

Community Engagement Noticeboard



Fighting the flu starts with you

Flu season is almost upon us.

Annual vaccination against influenza (flu) is the best defence to protect against disease.

The flu vaccine will be rolled out across pharmacies and GPs over the next few weeks. You should get vaccinated each year from April onwards to be protected before the flu season, which is usually June to September in most parts of Australia.

The vaccine is safe and recommended for all people in Australia aged 6 months and older.

You can get your 2023 COVID-19 booster at the same time if eligible and aged 18 years or over.

[Read the consumer fact sheet - Fighting flu starts with you >>](#)

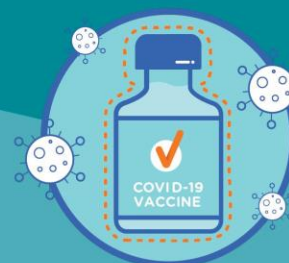
New COVID-19 boosters available

There has been an increase in COVID cases and hospitalisations this month due to multiple emerging Omicron variants.

- If it has been 6 months since your last dose or COVID infection, then it's time to get your booster shot. Vaccination is the best form of protection against this ongoing threat to your health, and the health of more vulnerable Victorians.
- The 2023 COVID booster dose is available for everyone aged 18+, and new bivalent boosters are designed to protect you from the more recent variants. It is highly recommended for people aged 65+ and the immunocompromised.
- Getting vaccinated is even easier now that many pharmacies take walk-ins. Or you can find and book an appointment with a GP or a local pharmacy by visiting the Vaccine Clinic Finder.

[>> For details see coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>>](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au/)

New Booster = Better Protection



Group A Streptococcal infection

Invasive Group A Streptococcal disease (iGAS)

- Group A strep commonly causes skin and throat infections but can develop into more serious illnesses such as sepsis, meningitis, and pneumonia.
- Young children, pregnant or post-partum women, and the elderly are among those at increased risk of iGAS.
- Parents and guardians are advised to be alert to the signs and symptoms and know when to seek immediate medical care.
- Parents and guardians should ensure children are up to date with all routine immunisations (including varicella (chickenpox) and upcoming annual influenza vaccination), to help prevent viral infections that increase the risk of iGAS.

[Read more from the Victorian Department of Health >>](#)



We'd love to hear from you! Tell us how we are doing, or have something you would like to share? Email the team at communityengagement@monashhealth.org

Cultural Diversity Week 2023



Delivering culturally equitable services

- Victoria is Australia's most culturally diverse state, with almost one quarter of our population born overseas.
- It is important that health services and health professionals can deliver culturally responsive and equitable services, to ensure the whole population receives quality healthcare.
- Health Translations is a free online library of high-quality translated Australian health and wellbeing information.
- Made for Australian health practitioners and people who work with culturally and linguistically diverse communities, the site provides quick access to a wealth of reliable resources.

[Visit the Health Translations website >>](#)

Closing the Gap on health inequities

Thursday March 16 was National Close the Gap Day, but every day is an opportunity to ensure Indigenous Australians get the healthcare they need.

For over a decade, Close the Gap Day has been an opportunity to highlight the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in health outcomes, life expectancy and economic opportunity.

At [Monash Health](#) every day, we're committed to working together to overcome the inequality experienced by First Nations peoples and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. We acknowledge there is more work to be done and we cannot rest when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a life expectancy that is ten years less than non-Indigenous people.

National Close the Gap Day

16 March



[Working together, we can close the gap >>](#)

Agency Regional Workshops

Click on the location for details and registration

Frankston	Tuesday 28 March
Caulfield	Wednesday 29 March
Springvale	Tuesday 4 April

You can attend all day or in part:

9:00am – 10:30am	Tobacco and vaping
11:00am – 12:30pm	Active living
1:00pm – 2:30pm	Cervical screening
3:00pm – 4:30pm	Falls prevention

If you cannot attend a workshop, please contribute by survey. [Click here for survey.](#)

Working together to improve health

SEPHU would like to consult and collaborate with key stakeholders to develop a population health catchment plan which reflects state-wide and local health and wellbeing priorities.

Agencies and councils can attend a workshop in their region or contribute to our on-line survey if interested in improving outcomes in one or more of these identified priority areas:

- Decreasing tobacco and vaping (e-cigarette) use
- Decreasing falls in the community
- Improving cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccination rates
- Improving active living

Community Groups can attend a focus group to contribute to the plan and will be compensated for their time. [More info and registration.](#)

These are just some of the opportunities. Talk to us to find out more.