

Looking to the future – COVID update

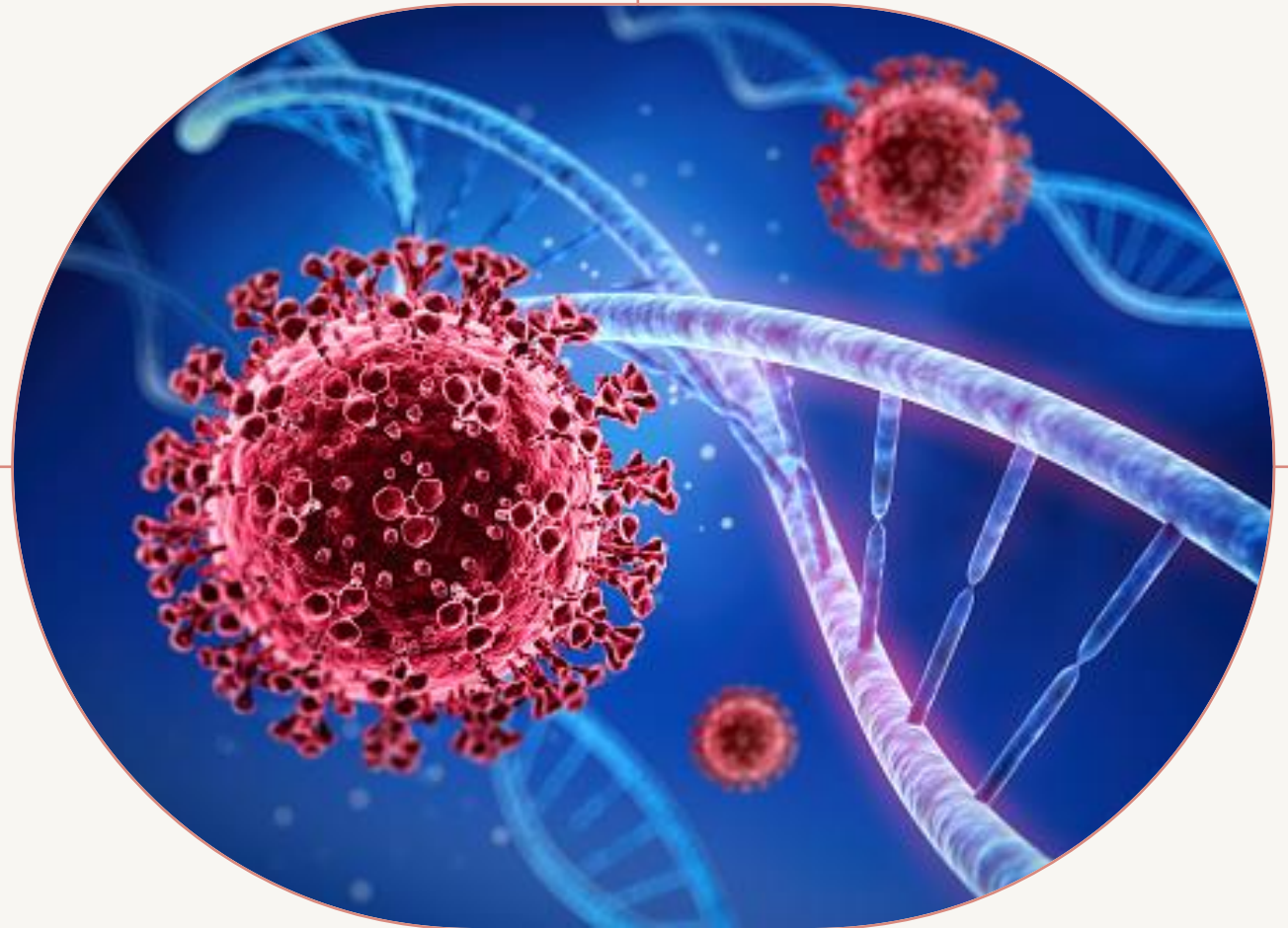
Associate Professor Fiona Robinson

30th November 2021



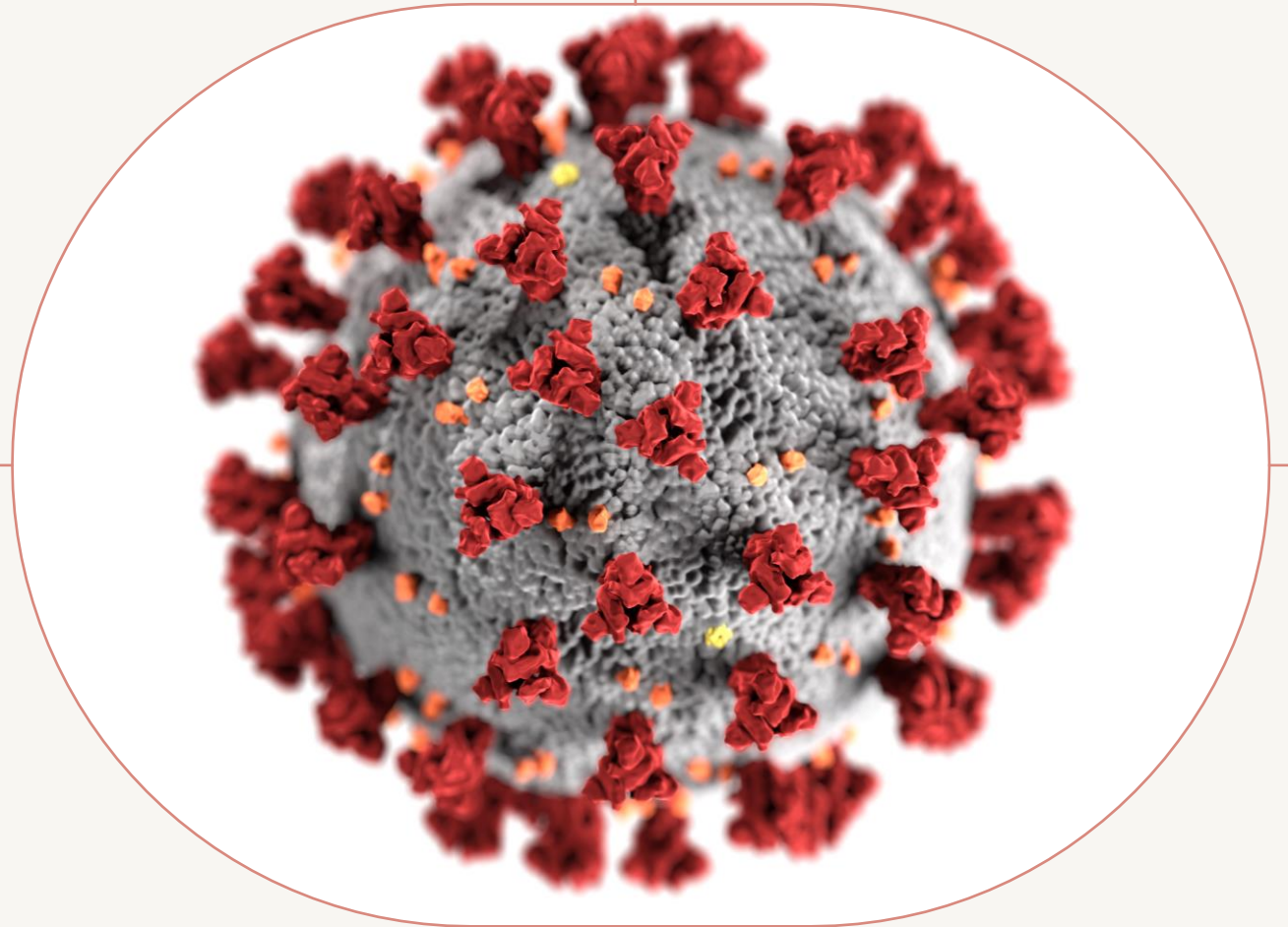
Outline of the presentation

- Acknowledgement of country
- Introduction
- COVID journey
- Northern Sydney strategy
- Virtual Hospital
- How we care for patients now
