

## Autism Queensland COVID-19 vaccination clinic – Information for individuals, families, and carers

The Metro South Health Vaccination program will be attending Autism Queensland's Sunnybank Hills location on the below dates, to provide free COVID-19 vaccinations for individuals aged 5 years and over.

We appreciate that a traditional vaccination clinic may not provide a suitable environment for individuals on the autism spectrum, and that a more tailored, supportive, and flexible approach may be required.

The intention of this vaccination clinic is to provide individuals on the spectrum, their families, and carers, with a more accessible and individualised avenue to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination.

Clinic date/s	Time	Additional information
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March and Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	8.30am to 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Available for individuals 5 years and over</li><li>Autism Queensland clients, their families and carers, and Autism Queensland staff</li></ul>
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> March and Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	8.30am to 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Available for individuals 5 years and over</li><li>Autism Queensland clients, their families and carers, and Autism Queensland staff</li><li>Open to the general public</li></ul>

We also understand from your feedback, the importance of pre-planning and preparation, and have provided some additional information below to assist you with this.

### Why should you receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 is a serious illness that can affect everyone in our community. The COVID-19 vaccination protects you from getting seriously ill if you were to get infected by the virus. Additionally, being vaccinated means you are less likely to transmit the virus to other family members.

### How will this vaccination clinic differ from more traditional, larger clinic environments?

This vaccination clinic will provide a more relaxing environment, that is familiar to the members of the Autism Queensland Community.

Depending on the support needs of the individual, we can tailor the administration of the vaccination to their particular needs and can be adaptable to vaccinating in most situations and environments.

We will have a number of flexible vaccination options, including

- Low sensory, quiet spaces
- Family room
- In-car vaccination

- Vaccination in an outdoor space

Our aim is to create a positive experience for the individual and that of their parent/carer to increase the likelihood of a successful vaccination occurring.

## Do I need to make a booking?

Bookings are not required, and you can simply walk into the clinic on the day.

However, we encourage you to use our special needs assisted booking service to go through a pre-vaccination intake questionnaire so we can clearly understand the needs of the individual, to collaboratively work with you to identify the best method of vaccination ahead of time.

## How do I contact the booking service?

You can contact the special needs assisted booking service by phoning 3176 7799 between 08:00am and 4:00pm, Monday-Friday, or by emailing [MSH-VaccBookings@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MSH-VaccBookings@health.qld.gov.au) at any time.

## What support will be provided via the special needs assisted booking service?

When you contact the special needs assisted booking service, we will ask you some questions to identify and consider the individual's personal preferences, requirements, and support needs. This will allow us to collaboratively determine the most suitable vaccination option.

This process will take approximately 10-15 minutes and will include some background information regarding the individual's personal preferences, such as communication, distraction methods, possible triggers, and their experience with previous vaccinations/needles.

Alternatively, we can email you a copy of the intake form to complete and return to our team prior to the vaccination appointment date.

At the completion of the intake process, you will be provided with an appointment date and time to attend.

## Is there anything I can do beforehand to prepare for the appointment?

Developing a "game plan" is a useful tool to help plan and prepare for the vaccination. A game plan helps you to consider some decisions beforehand, such as:

- What arm will the injection be received into?
- For a child's vaccination, consider whether they will sit on your lap/hold your hand/other?
- What will provide the best form of distraction?
- What are the best strategies for calming or coping prior to, during and after vaccination, should these be required?
- If there are difficulties with the first vaccination attempt, would you like staff to try more than once to vaccinate and if so, how will this be communicated?
- Is there a special treat or experience that can be received after the vaccination?

To minimise wait time at the clinic, the relevant consent form can be provided to you and completed ahead of time. Copies of these forms will be available through Autism Queensland or can be provided to you by the special needs assisted booking service.

## Are there any supporting resources available that could assist with preparing for a vaccination?

There are a number of social scripts available on the [Amaze](#) website, regarding the different types of vaccination clinics available, including a low sensory and a drive-through (in car) vaccination clinic.

The [Meg Foundation](#) website also has a variety of information, resources, and tools regarding needle phobia.

## Can my other family members also get vaccinated at this clinic?

Yes, the clinic will be open to Autism Queensland clients, their families, and carers. Anyone 5 years and over can receive a vaccination.

## What vaccine will be available at this clinic?

This clinic will be administering the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. First, second and booster doses are all available.

## Where do I find more information about COVID-19 vaccination?

Further information about the COVID-19 vaccination is available at [COVID-19 vaccines | Australian Government Department of Health](#)

## Still have more questions?

We'd be happy to answer them!

You can contact the special needs assisted booking service on 3176 7799 between 08:00am and 4:00pm Monday to Friday with any questions you may have. Alternatively, you can email your questions to [MSH-VaccBookings@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MSH-VaccBookings@health.qld.gov.au) and we'll get back to you with a response as soon as we can.

**We look forward to welcoming you to the Autism Queensland vaccination clinic.**