

Identifying and removing barriers to access COVID-19 testing and vaccination

To support all eligible children and young people to have equitable access to COVID-19 testing and vaccination, some adjustments to standard processes and approaches may be required.

Barriers and challenges experiences by some children and families can include:

- **physical access issues**

- Some environments or spaces may not be accessible for children with issues with mobility.
- Large pieces of equipment or multiple carers may necessitate more space during a consultation.

- **difficulties with social distancing**, particularly in unfamiliar, busy environments where there is additional worry. Some children may

- be intolerant of PPE
- have difficulties maintaining physical distance from others
- express their stress, anxiety, and frustration in ways that others find difficult to understand.

- **comorbid medical complexity and/or fragility**, where there is concern about infection risk associated with large crowds, or a history of adverse reactions to vaccination.

What to do when barriers or additional issues are identified

- Encourage families to discuss concerns they have about their child receiving the vaccination and ask them to explain the barriers they anticipate.
- Ask the child and/or their carer if there are any ideas or strategies that may enable a successful vaccination or more positive experience.
- Ensure there are alternative spaces for vaccination that are accessible for children with mobility issues, additional equipment or carers, or that reduce interactions with others.
- Consider whether a variation to standard process is required, e.g. does this child and family need a reduced waiting time, or do they need to wait in a quiet place?
- Consider whether an alternative response or provider is required.

Specialist paediatric COVID-19 immunisation advice

Health professionals seeking advice about the COVID-19 vaccination **for children with complex medical conditions and/or concerns of adverse events following immunisations** can contact the:

Queensland Specialist Immunisation Service (QSiS)

COVID-19 Immunisation Advice Service

Ph: 07 3068 2505

NOTE: this phone number is for clinician use only, not for the general public.

The QSiS service is available Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm.



QSiS will also provide statewide clinical consultation if required. For referral criteria, please see the QSiS website:

childrens.health.qld.gov.au/qsis-info-for-hp



To make a referral, visit the referral forms page on the Children's Health Queensland website:

childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/health-professionals/referring-patients/referral-forms/

For more information about COVID-19 and children, visit: childrens.health.qld.gov.au/covid-19

Version 1.0 updated 30/08/2021



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