



United Sri Lankan Muslim Association of Australia



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General Update - March 2021

Aak dear Members,

The Management Committee (MC) met last Tuesday and I thought of keeping the membership informed of a few topics that we discussed.

1. Circulation of Janaza notifications through SMS

It is a current financial members' perk to have one of his/her immediate family member's Janaza notice circulated to the membership, via email and SMS, if that Janaza is conducted in Australia. This is so that friends and family can attend the Janaza at very short notice. However, with the popularity of WhatsApp and the creation of the USMAA Family WhatsApp group, we are able to achieve the same outcome at zero cost. Further, we are not limited to the number of characters/words when circulating a message via WhatsApp, unlike when using SMS. The last SMS cost USMAA \$33, which is almost half of an annual family membership fee. Given the very low membership payments this year, I am sure there will be very little objection from the members if we decide to use a cost-saving alternative.

MC Decision

- USMAA will cease to circulate Janaza notices through SMS
- It will continue with an email and WhatsApp message through its "USMAA Family WA group"
- All members (financially current and non-current) are encouraged to join the WhatsApp group to continue receiving Janaza notifications
- Link <https://chat.whatsapp.com/BUdj6Fezl1t1qo0Rmf694>
- Financially current members can also publish the Janaza notice on our Janaza website page for free, through the self-service option. Non-current financial members can publish for \$10

2. Iftar/s in Ramadan

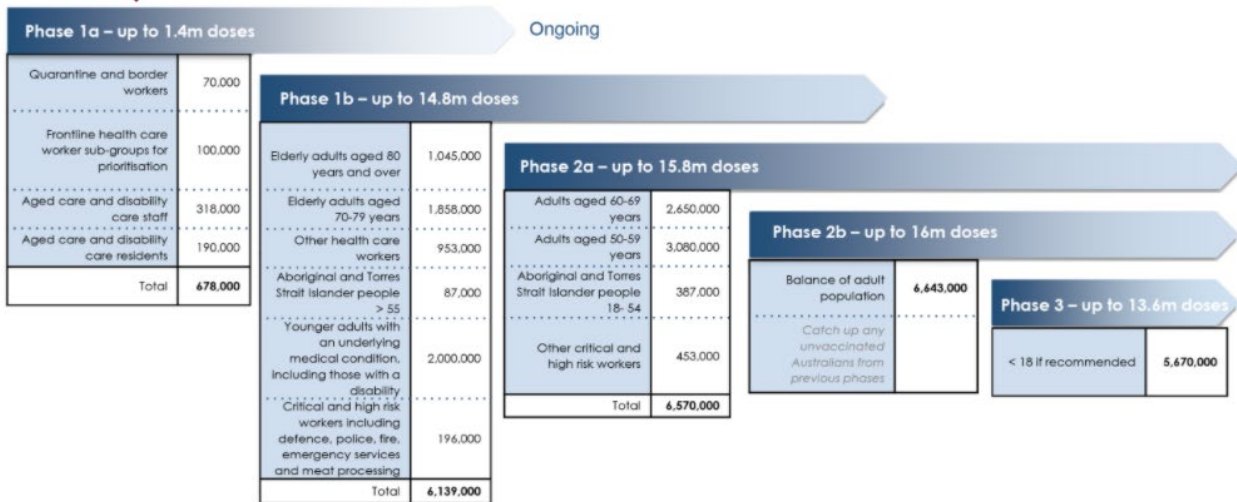
As per the Pharmacy Guild of Australia's website, forwarded to USMAA by the ICV

(Link : <https://getmycovidvax.com.au/form/?src=fdfb6&fbclid=IwAR2N8DAgYr-RX8GsHUkuGgZLKH0MHNwJ74JK2iSE3MASgyQGI5xH3Og2n8Q>)

the vaccines for our seniors (over 55 years) and the rest (mature adults and young adults), will be rolled out sometime in mid-2021. Refer extracts from the website below. However, the MC is on a wishful thinking mode and hope the vaccines will be administered to most of the senior USMAA population in time for at least one Iftar, if not for the traditional two. As mentioned in our previous communication, the main reasons the MC decided to shelve all plans for physical events was to protect our seniors, the high-risk category, from this virus and to prevent the USMAA name from being tarnished, if a cluster were to result from an event hosted by us, given our practice of embracing each other. Our position was that we would resume physical events when the majority of the USMAA seniors had been vaccinated. One could almost argue that we could host the Iftars without the seniors or for the seniors to run the risk and attend anyway, but what's the point in having a birthday without the birthday boy or girl?

Vaccination Phases Explained

Where we are now



In **Phase 2A**, up to 7.9 million Australians will receive their COVID-19 vaccination! Here, you will be vaccinated alongside the following groups of individuals:

- ▶ Adults aged 50-69 years
- ▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 18-54
- ▶ Critical and high risk workers (including defence, fire, police, emergency services, etc.)

Right now, we are in Phase 1A. COVID-19 vaccinations are being offered to those who are at highest risk and are being organised by employers or care facilities. Check with your employer or care facility, if you feel you are eligible.

The rollout is expected to reach Phase 2A around the middle of 2021.

MC Decision

- If the vaccine were to roll out for the seniors at the end of March 2021 (as per my GP) and add two to three weeks for the immunity to build up, as per our resident USMAA Chief Health Officer Dr Shahla Vilcassim (if she accepts the role), which is ultra-wishful thinking again and there are no locally acquired C19 cases for seven (7) days leading up to the event IA, we could go ahead with an iftar
- Given that our chief volunteer and organiser for the iftar, Sis Nizra Haniffa and her team, would like to have the event at the front end of the month of Ramadan, we will plan for one event at least for now IA
- At present, the Monash Council only allows a maximum of 100 attendees for any function hosted at the Mulgrave Community Centre. Therefore, we will send out an email requesting for registrations, inviting members to attend, but preference will be given to current financial members, then on a first-to-apply basis. If the restrictions ease, we can absorb more participants to the event IA
- The MC will meet again in early April 2021 to assess the situation IA and circulate an email with the final decision

USMAA assets stored at members' premises

Recently, the MC has been approached by two members wanting to return USMAA assets. We would like to request to all members, who have such assets, to kindly get in touch with the MC to return them as we have now made space available in the Mulgrave Community Centre storage room. We would like to thank all members for storing our assets at their residences in support of the organisation.

Community and SL Affairs Advisory Group

USMAA has now received sufficient nominations for the above subcommittee. The nominees, in order of receipt of nomination forms, are:

- Bro Eddie Dole
- Sis Sithy Marikar
- Bro Nazeem Yakoob
- Bro Fahmi Haniffa

USMAA would like to extend its appreciation to the above members for constantly stepping up when required. May Allah bless them all. Ameen.

Jzk,..Falih Shums



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