



2011 Residents' Association Inc.

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PO Box 1513
Potts Point NSW 1335

14 October 2021

Dear Councillor,

COVID-19 and the 2011 Postcode Area

This week NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet declared Sydney once again open after more than three months of COVID-19 lockdown. This was done as NSW achieved a COVID-19 vaccination rate of 70%. He has since gone on to say that further freedoms would be announced as early as Monday 18 October, as the State moved toward 80% vaccination cover.

That means that pubs, clubs and other venues in Kings Cross and Potts Point are once again open for business.

However, here in Potts Point, our rates of first and second COVID-19 vaccination rates are lagging well behind the State average, as the NSW Government website on vaccination rates shows: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/data-and-statistics#toc-map-of-nsw-vaccinations-by-home-postcode-and-lga> .

The most recent figures available for Potts Point and Elizabeth Bay (the 2011 postcode area) show first and second dose vaccinations are at 50-60% average, well below the required 70% and 80% goal.

Our area is home to many people who would be considered vulnerable to COVID-19: the homeless, the elderly, low-rent boarding house residents, itinerant workers, and Indigenous Australians, as well as those who pass through our area on a daily basis for medical treatment (e.g. patients en-route to St Vincent's Hospital, or clients visiting the Medically Supervised Injection Centre in Darlinghurst Rd).

There is also an ongoing illicit drug trade on our streets, despite the best efforts of Kings Cross Police to disrupt it, which attracts a steady, small but significant mobile population.

We are concerned that a combination of comparatively low COVID-19 vaccination rates, the vulnerable and elderly in our neighbourhood, and a steady inflow of mobile itinerant workers (e.g. bike riders delivering food and groceries to apartment buildings), all against a backdrop of increasing patrons coming back to the area to take advantage of reopening pubs and clubs, may create a greater risk for increasing community transmission of COVID-19.

We ask Council:

1. *What steps are being taken to guarantee **COVID-19 compliance** at venues and other businesses in the 2011 postcode area to ensure all patrons are screened for double-vaccination status?*

We know from the experience of the recent past that many venues in the Kings Cross area failed regulatory compliance when it came to monitoring their patrons' safety, both inside their venues and when patrons left in a drunk and vulnerable condition. Will regular compliance checks, or random spot-checks, be performed by NSW Health Officers or Police to confirm that only those patrons with double vaccination status are entering venues in our area? What penalties will apply for those venues that fail to comply?

2. Is it possible for Council to liaise with NSW Health to establish local pop-up vaccination clinics to increase the currently low vaccination rates in the area?

There are currently some empty shop fronts in the area that could quickly be converted and used for that purpose. Given the fluid nature of a portion of the population in Kings Cross/Potts Point as stated above - a mix of homeless, vulnerable elderly, itinerant workers, etc, it should be an urgent priority to be able to access as many people in this area as possible, to increase vaccination rates.

Other established sites that could be considered for pop-up vaccination clinics to target local vulnerable groups are:

- Wayside Chapel, 29 Hughes St, Potts Point, tel. 9581 9100
- St John's Church Hall, 120 Darlinghurst Rd, tel. 9360 6844
- St Canice's, 28 Roslyn St, Elizabeth Bay, tel. 9358 5229
- Medically Supervised Injection Centre (MSIC), 66 Darlinghurst Rd, tel. 9360 1191
- Clinic 180, at 180 Victoria St, tel. 9357 1299
- Kirketon Road Centre, above Darlinghurst Fire Station on Victoria St, tel. 9360 2766

We appreciate any assistance that could be considered to increase vaccination rates in our area, and we acknowledge the enormous work that Council and the State Government has already done to make us COVID-safe.

Yours faithfully,

Carole Ferrier
Convenor
2011 Residents Association