



Information for General Practitioners and community service providers about JYNNEOS® monkeypox vaccine in the ACT

Dear General Practitioners and Community Service Providers,

Re: Priority criteria for initial monkeypox vaccine doses in the ACT and how to refer an individual for vaccination

Key Points:

- Based on current experience in Australia and internationally, people at highest risk from monkeypox are gay, bisexual or other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) who have close and intimate contact with multiple partners.
- ACT Health has secured a small initial supply of 200 doses of the JYNNEOS monkeypox vaccine. These vaccines will be prioritised to individuals who meet the initial priority criteria (see below).
- Canberra Sexual Health Centre (CSHC) will be the ACT's initial vaccination site.
- Clinicians and community service providers can refer ACT residents (and NSW residents with established links to ACT healthcare providers) AND who meet vaccination priority criteria to CSHC.
- Further doses are expected in the ACT over the coming months. ACT Health will provide more information about expanded priority criteria and access to the vaccine over time.

Priority Criteria for initial doses in the ACT

The initial limited supply of the monkeypox vaccine will be prioritised for people most at risk of exposure to, onwards transmission of, and severe outcomes from monkeypox infection, should the disease become more widespread in Australia and the ACT.

Current priority criteria are:

- People who have close and intimate contact with multiple partners¹

AND the person identifies as a:

- Sex worker with clients who are GBMSM **OR**
- GBMSM living with HIV and who have a CD4 count < 500 **OR**
- GBMSM with barriers to accessing early care and support* if they were exposed to or had monkeypox infection. This may include individuals who:
 - Are homeless or have unstable housing/accommodation arrangements
 - Have drug use or mental health concerns that impact on their ability to access care

**Other factors that may impact access to care and could be considered in the above assessment:*

- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people
- First Nations people
- Trans, gender diverse and non-binary people

¹ This may include attendance at sex parties, saunas and sex-on-premises venues



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A small number of doses are also being reserved for people with known high-risk exposure to monkeypox for **post exposure prophylaxis (PEP)**, as determined by ACT Health. If you have an individual who may need PEP, please discuss with CDC by calling (02) 5124 9213. CDC will assist with assessing eligibility in line with national guidance and facilitate timely access to PEP.

As further vaccine becomes available in the ACT, the priority criteria will be expanded. ACT Health will directly communicate to clinicians and community service providers about expanded priority criteria and access to the vaccine at this time.

Referral for Vaccination

Individuals who self-identify to you or are identified by your organisation can be referred using the attached form (also available on the ACT Health website: www.health.act.gov.au/monkeypox).

If you see a high number of clients or patients who meet the priority criteria, please consider directly contacting them to discuss whether they would like to be referred for monkeypox vaccination.

At the time of vaccination, CSHC will undertake a consent process in line with the [national consent form for JYNNEOS](#).

Following their 1st dose, individuals will be contacted when more vaccine becomes available to book for their 2nd dose. Individuals with specific conditions who may have a lower immune response e.g. HIV with immunocompromise, will be prioritised to have two doses from the initial supply.

Please be aware that referral does not guarantee vaccination access. Referred individuals will be contacted by CSHC to confirm that the individual meets the priority criteria and to make an appointment. If initial vaccine supply has been fully utilised, the individual can opt to be placed on a waiting list for when further vaccine supply is available.

People who have received a vaccine for monkeypox should understand they are still at risk of becoming infected with monkeypox. They should continue to be alert to symptoms and to stay at home if symptoms develop and phone their GP or CSHC.

ACT Health is working with ACT clinicians and community service providers to explore options for alternative points of access to vaccination as more supply becomes available locally.

Adverse Event Following Immunisation

Any suspected adverse event following immunisation should be reported to the ACT Health Immunisation Unit using the [Immunisation Adverse Event Reporting Form \(online form\)](#) or by calling the Immunisation Unit on 02 5124 9800.



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Background information on monkeypox

On 26 July 2022, Australia's Chief Medical Officer declared the monkeypox situation a Communicable Disease Incident of National Significance.

Confirmed cases of monkeypox have been reported in Australia, including the ACT. To date, most cases in Australia have been in people infected from exposure overseas, with a very small number of cases transmitted within Australia.

People are at highest risk of exposure to monkeypox following skin-to-skin contact with someone who has monkeypox and has a rash or sores.

Vaccination for monkeypox

JYNNEOS (modified vaccinia virus Ankara – Bavarian Nordic, MVA-BN) is a third generation vaccine used to prevent infection with smallpox and monkeypox viruses. It is a highly-attenuated vaccine (replication-deficient) that is administered in a 2-dose schedule by subcutaneous injection at least 28 days apart.

JYNNEOS is most effective when it is used to vaccinate a person before they are exposed to monkeypox. It may be used for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for individuals who have had a known high-risk exposure to an individual confirmed to have monkeypox, as determined by ACT Health.

[ATAGI](#) have provided guidance to complement the US Food and Drug Administration [product information](#) for the JYNNEOS vaccine. JYNNEOS will be available for use in Australia under s18A (emergency use provision) of the *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*.

For more information

- **ACT Health** – Monkeypox Webpage: www.health.act.gov.au/monkeypox
- **Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation** – ATAGI clinical guidance on vaccination against monkeypox: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-clinical-guidance-on-vaccination-against-monkeypox>
- **Commonwealth Department of Health** – Information on JYNNEOS Vaccine: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/monkeypox-mpx-information-on-jynneosr-vaccine>

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