



The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP
Minister for Indigenous Australians
Member for Hasluck

The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care
Member for Flinders

The Hon Phillip Thompson OAM, MP
Member for Herbert

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Supporting vaccinations at All Blacks Rugby League Carnival

The importance of making healthy life choices, including getting vaccinated against COVID-19, will be widely promoted at the annual Bindal Sharks All Blacks Rugby League Carnival kicking off in Townsville today.

This year, the three-day drug and alcohol-free event will feature a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic and health professionals will be on hand to educate people and address any concerns they may have about getting the vaccine.

“The Morrison Government, through the National Indigenous Australians Agency, will be offering free entry for the three days to the first 1000 spectators who can demonstrate they have had at least one COVID-19 vaccination prior to the day,” Minister Wyatt said.

“And for anyone who chooses to get vaccinated on the day, Queensland Health will subsidise their entry for the remaining days.

“Townsville Aboriginal and Islanders Health Services (TAIHS) are supporting players to get their 715 Health Checks before competing and is also supporting the event this year with the provision of lunches for each of the teams’ Elders.”

“Thank you to the organisers, the Bindal Sharks United Training Employment Sport and Recreation Aboriginal Corporation, for encouraging early vaccinations in the Townsville region and Townsville University Health and Hospital Service for supporting the pop-up clinic.”

Now in its 35th year, the All Blacks Carnival brings together some 25 teams of men, women and juniors, and between 7,000 and 10,000 spectators from across the North Queensland region for a fun competition with positive health messages.

“I encourage everyone who may be hesitant about getting the COVID- 19 vaccination to learn more from the health team on site.”

Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, said this was a great initiative and encouraged attendees who haven't received a COVID-19 vaccination, to do it while at the Carnival.

"To date, more than 80 per cent of eligible Australians have received one COVID-19 vaccine and almost 60 per cent are fully vaccinated. This is a significant achievement and I thank those who have come forward so far to receive a vaccine," Minister Hunt said.

"If you haven't received a COVID-19 vaccine, the Bindal Sharks All Blacks Rugby League Carnival is a great place to receive yours. Otherwise, we encourage you to call your local GP, Community Pharmacy, State or Commonwealth Hub and book your appointment today, to protect you and your loved ones."

Federal Member for Herbert Phillip Thompson said having the team on-site would provide a major boost to vaccination rates.

"It's been great to see so many people coming out to get vaccinated but we also need to be meeting people where they're at, which is why this pop-up clinic is such a great opportunity," he said.

"This is a great event that attracts big crowds, so while you're enjoying some of our best local footy why not roll up your sleeve and help us get life back to normal."

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