- Vaccination story
- How will it look in the future
- Questions



Introduction

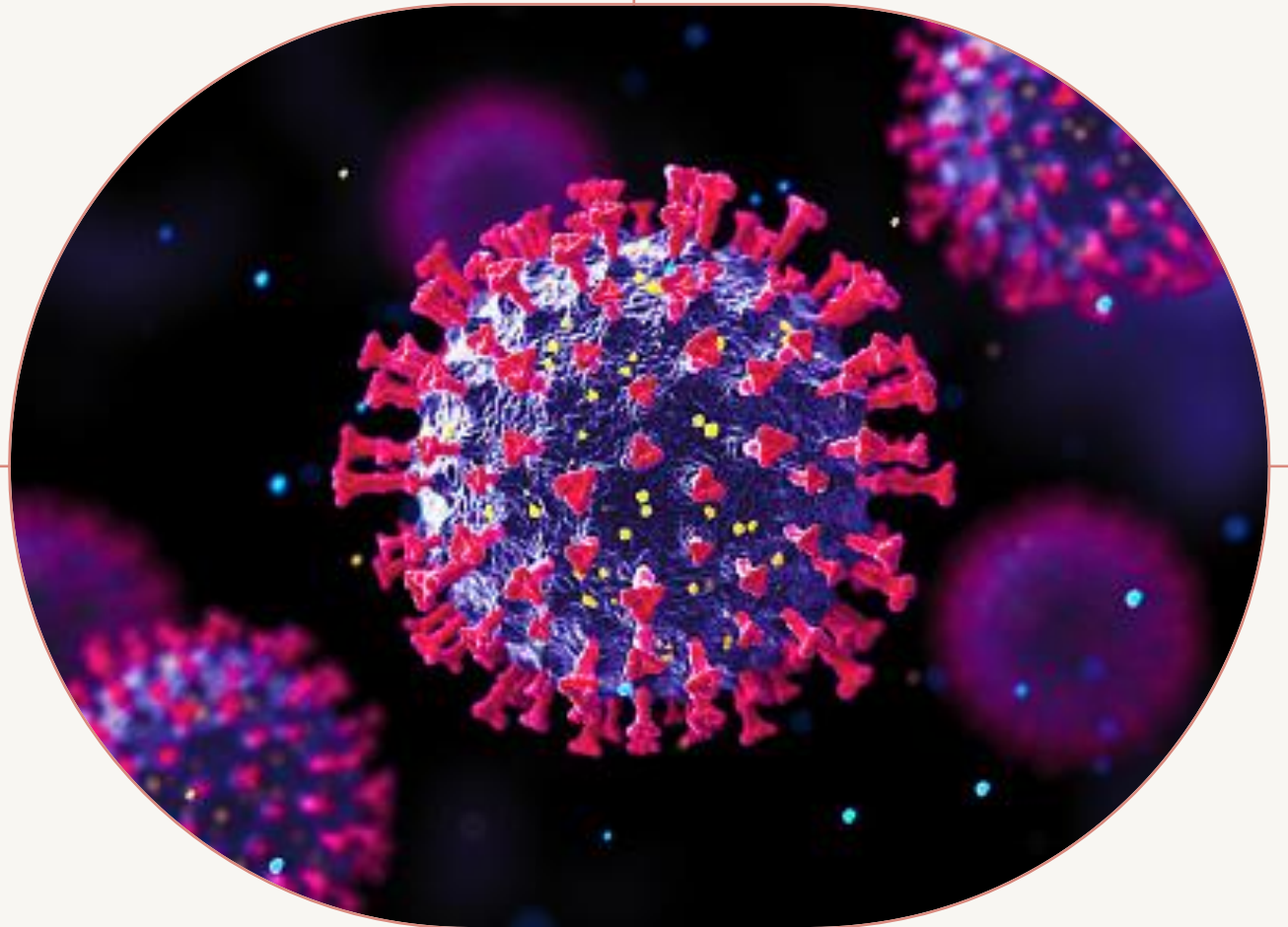
- GP
- Head, Specialty of General Practice, University of Sydney
- Head, Department of General Practice, RNSH
- Clinical lead, HealthPathways, SNPHN & NSLHD
- VMO, Virtual Hospital and Vaccination Hubs, NSLHD



