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Crackers are back



An old tradition of cracker night is coming back albeit with a modern safer, more organised guise.

The days of vandals blowing up the neighbourhood letterboxes with penny bungers are gone with the tightly-controlled release of fireworks mainly for groups rather than individuals.

The main supplier of fireworks has reported an increase of 40 per cent in demand this year and many service clubs and community organisations have taken the opportunity to run fundraisers by hosting a family oriented fun event.

That was the case in the North-East, where there were about a dozen fireworks events registered through Worksafe Tasmania.

A Bridport Lions Club bonfire overwhelmed organisers with nearly 500 people attending the event off Barnbougle Road.

• Enjoying the sparks at a Ringarooma bonfire is Archie Stewart. Photo by Alice Forsyth

JAB WAIT QUESTIONS

BY TONY SCOTT

CONFUSION continues over vaccination eligibility and timetables for the Covid-19 jab in the North-East.

Scottsdale-based Ochre Medical Centre has a waiting list of about 500 patients due for Astra Zeneca vaccine, while there are reports of people getting into other special vaccine clinics nearby with just a couple of days' notice and there are claims of some patients getting random shots where there's been an oversupply of vaccine.

At some of the other centres there have been instances of people in their 20s

receiving jabs possibly without meeting the guidelines for phases 1A, 1B or 2A of the rollout, which are the only phases supposedly open.

Phase 1A was the first available and included quarantine workers, frontline health staff and staff in aged and disability care.

Phase 1B was for other health care workers, families of quarantine workers, emergency services personnel, adults with a disability, everyone over 70 years old and Aboriginal people over 50.

Phase 2A came into effect on May 3 and covers everyone over 50 and Aboriginal

people between 16 and 50.

Everyone over 50 is being encouraged to book a vaccination either through community clinics or participating general practices.

After general practices were included in dispensing to patients in phase 2A on May 17 the Scottsdale Centre, however, was inundated with requests for appointments leading to an overloading of its phone system.

The centre says it's working to administer the vaccine it is being given as efficiently as possible.

But its waiting list is expected to take

several weeks to work through.

There are reports that people, regardless of age, have been able to book a jab at Lilydale, George Town or the Launceston General Hospital or Launceston Medical Hub with minimal delay.

There are plans for Scottsdale to have a State-Government provided community clinic, as several other regional centres already have operating.

But yesterday the Scottsdale centre was "still getting ready", according to the Public Health Hotline, which could also not say what premises would be used when it does open.

Bookings would still need to be made to attend a community vaccine clinic, but to add to the uncertainty one of the southern clinics had run out of vaccine despite appointments apparently still being available on the website.



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