heart Communities</b> Food hampers, delivery or collection	223 Great Southern Road, Bargo 0402 406 492	Hours vary, phone or order online	\$20-50	1-minute walk from Bargo Station Bus routes 900, 911, 912 Home delivery available

[www.tmnlinks.net.au/assets/information\\_files/nsw-rhs-low-cost-and-free-meals-directory.pdf](http://www.tmnlinks.net.au/assets/information_files/nsw-rhs-low-cost-and-free-meals-directory.pdf)



## POSITIVE LIFE TREATMENTS SUPPORT

For all your HIV treatment questions and support, including COVID-19 concerns, call (02) 9206-2177, 1800 245 677 (freecall outside metro) Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm or email [contact@positivelife.org.au](mailto:contact@positivelife.org.au)



Want to talk about your HIV and health?

Contact a Positive Life Treatments Officer  
02 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677 (freecall)

Positive Life NSW

## SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MONTHLY EBULLETIN



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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land that we live and work on, and recognise, respect and value the deep and continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to land, waters, community and culture. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Positive Life NSW

The voice of all people living with HIV