

Primary Care: Referral Guide to Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

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Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

Background

Vaccine safety in Victoria is managed under a **Department of Health (DH)** contract by **SAEFVIC**, a vaccine safety team based at the **Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI)**, Parkville.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of vaccine safety services in the state **were paediatric focused**, therefore there was a need to **rapidly expand and enhance adult vaccine safety services**.

These adult specialist immunisation services are required to address vaccine safety concerns and safely provide vaccination under supervision where required.



Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

The purpose of the VicSIS network is to:

- **Oversee and provide specialist vaccination services for**
 - those identified as at-risk for adverse events following immunisation (AEFIs)
 - those who experience AEFIs in the context of COVID-19 vaccines
- **Provide expert advice and clinical guidance for the state with input from our subject matter experts**
- **Help coordinate work across the key stakeholder groups, including Department of Health, SAEFVIC, and the hospital sites selected to be Specialist Immunisation Clinics.**

Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

VicSIS provides both Telehealth and face-to-face consultations for patients:

Pre-vaccination









- Persons **at-risk of adverse events following immunisation (AEFI)**, for example a history of anaphylaxis, or those who fall into Special Risk Groups (SRGs).

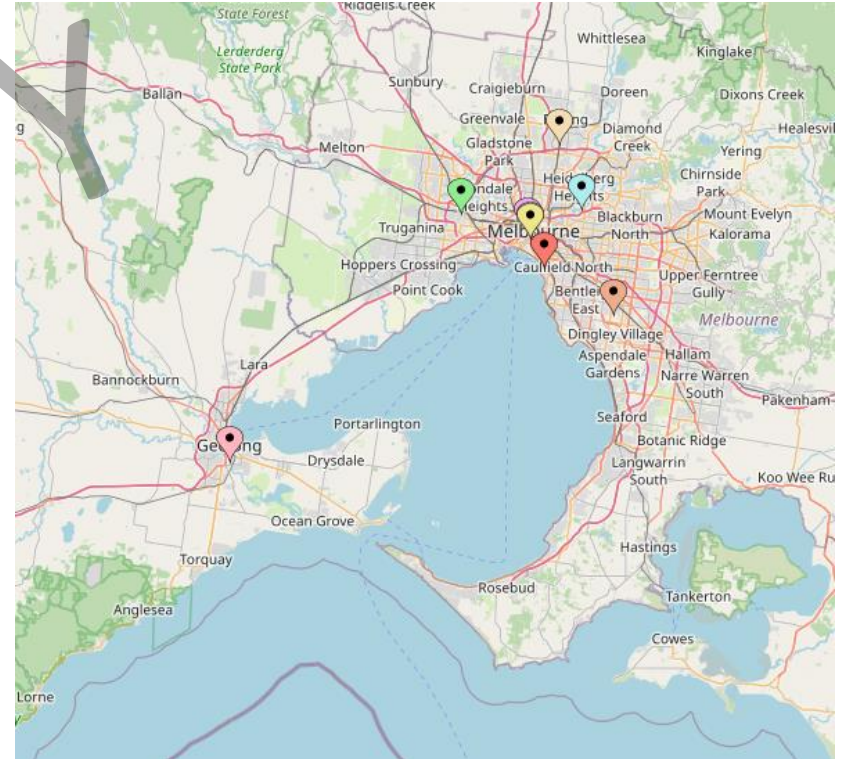
Post-vaccination

- Persons who have **experienced an AEFI after a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine** and require clinical review prior to second dose or ongoing follow-up.

VicSIS Clinic Locations

There are 9 VicSIS clinics, with two dedicated allergy services and one regional site.

-  Alfred Health
 -  Austin Health – allergy services
 -  Monash Health – allergy services
 -  Western Health
 -  Barwon Health - regional lead
 -  Northern Health
 -  Royal Melbourne Hospital
 -  Peter MacCallum Cancer Center
- (Royal Children's Hospital) – established immunisation clinic with increased capacity for the future rollout of COVID-19 vaccination for children and adolescents



How to refer to VicSIS

<https://mvec.mcri.edu.au/references/the-vicsis-victorian-specialist-immunisation-services-network/>

- **All referrals** to Specialist immunisation services **must be sent via email** using the referral form (pictured) and made **by a Medical Practitioner**.
- All referrals from **regional Victoria** should be sent to the **regional SIS in Geelong** (Barwon Health), who will conduct **telehealth appointments** and **refer on for in person appointments** as required.
- **Metropolitan Melbourne** referrals should be made to the **patient's closest geographical location**, however, **two allergy services** have been set up to cater for **allergy-specific concerns**.