COVID journey

- Started in Australia March 2020
- March - June 2020 (Alpha)
- November 2020 - February 2021
Northern Beaches (Alpha)
- June 2021 - ongoing (Delta)
- November 2021 - ongoing (Omicron)

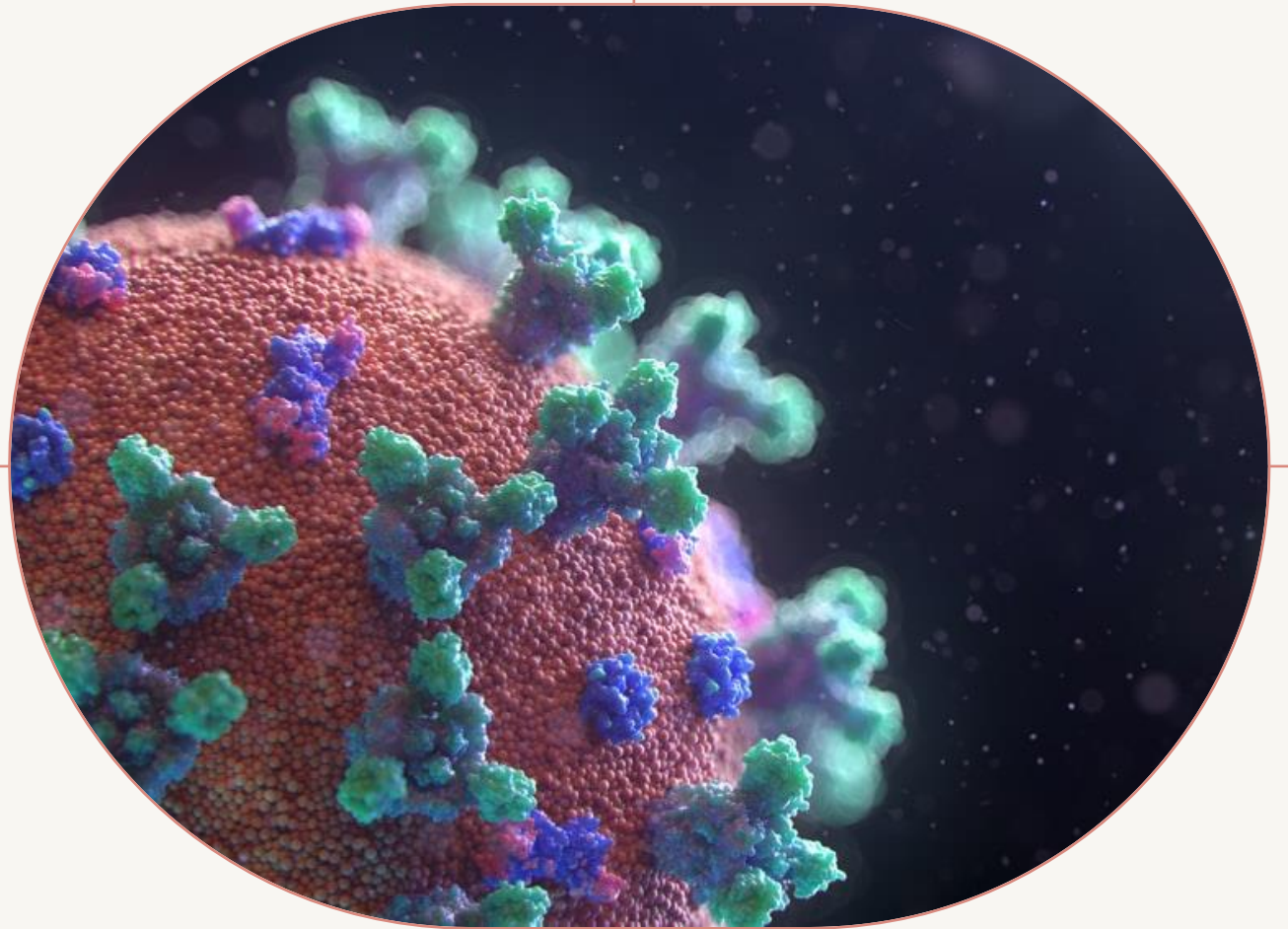
- Different demographics
- Different needs and services



