Day Month Year

Your Name

Address Line 1

City State Post Code

Email address

MP Name

Title

Address/email

Dear INSERT MP NAME,

My name is X and I am an immunodeficient patient / a carer to an immunodeficient patient / a concerned citizen whose life has been touched by immunodeficiency.

I’m getting in touch with you in relation to the need for complimentary access to and/or subsidised Rapid Antigen Tests for immunodeficient patients and their carers.

*Insert personal story: Full Name, age, suburb of person affected. Name of immunodeficiency you were diagnosed with and when. List first signs and symptoms. Current situation in regards to COVID-19, the challenges and expected outcome.*

As clearly stated on the Australian Department of Health website, patients with immunodeficiencies are extremely vulnerable to severe disease when infected with COVID-19. Currently the COVID-19 testing protocols in place are insufficient in protecting immunodeficient patients.

There are two key issues that are of concern:

* **Access to and distribution of Rapid Antigen Tests for immunodeficient patients.**

Immunodeficient patients need access to complimentary or subsidised bulk Rapid Antigen Tests as they need to test support workers, close contacts and family on a regular basis. These patients must also be able to test themselves if they are concerned about potential exposure as they must receive treatment within a very narrow timeframe to try to prevent serious disease. The declining access and delays to PCR tests means it could be too late if these patients are unable to be tested immediately.

Immunodeficient patients also require a distribution plan for receiving these tests in a way that won’t put their health at risk. Many patients that are immunodeficient and/or receive NDIS don’t qualify for concession cards and do not qualify for a government pension. This precludes them from the complimentary tests that should become available in the near future.

Having to pay for multiple RAT tests adds another expense, on top of existing medical bills for essential medical treatment and medications (often not covered by the pharmaceutical benefits scheme), adding an additional layer of financial stress.

* **Availability and supply of Rapid Antigen Tests for carers of immunodeficient patients:**

Many immunodeficient patients rely on carers and risk exposure to COVID-19. Immunodeficient patients need to have those close to them tested regularly and there is a need for carers to receive a bulk supply of RATs because of this. Currently, effective testing for carers is difficult to access and costly to individuals. In addition to this, many carers don’t have concession cards. Many immunodeficient patients are not feeling safe enough to accept the help that they need from their carers because of insufficient testing and are being forced to isolate indefinitely, which may contribute to significant mental health concerns.

I urge the state/federal government to provide greater access to and/or subsidised Rapid Antigen Tests for immunodeficient patients and their carers/support workers.

Please, put these important issues faced by our nation’s vulnerable immunodeficient patients on your agenda and support the work of the Immune Deficiency Foundation Australia [www.idfa.org.au](http://www.idfa.org.au)

I look forward to your reply, with much anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

SIGN

NAME IN FULL

CONTACT DETAILS FOR REPLY