VicSIS Clinic Referral Form

Patient Details

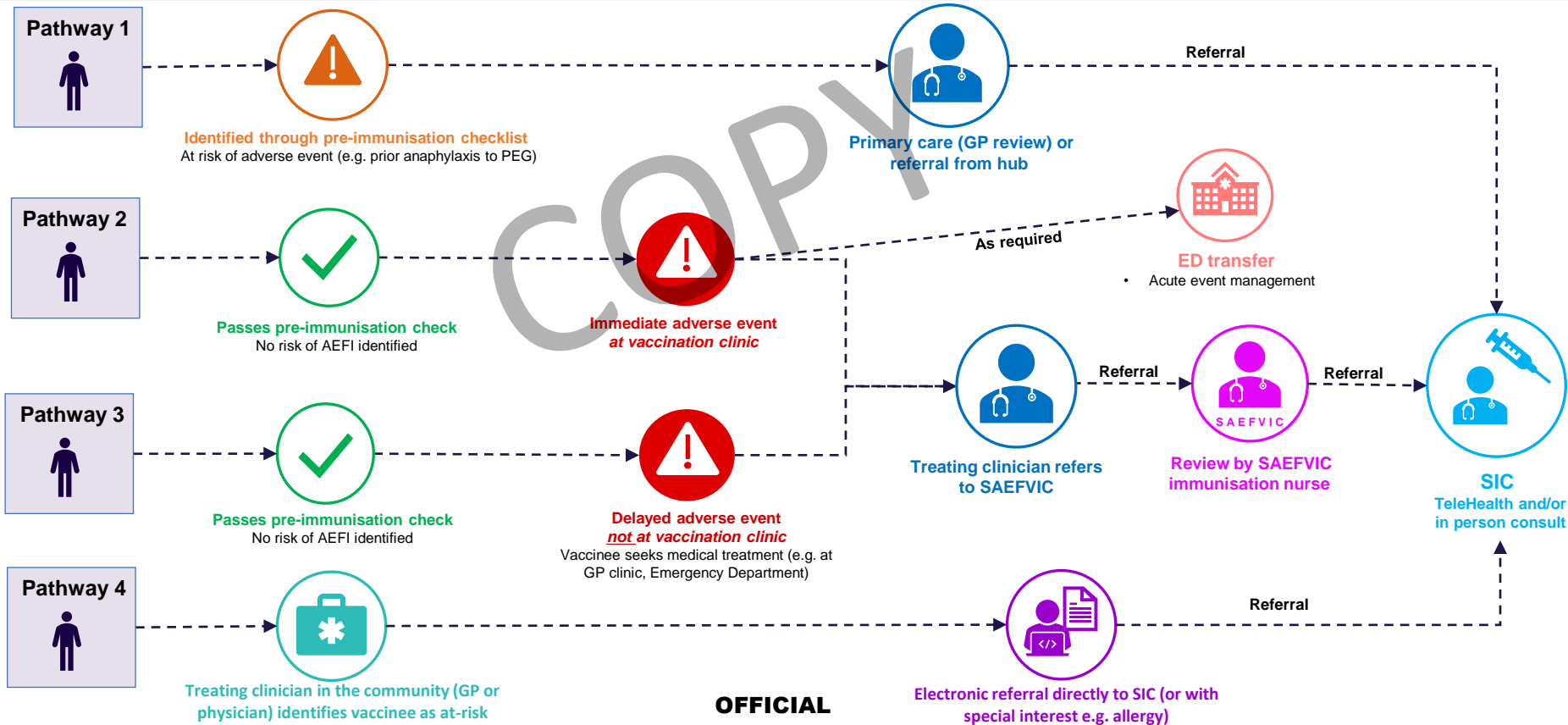
Name: _____	Date of Birth: DD / MM / YYYY
Address: _____	Phone Number: _____
Medicare: _____ Ref: _____	Date of Referral: DD / MM / YYYY

Referee Details

Doctor Name: _____		Phone: _____	
Address: _____		Provider Number: _____	
Reason for referral:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Allergy	<input type="checkbox"/> Special risk group (e.g. previous CVST, immunocompromised)	<input type="checkbox"/> Previous adverse event following immunisation (AEFI)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please indicate): _____
Additional clinical information: _____			
Which VicSIS clinic is this referral for?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Alfred Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Austin Health*	<input type="checkbox"/> Barwon Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Monash Health*
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunshine Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> Royal Melbourne Hospital	<input type="checkbox"/> Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Is patient aware of referral? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes			
Is an interpreter required? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, language: _____			

