



Media Release | 13 August 2021 | For Immediate Release

Community Coalition Demands Immediate Action To Vaccinate People With Disability Against COVID-19

11-Point Plan Proposed to Better Protect People with Disability

An alliance of disability representative organisations has joined forces to pressure Australia's governments to better prioritise people with disability in their vaccine rollout programs.

On the first full day of a Canberra lockdown, the coalition of more than 60 disability organisations has released an [open letter](#) criticising the Australian Government for failing to vaccinate and protect the most clinically vulnerable people with disability in the nation.

The letter is addressed to National Cabinet, which meets today, and contains an 11-point plan outlining the kind of action that governments across Australia need to take to protect people with disability.

The plan includes recommendations in relation to consultation, planning, implementation and reporting. Key recommendations include prioritising in-home vaccinations, maximising vaccine choice and increasing transparency around progress reporting.

People With Disability Australia Chief Executive Officer Sebastian Zagarella: "The Australian Government has failed to fully vaccinate people with disability under phase 1a and 1b of the vaccine rollout despite getting started in February 2021.

"Now that unvaccinated people are dying in this country of the Delta variant, we need Australia's national, state and territory governments to get serious and commit to completing the rollout of vaccines to people with disability.

"People with disability include some of the most clinically vulnerable people and Australia's governments must prioritise the rollout of vaccines to people with disability as a matter of urgency.

"We've developed a clear 11-point plan to which we want governments across the country, but the federal government in particular, to urgently commit themselves so that people with disability get the protection they need to survive this crisis."

Mr Zagarella was joined by the chief executives of other disability organisations in lobbying Australia's governments for change.

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations CEO Ross Joyce: "The sector is united in our frustration and demand immediate action on the vaccine rollout for the most vulnerable in our community as was promised by the Morrison Government."

First Peoples Disability Network Australia CEO Damian Griffis: "First Peoples with disability urgently need better access to the vaccine, as well as immediate measures to ensure people have what they need, such as food and essential disability supports. Our community has been leading the fight to stay safe from COVID-19, now we need action from governments too."

Children And Young People With Disability Australia CEO Mary Sayers: "People with disability, including children and young people, need priority for vaccinations because of the



increased risk of adverse outcomes if they catch COVID, yet despite the government acknowledging this, it is not translating to activity on the ground. We need less lip service and more action from the government to roll out the vaccine to those who need it most.”

Inclusion Australia CEO Catherine McAlpine: “All people with intellectual disability in group homes need to be vaccinated right away. They should have been vaccinated at the start of the rollout, as they are a group at very high risk of adverse outcomes if they get COVID-19. We need all governments to do their bit urgently.”

The open letter can be viewed and downloaded on the PWDA website:

<https://pwd.org.au/open-letter-immediate-actions-required-to-vaccinate-and-protect-all-australians-with-disability-against-coronavirus/>

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Media Contact:

Michael Badorrek, PWDA Marketing & Communications Manager
michaelb@pwd.org.au | +61 408 682 867

Amanda Ellis, PWDA Senior Policy Officer
media@pwd.org.au | +61 2 9370 3100

Suggested Social Media Post

A coalition of more than 60 disability orgs is calling on all Australian governments to take immediate action to protect people with disability from the Delta variant of COVID-19. The coalition has issued an open letter with an 11-point plan outlining urgent activities for prioritising the vaccine rollout for people with disability. <https://pwd.org.au/community-coalition-demands-immediate-action-to-vaccinate-people-with-disability-against-covid-19/>
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