



THE HON MARK COULTON MP

Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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Covid-19 vaccination ready to roll in rural and remote Australia

Federal Regional Health Minister, Mark Coulton said the Australian Government is committed to providing safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines free to everyone in Australia – no matter where they live.

“We are ready to roll out COVID-19 vaccines with hundreds of distribution points nationwide,” Minister Coulton said.

“Further sites will be finalised in the coming weeks and will include rural, regional and remote based GP-led Respiratory Clinics, GPs, community pharmacies, state and territory vaccination clinics and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Health Organisation clinics.

“The Government’s call out to GPs and community pharmacies will strengthen the rollout and will allow people living in regional, rural and remote communities to access COVID-19 vaccinations side by side with the rest of the nation.”

Minister Coulton said thousands of aged care residents, including many in regional Australia, will receive their first COVID-19 vaccine dose next week.

Residents and staff in 134 regional and rural aged care facilities – almost 44 per cent of the initial vaccination locations - will be among those who get their first COVID-19 vaccine next week.

“Protecting the most vulnerable citizens in our regions is an absolute priority.

“We are fortunate to have in AstraZeneca a vaccine that is well suited to be deployed right across the vast expanses of the country.

“We have also been working hard to ensure the unique storage requirements of the Pfizer vaccine are not a barrier for our regional areas.”

Both vaccines demonstrate they will stop people becoming very sick – keeping them off ventilators and out of hospital.

“Surge workforce announced last week will partner with peak organisations and other providers to assist in administering the vaccine for harder-to-reach populations, such as rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

“The Federal Government will continue to work closely with state and territory governments and key stakeholders to ensure communities in regional, rural and remote Australia are informed about the rollout.”

These stakeholders will be particularly important as the Commonwealth, together with the States and Territories, establish the *Remote Vaccine Working Group* to support the newly established *Vaccine Program Principal Committee*.

Find out more about the rollout and priority groups at: aus.gov.au.