* Indicates clinic has specialist allergy services

Referral Pathways to Specialist Immunisation Clinics (SICs)



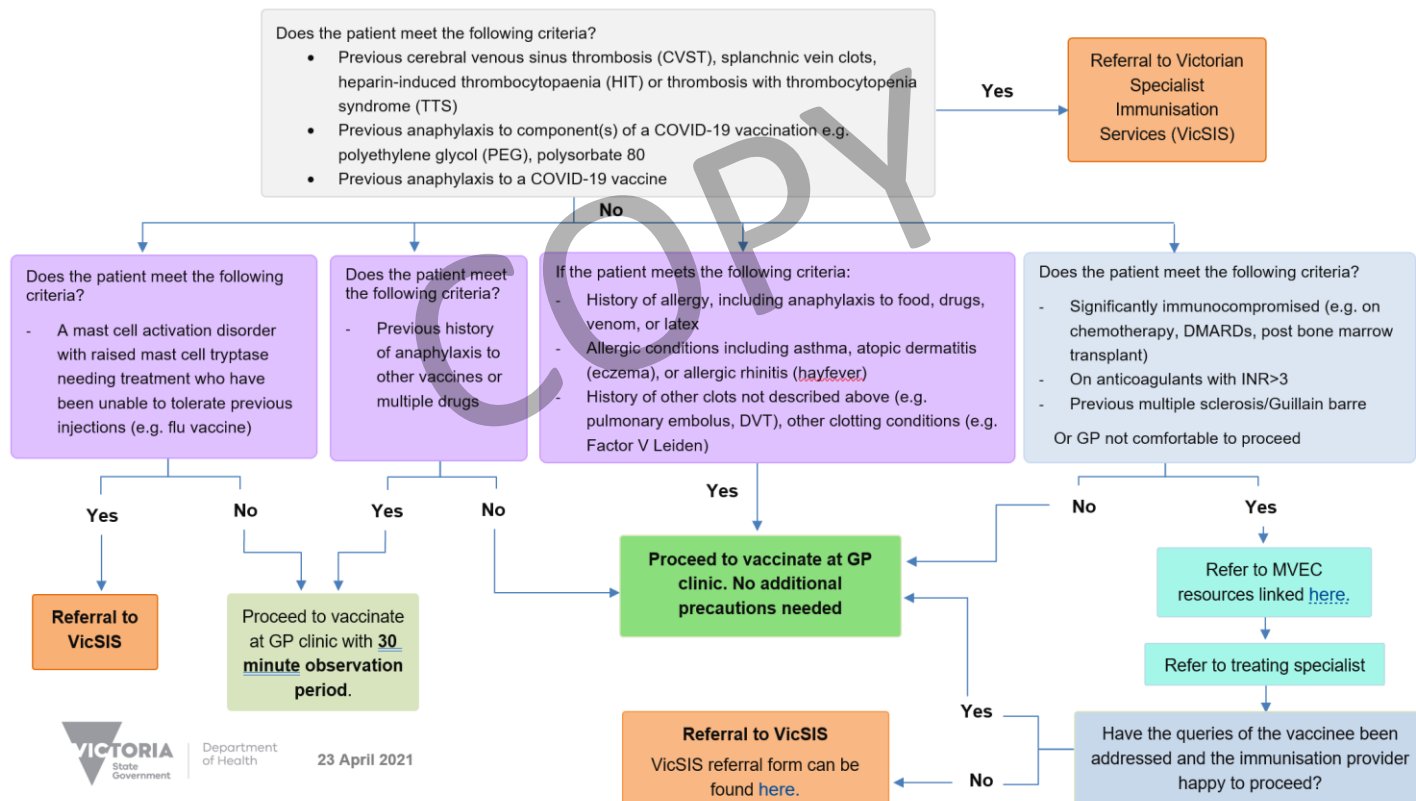
Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

Other functions:

- VicSIS network meets **weekly** to discuss vaccine safety and develop clinical guidance
- Allergy subgroup **reviews severe allergy cases and their management**, and contributes to state and national **guidelines**
- **Subject matter experts** are brought in to review complex cases
- Collaborate with **Melbourne Vaccine Education Centre (MVEC)** in the development of FAQs

Primary Care Referral Guide to the Victorian Specialist Immunisation Services (VicSIS)

The purpose of this document is to provide clinicians and vaccine providers with additional information for when it is appropriate to refer patients into VicSIS vs when patients can receive their vaccines in clinic.



