Flu vax for you and me, for free

Greater Geelong residents are now eligible to receive their annual flu shot for free after flu cases in the state rose over 30 per cent in just one week.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a reduced immunity to common viruses including influenza, with flu cases statewide rising from 10,000 to 15,000 in Victoria during the last week of May. The vaccine is already free for children aged under five, people aged over 65, pregnant women, people with increased-risk medical conditions and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The state government initiative will reimburse GPs and community pharmacies for influenza vaccines administered to people not usually eligible for a free vaccine.

> “This will be the first time in two years that we will face a real flu season”
>
> - Martin Foley

Immunisation providers will also be offered $2000 grants to assist in managing additional demand, including the costs of rostering more staff and extending opening hours.

More than 3000 Victorian GPs and community pharmacies have been invited to take part under a $33 million package, aimed at boosting vaccination coverage and avoiding more hospitalisations during winter.

“This will be the first time in two years that we will face a real flu season – we need all Victorians to roll up their sleeves and help protect their loved ones and our health system by getting vaccinated,” Health Minister Martin Foley said. With no interval required between receiving the flu and COVID vaccines, Victorians are encouraged to ensure their vaccinations, both influenza and COVID, are up to date for the winter season.

“Victorians really took up the call to arms when it came to COVID-19 vaccinations, and we know they can do it again – so we’re removing as many barriers as possible to help boost vaccine coverage,” Mr Foley said.

“Help your family stay safe this winter by getting vaccinated for both the flu and COVID-19, getting tested if you have any symptoms and staying home while unwell.”

Victorians can book their free flu vaccines by contacting their local GP or community pharmacy.

Recovery help welcome

South Barwon Football Netball Club was selected as a winner of the AFL Golden Rego Giveaway, a competition rewarding all registered grassroots participants and clubs.

As the winner of the Therabody Prize, South Barwon received the ‘Ultimate Recovery Session’. It involved a sausage sizzle put on for the club with recovery sessions run with the junior boys, senior men’s, senior women’s and netball teams.

After the session, the club was left with $7249 worth of product to help with their future recovery needs and ensure they can perform at their best in the Geelong Football Netball League.

South Barwon Football Netball Club president Tim Sherman said the event was very worthwhile.

“After a tough couple of years, it’s great to be getting back into footy, and to feel the energy it brings within the community,” he said.

“With recovery becoming such an important part of the routine, to have a session with Therabody and have won some of their devices is fantastic.

“No matter what level, it’s always important to find ways to achieve those additional one-percenters, and what Therabody have provided will be a great help to achieve those for South Barwon.”

South Barwon Football Netball Club at the Thereabody Ultimate Recovery Session. (Supplied)

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