



Australian Government
Department of Health

Acting Chief Medical Officer

Mr Andrew Pinder
Australian Funeral Directors
Association Limited
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(PO Box 291)
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Dear Mr Pinder

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 October 2020 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, regarding prioritisation for high risk health workers for COVID-19 vaccination. The Prime Minister has asked me to reply.

The Australian Government has announced a COVID-19 Vaccine and Treatment Strategy (the Strategy), which provides a framework for securing early access to safe and effective vaccines and treatments. Access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines as soon as possible will save Australian lives, allow us to consider re-opening borders, rebuild the economy, and assist our region. The Strategy has been published on the Department of Health website at:
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australias-covid-19-vaccine-and-treatment-strategy>

Decisions regarding the roll-out of a potential COVID-19 vaccine will be guided by expert advice and will be contingent on meeting all requirements with regard to testing and safety.

The Australian Government is considering advice from a number of experts, including the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI). This advice covers the highest priority population groups and the most effective and efficient arrangements to vaccinate these groups, as well as a population-wide vaccine rollout.

Any decision on the prioritisation of population groups will be made taking into account the best available public health, medical and epidemiological data available at that time. I can assure you that frontline workers are among priority groups being considered, noting that different vaccine candidates will vary in their efficacy and suitability for different population groups and only more detailed Phase 3 clinical data will be able to inform vaccination prioritisation decisions.

The Australian Government's priority is access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines at the earliest time, to ensure the health and economic security of all Australians.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Kelly', with a long, sweeping underline.

Professor Paul Kelly
Acting Chief Medical Officer

4 November 2020