Patient eligibility for VicSIS Referral

Does the patient meet the following criteria?

- Previous cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (**CVST**), splanchnic vein clots, heparin-induced thrombocytopenia (**HIT**) or thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (**TTS**)
- Previous **anaphylaxis to component(s) of a COVID-19 vaccination** e.g. polyethylene glycol (PEG), polysorbate 80
- Previous **anaphylaxis to a COVID-19 vaccine**

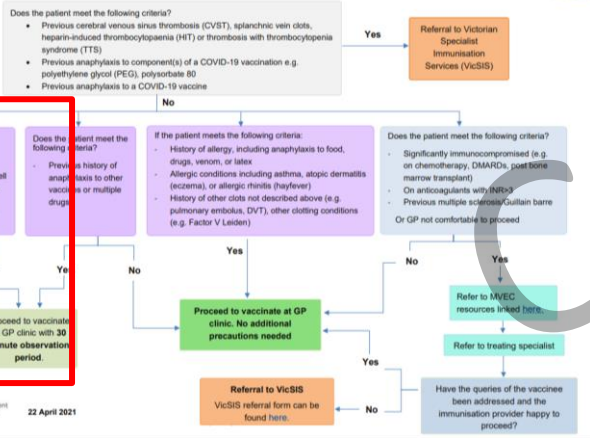
Yes

Referral to Victorian
Specialist
Immunisation
Services (VicSIS)

No

Patient eligibility for VicSIS Referral

Primary Care Referral Guidance



Does the patient meet the following criteria?

- A mast cell activation disorder with raised mast cell tryptase needing treatment who have been **unable** to tolerate previous injections (e.g. flu vaccine)

Yes

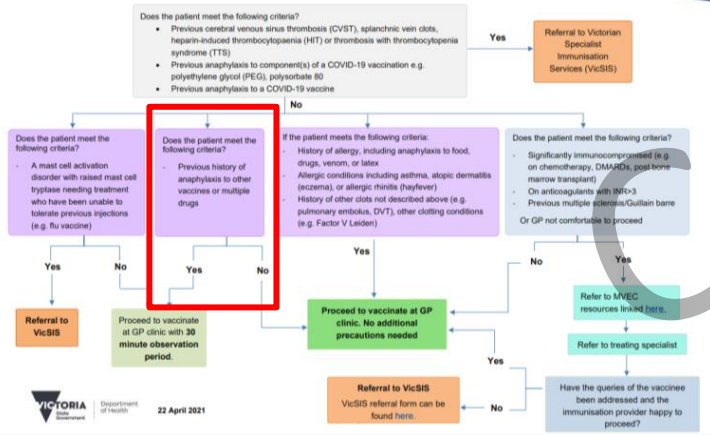
No

Referral to VicSIS

Proceed to vaccinate at GP clinic with 30 minute observation period.

Patient eligibility for VicSIS Referral

Primary Care Referral Guidance



Does the patient meet the following criteria?

