
Editorial



Vaccines – The End Game?

As we go to print, Australia is preparing to roll-out the first COVID-19 vaccines by late February 2021 to various priority groups, with a second vaccine to follow in March. While there are many questions still to be answered, including how long the protection will last, whether it prevents infection, the degree of protection against serious disease in different populations and age groups, and what protection will be afforded against the new variants, including the B.1.1.7, B.1.351 and P1 lineage variants, the vaccines do provide a potential way forward for terminating the rolling outbreaks around the world,

achieving some form of herd immunity and allowing a move back towards normality—the End Game.

Vaccines have played a key role in military operations since their introduction in the Great War, where typhoid vaccines were particularly effective, and further enhanced in World War 2. They remain a mainstay of military operations, including potential biological warfare threat environments in the 21st century. Vaccinating the Australian Defence Force front-line troops against COVID-19 will become a priority over the next 3–6 months, given their potential exposure during operations and possible spread to the wider Australian community.

Our first issue of 2021 contains a diverse range of articles from dental health, health and fitness training, and health promotion through to women's health. We continue to attract a good range of articles, including from overseas. We encourage all our readers to consider writing on their areas of military or veterans' health interest. We would particularly welcome papers based on our 2020 conference presentations, but welcome any articles across the broader spectrum of military health.

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Editor-in-Chief

- 1 Shanks GD. How World War 1 changed global attitudes to war and infectious diseases. *The Lancet*. 2014 Nov 8;384(9955):1699-707.
- 2 Walker AS. *Clinical Problems of War: Australia in the War of 1939-1945*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial. 1962.