NSW Statistics

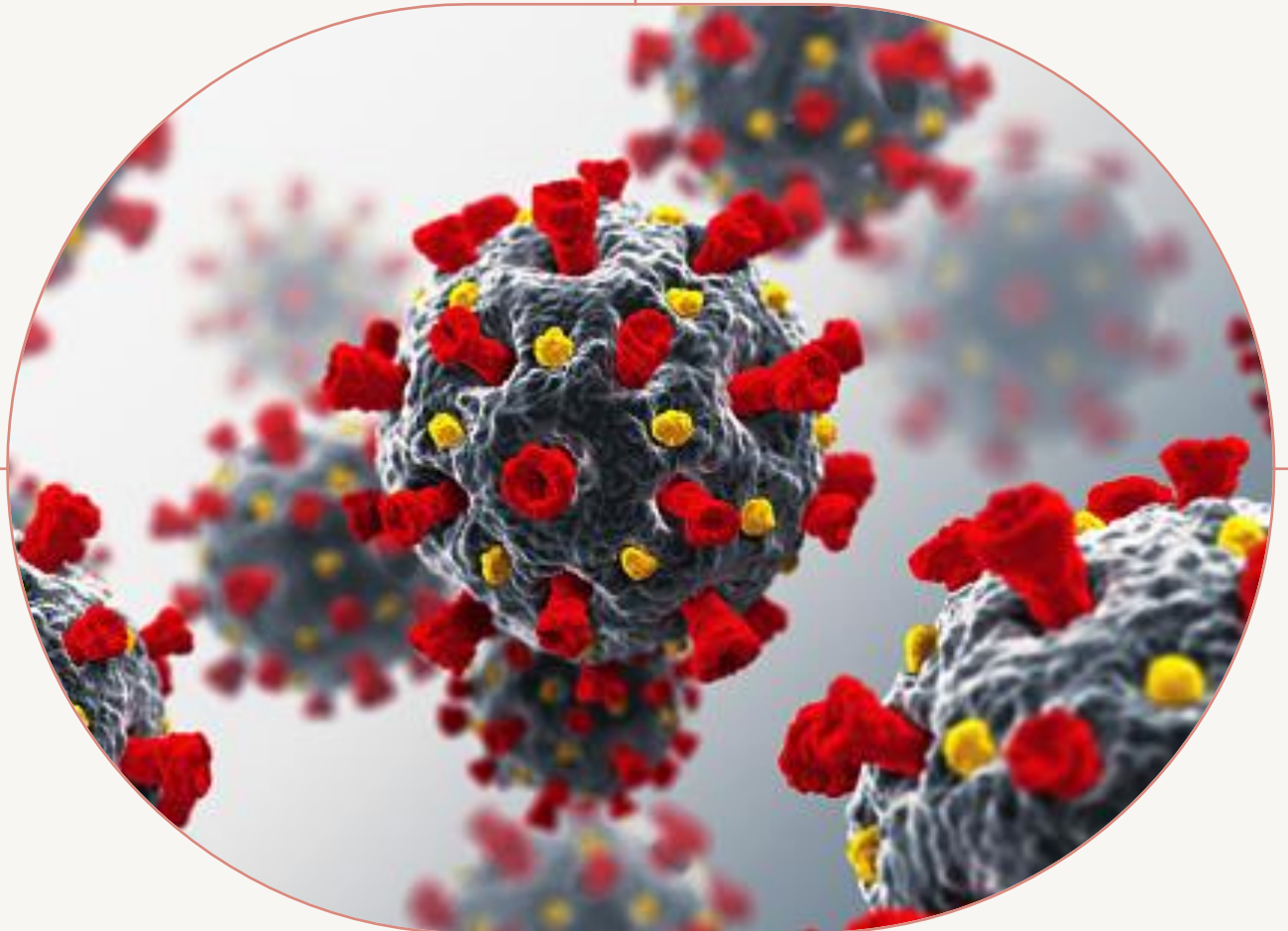
- 179+ new cases 30/11/21
- 27 in NSLHD
- 47,000+ tests 30/11/21
- 1504 new cases in the last week
- 2595 active cases in NSW
- 160 patients in hospital
- 26 in ICU
- 11 on ventilation