- Previous history of **anaphylaxis** to other vaccines or multiple drugs

Yes

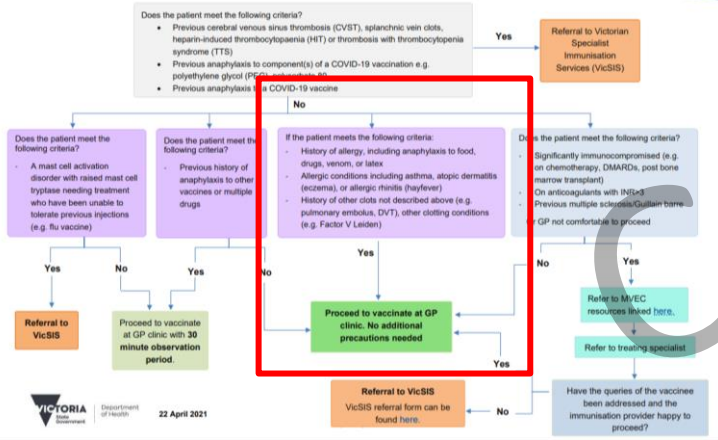
No

Proceed to vaccinate at GP clinic with **30 minute observation period.**

Proceed to vaccinate at GP clinic. **No additional precautions needed**

Patient eligibility for VicSIS Referral

Primary Care Referral Guidance



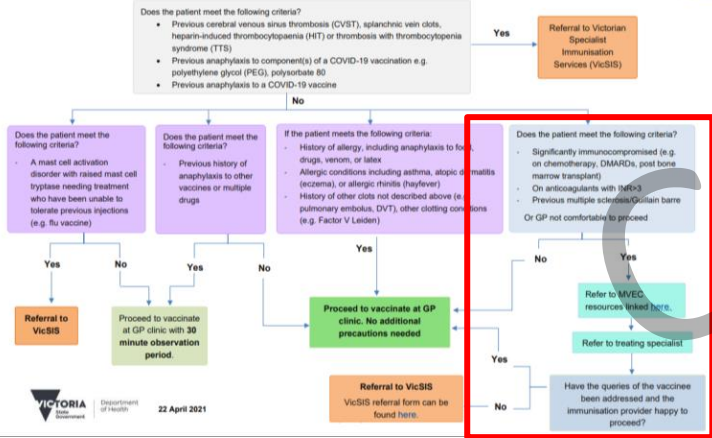
If the patient meets the following criteria:

- History of allergy, including anaphylaxis to food, drugs, venom, or latex
- Allergic conditions including asthma, atopic dermatitis (eczema), or allergic rhinitis (hay fever)
- History of other clots not described above (e.g. pulmonary embolus, DVT), other clotting conditions (e.g. Factor V Leiden)

Proceed to vaccinate at GP clinic. No additional precautions needed

Patient eligibility for VicSIS Referral

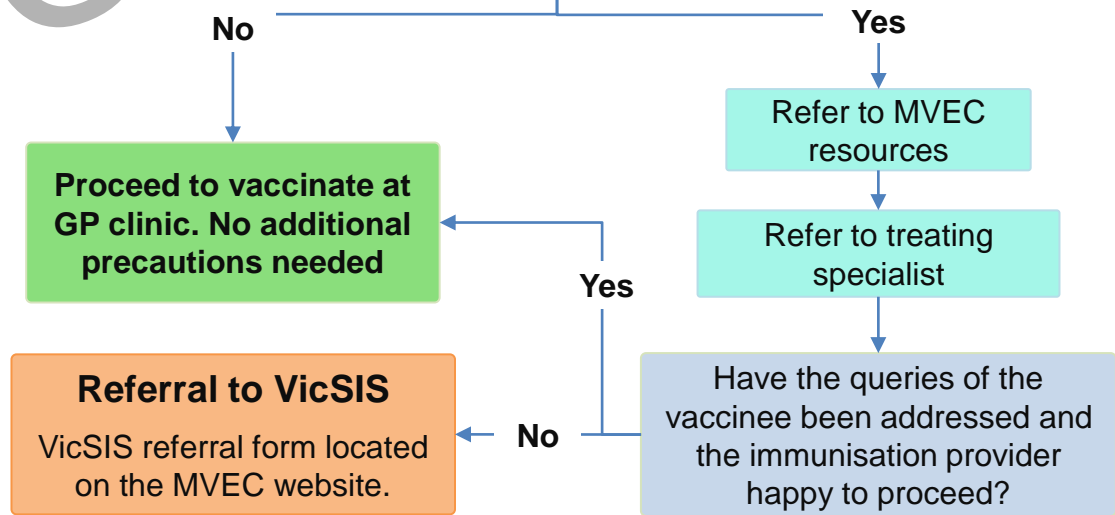
Primary Care Referral Guidance



Does the patient meet the following criteria?

- Significantly immunocompromised (e.g. on chemotherapy, DMARDs, post bone marrow transplant)
- On anticoagulants with INR>3
- Previous multiple sclerosis/Guillain barre

Or GP not comfortable to proceed



Acknowledgements

- VicSIS team – Ngaree Jannali Blow, Elise Virah Sawmy and Eleanor Duckworth
- Safety team of COVID-19 vaccine program – Nigel Crawford, Hazel Clothier, Michelle Wolthuizen
- VicSIS clinicians and subject matter experts
- SAEFVIC – Jim Buttery, Georgie Lewis, Adele Harris, Lois Tham
- MVEC – Daryl Cheng, Francesca Machingaisa, Rachel McGuire

Important links

Referral information for VicSIS can be found at:

<https://mvec.mcri.edu.au/references/the-vic-sis-victorian-specialist-immunisation-services-network/>

MVEC COVID-19 vaccine FAQs:

<https://mvec.mcri.edu.au/references/covid-19-vaccines-frequently-asked-questions/>