



MEDIA RELEASE

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Aged care residents and staff safer with aged care staff vaccinated

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia says residents in aged care are safer than ever today, after the Federal Government confirmed nearly all (97.6% and rising) aged care staff have received at least one Covid jab and almost 80% are fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

“I want to thank the government and every worker and aged care provider who made this possible by refusing to compromise on the health and safety of older Australians,” says Ian Yates AM, Chief Executive of COTA Australia.

“COTA’s early call back in May for aged care staff vaccination to be made mandatory was met with scepticism and resistance by many, but a strong government approach and close coordination with providers and consumer organisations has made it a reality.

“While there are still some providers that are lagging behind the national average, we know the government has robust processes in place to support and assist those aged care homes which haven’t yet achieved close to 100% staff vaccinations by the deadline.

“I am grateful to, and congratulate, every aged care worker who got their jab to protect the health and safety of the people in their care.

“This significant achievement proves that Australia can, and should, be ambitious when it comes to aged care.

“With national coordination and proper resourcing, we can achieve sector-wide reforms to protect the safety and dignity of older Australians and ensure the high-quality aged care we all expect and deserve.

“In these uncertain times, this is a significant step forward. We can build on it to do more:

- Requiring all home care staff providing support and care in people’s homes to be vaccinated - which providers should be supporting to happen now.
- As states begin to provide more rights during the current COVID restrictions when they reach 70%, moves to connect older people in nursing homes - where most are vaccinated, and staff are vaccinated – with their families must be prioritized. In some states it’s been over three months since a daughter could visit her mother in aged care to provide essential care and support during her later days. Immense harm is being done to many residents.

“COTA will continue to work closely with the government and aged care sector as we move through this pandemic together.

“Together we can build a stronger, safer better, consumer focused aged care system that all Australians can benefit from when they need it.”

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