- Total cases in NSW so far: 81,310
- Total deaths in NSW: 625

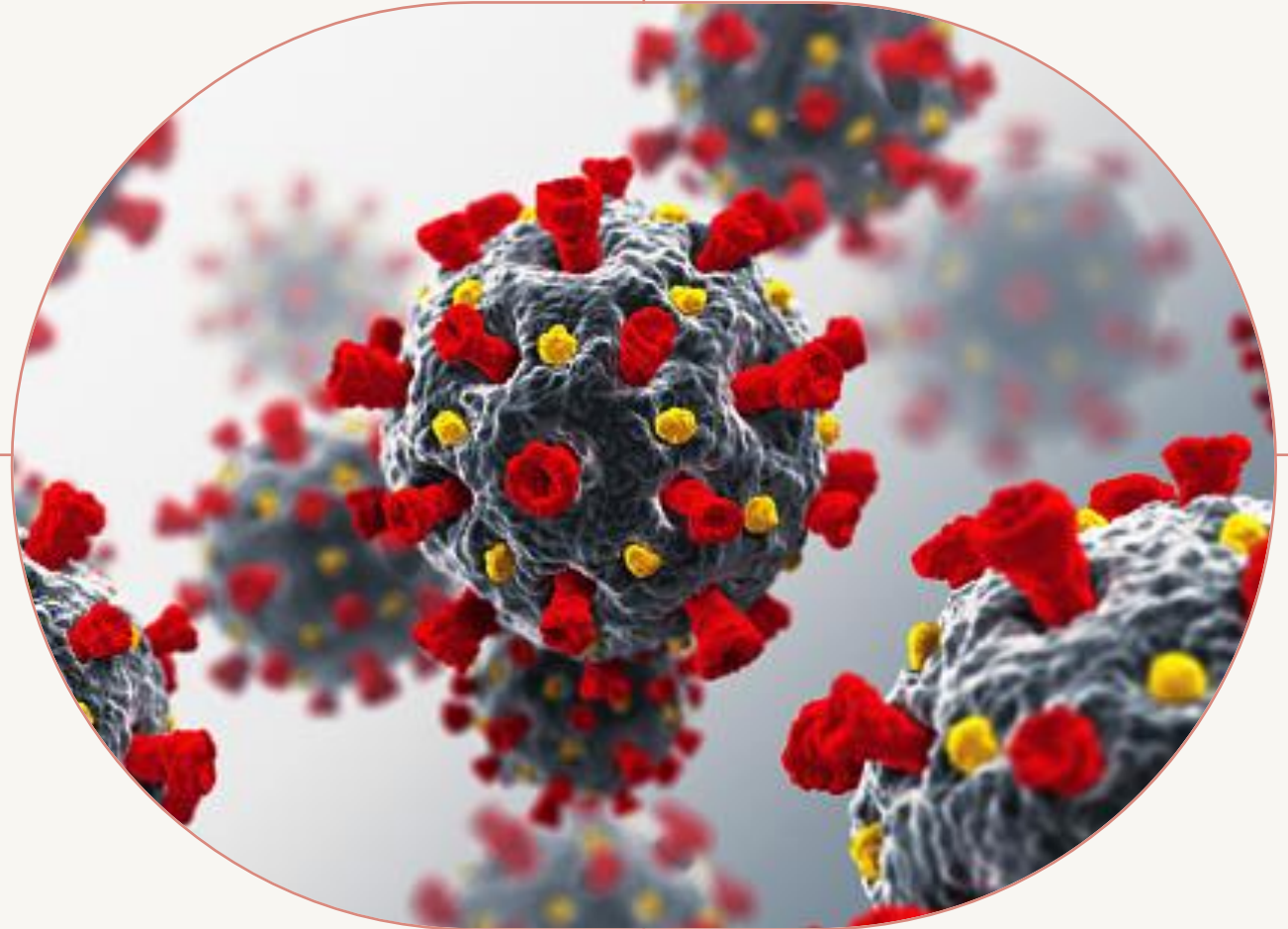


Northern Sydney Strategy – Virtual Hospital

- Based at RNSH
- Information comes from PHU (all +ve cases)
- Admitted as outpatients
- Risk stratification on admission determines initial level of care received
- Doctors (variety of specialties incl ID, ED, GP), nurses, social workers, admin

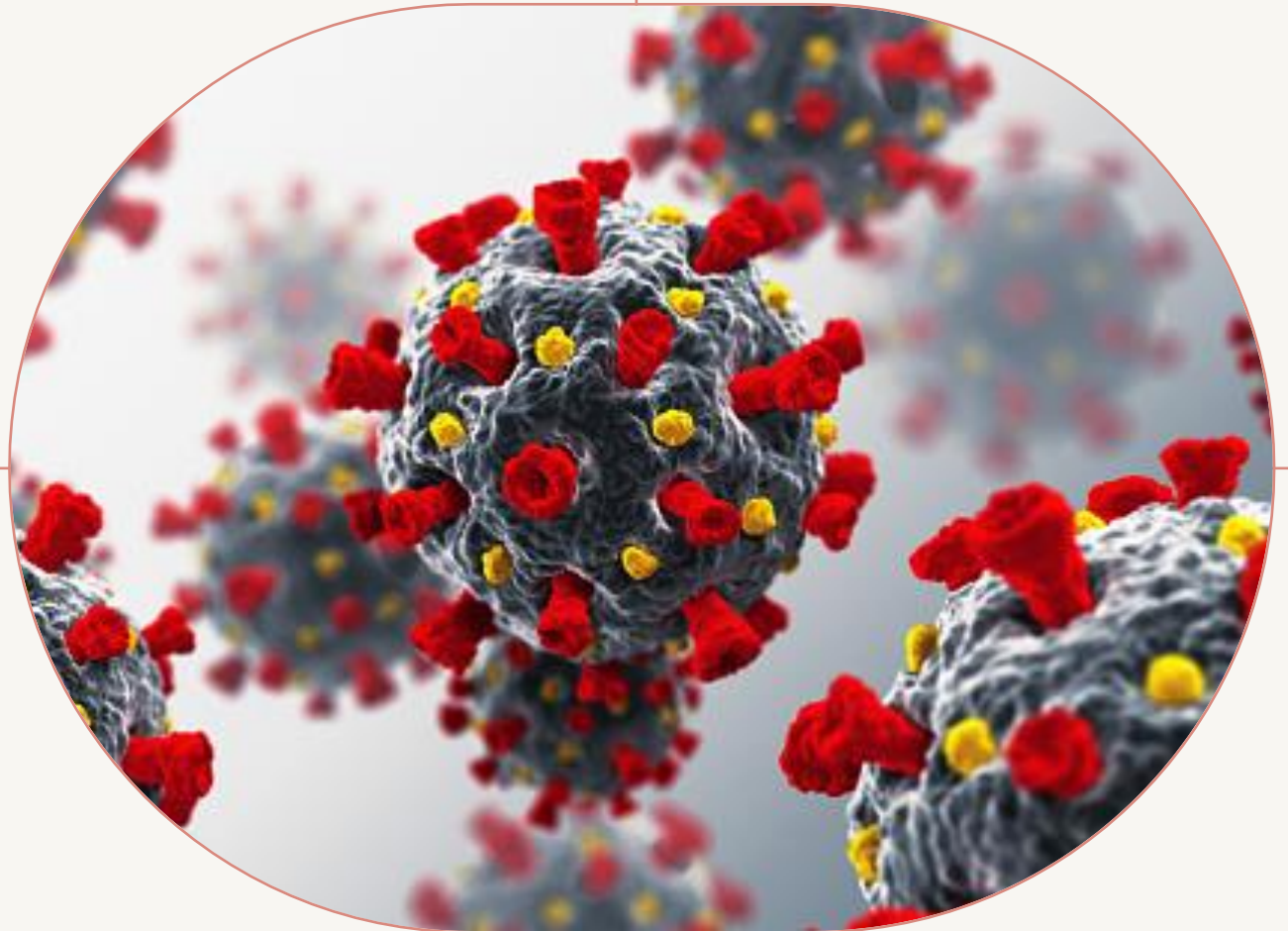


- Look after patients throughout their isolation period
- Subject to Public Health orders
- Ages range from 17 days to 98 years (so far)
- Other issues still looked after by GPs via telehealth
- 7 days a week 8am-8pm
- Consult other services as required incl. D&A, mental health, pharmacy, palliative care, Police liaison officers, Aboriginal health workers



