



## Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA) COVID-19 'Pulse Check' Survey - April 2021

### Key Messages

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## APNA 2021 COVID Pulse Check # 1 survey data - April 2021

A sample survey of the largest workforce in primary health care, shows that nurses involved in the rollout:

- Are most commonly educating patients about the COVID-19 vaccine and discussing vaccine hesitancy (87.7%), with a significant majority (79%) feeling confident or very confident providing this education.
- Report feeling *'tired and burnt out'* (19%).
- See the low supply of COVID-19 vaccines as the main issue hampering their work (28%).

Nurses whose organisations are not involved directly in the rollout:

- Are still playing a vital role, with a significant majority (85.8%) providing general education to patients about the COVID-19 vaccine and/or discussing vaccine hesitancy.

The data is telling us that primary health care nurses are taking a lead in educating patients about the COVID-19 vaccine and potential vaccine hesitancy, regardless of whether they are directly involved in the vaccine rollout.

This reflects the fact that primary health care nurses are on the front line in the fight against COVID-19 and should be utilised to the fullest extent of their professional abilities.

The sample survey also painted a concerning picture of how COVID-19 is having a wider impact on the health of Australians.

- Of those respondents who indicated that their role had changed as a direct result of the pandemic, approximately 46% reported doing less preventative health and screening activities; and chronic disease and healthy ageing management compared to pre-COVID.
- For those respondents doing less preventative health and chronic disease management, more than a quarter (27%) reported that their practice does not have a process in place to support patients with routine care.

This is a significant concern as the reduced focus on preventative health and chronic disease management will likely cost the community and government more in health and treatment costs in future years.

**About the survey:**

- The Australian Primary Health Care Nurses (APNA) undertook a sample survey (COVID-19 PulseCheck) of primary health care nurses between Saturday, 10 April and Tuesday, 20 April 2021.
- The survey sought feedback from nurses on the impact of the pandemic on their work, and their views in relation to the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.
- Primary health care nurses are the largest workforce in primary health care with more than 82,000 nurses working in many clinical settings including general practice, correctional care, community health, aged care and schools.