

Guideline

Subject: Implementation of COVID-19 Vaccine for Laboratory Workers
Approval Date: February 2021
Review Date: February 2022
Reviewed By: Microbiology AC, BPPQ, Board of Directors
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The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia strongly supports the roll-out of the SARS-CoV-2 vaccination to help control the COVID-19 Pandemic. In the Australian Pathology laboratory sector, the College recommends all staff directly involved in the collection of respiratory specimens and in the laboratory processing of respiratory specimens for COVID-19 testing be included in the 1a category for the vaccination roll-out. These include all pathology collection staff and all laboratory staff involved directly in performing molecular tests for SARS-CoV-2. The collectors are at high risk of exposure and the diagnostic staff are essential workers and are part of the critical infrastructure managing the Pandemic. The remaining laboratory staff should be included in the 1b category alongside other healthcare workers. And in New Zealand, pathology and laboratory staff should be included in the Tier 2 category based on the low or no community transmission scenario.

We urge Australian state governments to consider both public and private laboratories equally in the allocation of these critical vaccinations.