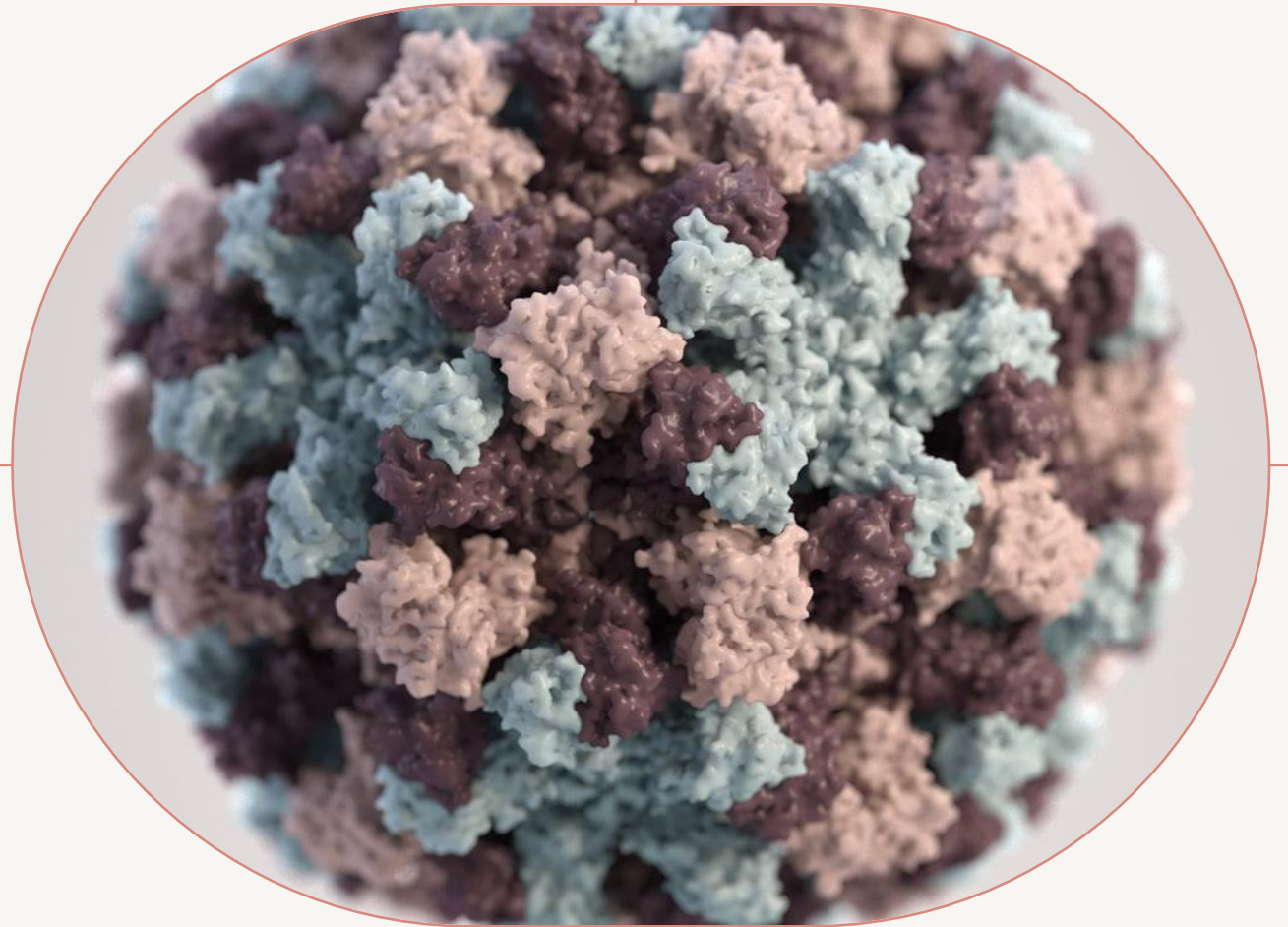
Risk of poor outcome

- >65 years
- Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait islanders
- Pregnant
- Comorbidities:
 - Lung disease
 - CV disease incl HT
 - Obesity BMI > 30
 - Diabetes
 - Renal failure
 - Immunocompromised
- Mental health history
- Concerns about personal safety



How we care for patients now

- Initial medical admission
- Risk of severity assigned
- High risk: daily medical calls/video
- Moderate risk: daily nursing calls
- Low risk: 2nd daily nursing calls
- All check symptoms, comorbidities, isolation
- Escalation and de-escalation occurs
- Oximeters used
- Home swab teams for testing family members
- Discharged and de-isolated



