

MEDIA RELEASE

17 November 2021

Residents in Doomadgee and outlying North West communities are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated for COVID-19 following the identification of positive cases in the Northern Territory's Robinson River and Greater Katherine local government areas.

With residents frequently travelling between Doomadgee and Robinson River, North West Hospital and Health Service (North West HHS) Chief Executive Craig Carey said it was critically important for residents to come forward and get vaccinated as soon as possible.

"Increasing vaccination rates throughout the North West is a vitally important step in protecting our communities, especially our remote Indigenous communities, who are at greater risk of serious illness caused by this disease," Mr Carey said.

"North West HHS has activated a COVID-19 testing clinic at the Doomadgee Hospital, and we will be using rapid testing for anyone in the community who is symptomatic or has been in the identified hotspots in the neighbouring Northern Territory."

With a vaccination clinic already scheduled for Doomadgee on November 17, 18 and 19, it is planned for the clinic to continue through the weekend.

Mr Carey said vaccination rates for Doomadgee were currently too low, and the nearby hotspot was a timely reminder of the work still to be done to lift rates in the community.

"We've held more than eight vaccination clinics in Doomadgee to protect and support the community," Mr Carey said.

"We hope that the residents will protect themselves, their family and friends by getting vaccinated this week given increased risks from Robinson River and Katherine.

"North West HHS is working in partnership with Gidgee Healing, Townsville's Public Health unit, the Western Queensland Primary Health Network and the Royal Flying Doctor Service to support our communities and to assist with contact tracing, vaccinations and testing requirements.

"The sooner we meet the target of 80 percent of our North West population vaccinated, the safer our communities will be."

Currently, anyone travelling into Queensland from the declared Northern Territory hotspots of Greater Katherine and Robinson River (including surrounding homelands) from 6pm November 16 will need to arrive by air, provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result and enter home quarantine for 14 days.

For full list of North West HHS COVID-19 vaccination clinics visit the website at: <https://www.northwest.health.qld.gov.au/for-patients-and-visitors/covid-19-information/>

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