



**Australian Government**

**Department of Health**

**Chief Medical Officer**

Dear Colleagues,

As you would be aware from my recent correspondence, the 2020 influenza season is upon us.

Influenza seasons and their severity are unpredictable. However, what we do know is that vaccination is the most important measure we have to prevent influenza and its complications and is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over.

Many who might visit your pharmacies over the coming months may benefit from receiving the influenza vaccine to protect themselves against influenza and its complications. As the COVID-19 outbreak evolves, I would like to emphasise that vaccination is particularly important this year to protect people from influenza.

People most commonly affected by influenza are young children and older adults. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, pregnant women and people with chronic disease are also at high risk of becoming seriously ill with influenza.

I would like to thank all our healthcare workers; from doctors, to nurses, to pharmacist and retail pharmacy assistants for being prepared to put yourself in the front line of our national response. It is incumbent on each of us to embrace the responsibility that we have at this time to protect those most vulnerable in our community.

I thank you again for your ongoing assistance and efforts in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Murphy', written in a cursive style.

Professor Brendan Murphy  
Chief Medical Officer

20 March 2020