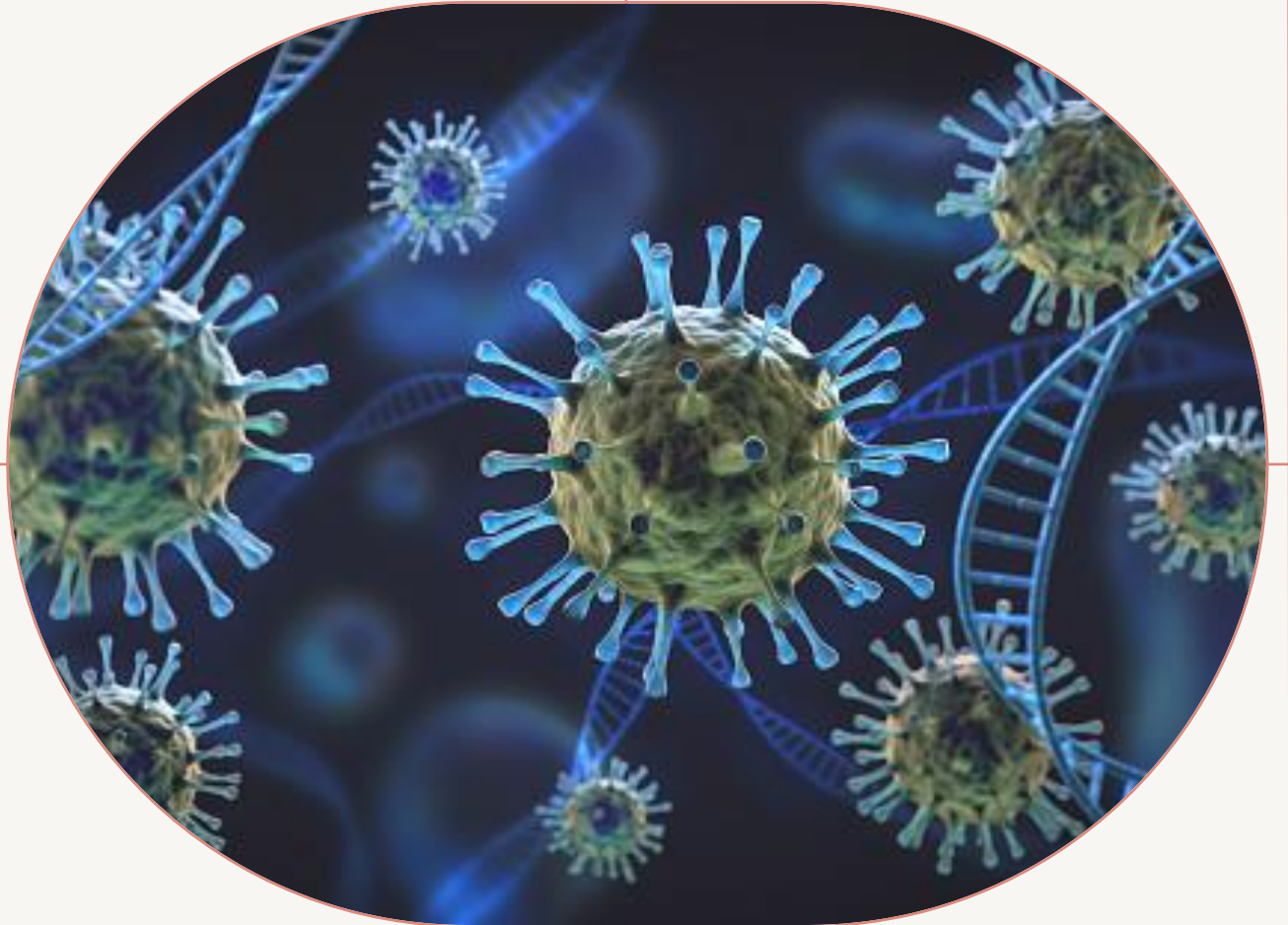
Vaccination story in NSW

- > 16 years 92.4% fully vaccinated
- 12-15 years 76.5% fully vaccinated
- Vaccines administered:
- NSW Health: 4,148,036
- GPs and others: 8,710, 489
- **TOTAL: 12, 858, 525**

