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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Informed Decisions about Vaccination the key to Transplantation**

Transplant Australia supports the decisions by transplant units across Australia for compulsory vaccination for patients waiting for a transplant.

Transplant Australia CEO, Chris Thomas, responding to a story 'no jab, no transplant' in The Courier Mail said Transplant Australia was very sympathetic to the concerns of anyone waiting for a transplant.

"It is an extremely troubling time for patients as we are still waiting for the light at the end of the tunnel from this pandemic. However, evidence from across the world clearly shows both patients waiting and those with a transplant are safer having been vaccinated against COVID-19," Mr Thomas said.

"Transplant Australia has spent the past 18 months advocating for recipients and those waiting for a transplant because of their compromised immune status to be given early access to vaccination. We are pleased the Federal Government has prioritised this group of Australians.

"All the data from across the world demonstrates the overwhelming benefits of vaccination versus non-vaccination. It is clear being vaccinated provides these patients waiting with increased protection as they proceed through the transplant process, being exposed to other patients as they visit hospital or clinic.

"In fact the real question is why anyone waiting for a transplant, with their reduced immunity, increased co-morbidities and other ailments, would want to remain exposed to COVID let alone go through an exhaustive hospital procedure without the benefits of vaccination?"

Mr Thomas said he hoped all patients waiting for a transplant are given all the information and time necessary to make an informed decision regarding vaccination.

"We note that vaccination is not the only factor as to whether someone remained on a waiting list. Often they might need to give up smoking, quit alcohol consumption or lose weight and in that context vaccination is really just another prerequisite to achieving transplantation.



“There are very few reasons for medical exemption to vaccination. We strongly encourage all recipients and those waiting for a transplant to reach out to the helping hand they are being offered to beat this pandemic and achieve a long life with a transplant.”

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