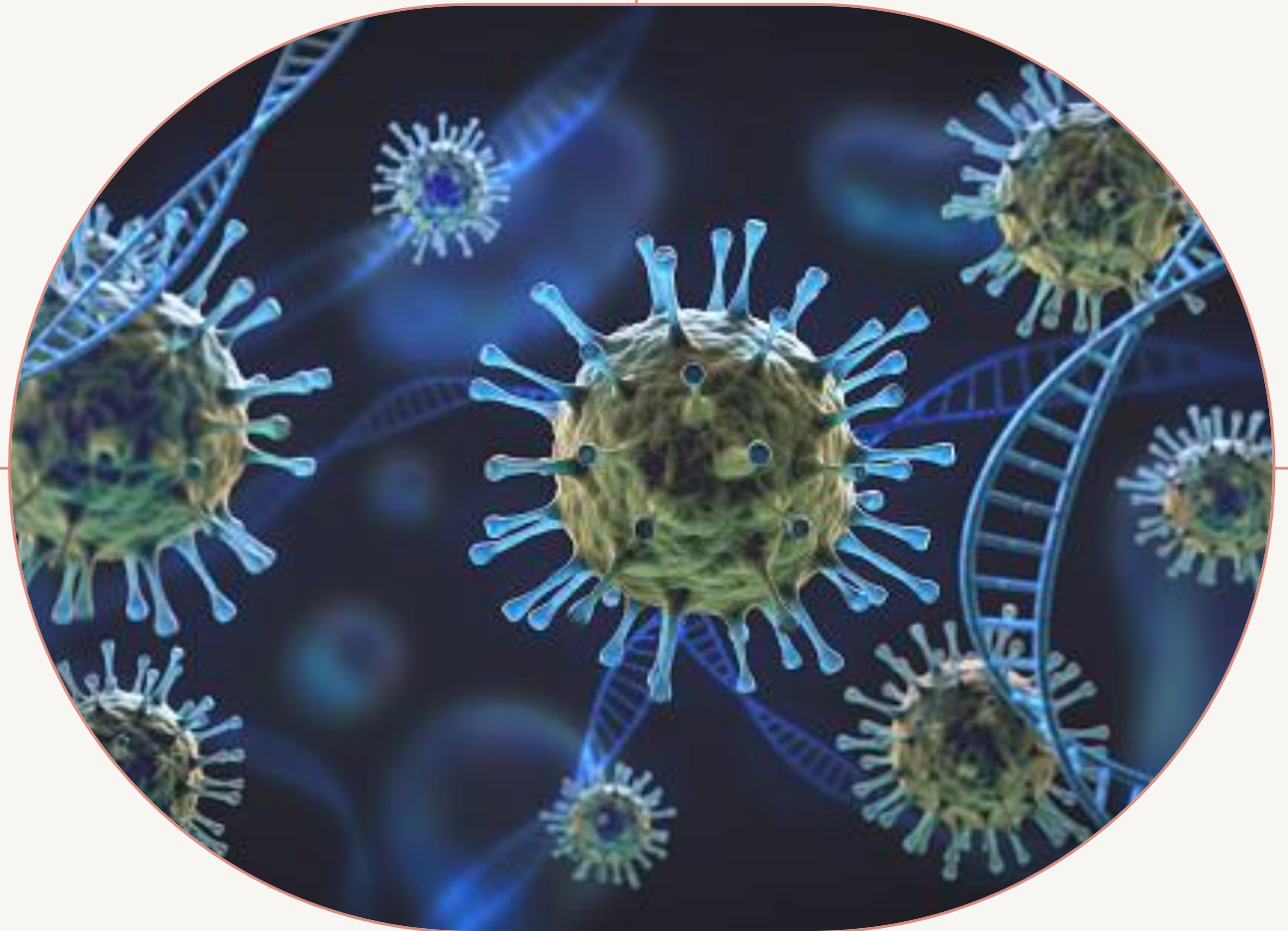


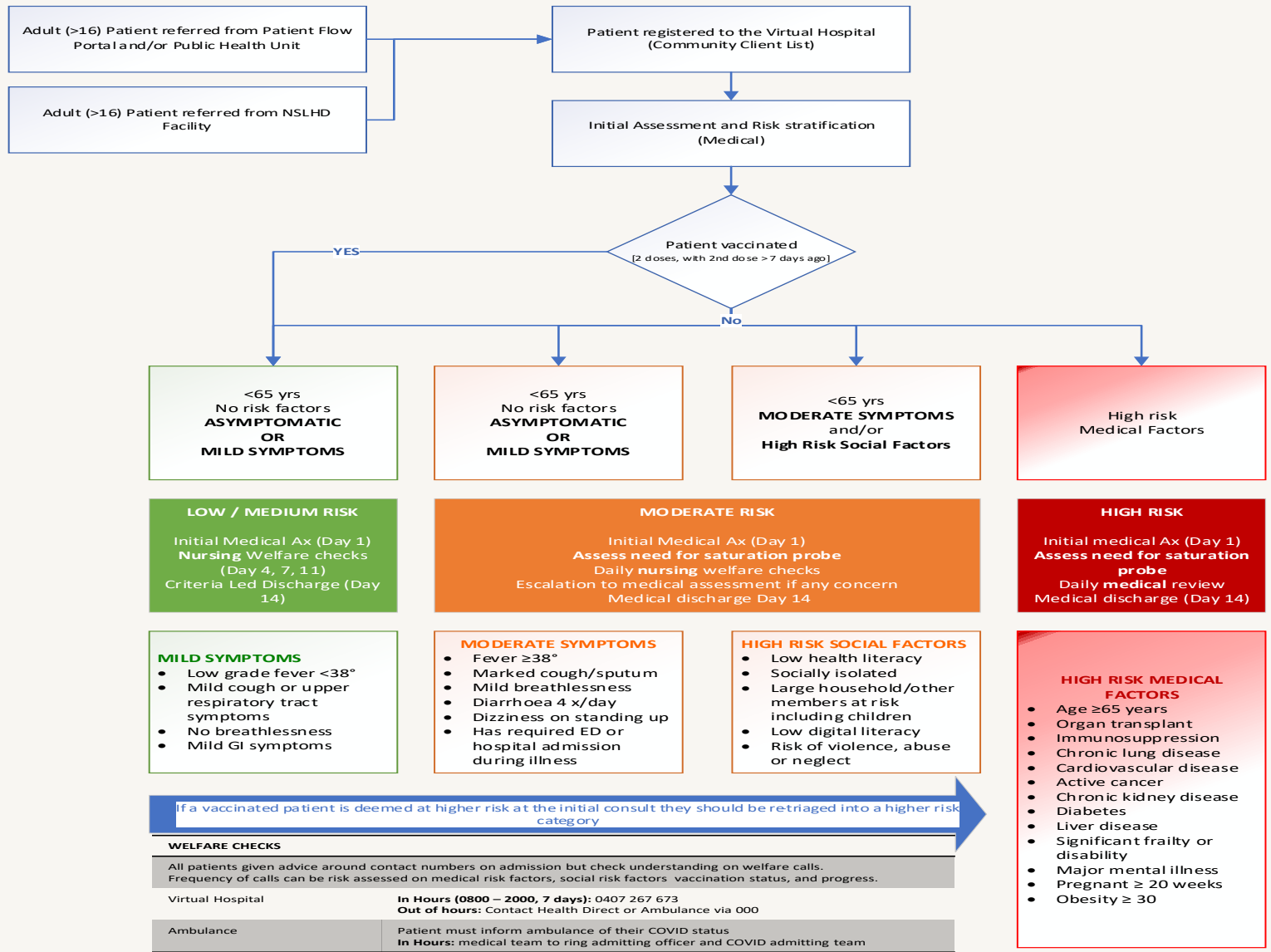
What does the future look like?

- Care will move to the community setting
- Initially low risk patients will be triaged by Health Direct and assigned to GPs
- (each LHD will differ in their implementation)
- In NSLHD pilot roll out- Low risk:
 - <65 years
 - Fully vaccinated
 - No comorbidities
 - No regular GP
- If low risk, patients need admission, calls on days 4,7,11 and then discharge



- If clinical/other concern, patient can be transferred back to Virtual Hospital
- Moderate and high risk will (initially) stay within the Virtual Hospital
- Plan by Jan 2022, medium risk patients will also move to GP care and patients will be cared for by their own GP
- In-home services need to be fully operational
- Support to help with roll out:
 - GP education sessions
 - Health pathways/other resources
 - GP hotline
 - Awaiting oral treatment use





Strategies for ongoing management

- Booster doses - NOW!
- Funding support for more community services
- Continue to be vigilant:
 - Handwashing
 - Masks
 - Physical distancing if possible
 - Testing if symptomatic
 - Stay home if sick



First image of Omicron variant

- No evidence that this leads to any more serious disease
- If anything, it's suggesting a lesser form of disease, especially in the vaccinated population.
- We need to work through the science, not emotion!
- More will be known within the next 2 weeks



Thank you!

