



## Newsletter

### Issue 3, December 2018

#### Update from AusVaxSafety Coordinator

This year has been very busy for AusVaxSafety, and in the final issue of the newsletter for 2018 I'd like to reflect on some of the highlights:

- Completion of the first annual report from AusVaxSafety, which summarises information from parents and carers who responded to an SMS about their child's health a few days after receiving a vaccine at routine National Immunisation Program schedule points in 2016-17.
- Development and launch of the new AusVaxSafety logo
- A record season for active surveillance of influenza vaccine safety, with over 165,000 adults and children of all ages participating in surveillance and confirming that the vaccines available in 2018 are safe
- Successful recruitment of specialist immunisation clinics to the national AEFI-CAN clinical database, with John Hunter Hospital, Queensland Children's Hospital, The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, and Monash Health immunisation clinics all using the database.
- Expansion of AusVaxSafety to include active surveillance of adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) with maternal pertussis-containing vaccines, as well as HPV vaccine
- Dissemination of AusVaxSafety findings at several conferences and high-level meetings, as well as a manuscript published in BMJ Open detailing AusVaxSafety's active surveillance of 2017 seasonal influenza vaccine safety
- Completion of the first AusVaxSafety report detailing herpes zoster vaccine safety based on NPS MedicineInsight general practice data

The NCIRS AusVaxSafety team would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the hard work and contributions of the AusVaxSafety consortium in 2018 – thank you!

Chloé Damon, AusVaxSafety Coordinator

## News and events

[NCIRS Seminar: Vaccine safety and adverse events following immunisation: a practical approach.](#)

In the September NCIRS seminar series, Associate Professor Nigel Crawford, Director of Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Vaccination In the Community ([SAEFVIC](#)), and Dr Lucy Deng, General Paediatrician and Staff Specialist at [NCIRS](#), gave an overview of common, expected, and rarer serious adverse reactions following immunisation, as well as the management and reporting of these adverse events. The video from the webinar is now available to view on the [NCIRS](#) website.

## AusVaxSafety publication

AusVaxSafety's active surveillance of 2017 seasonal influenza vaccine safety has been published by BMJ Open: [Active surveillance of 2017 seasonal influenza vaccine safety: an observational cohort study of individuals aged 6 months and older in Australia](#). This paper by lead author Alexis Pillsbury provides detailed analysis of influenza vaccine safety data from more than 73,000 all-age influenza vaccine recipients with evidence of comparable brand-specific safety profiles, while highlighting an increased, albeit low and expected rate of adverse events associated with concomitant vaccination.

## SmartVax in the media

Great coverage in the media last month for AusVaxSafety and SmartVax, with three articles covering Dr Alan Leeb's presentation at the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners annual conference on the Gold Coast in November. Articles can be found at [The Sydney Morning Herald](#), [the AGE](#) and [The Medical Republic](#).

## HPV conference

AusVaxSafety had a poster on display at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Papillomavirus Conference in Sydney on 6 October. NCIRS Director Professor Kristine Macartney also presented a plenary talk: "*Maximising vaccine safety and confidence: AusVaxSafety, Australia's novel active vaccine safety surveillance system*".

## National AEFI-CAN clinical database update

[AEFI-CAN](#) have hit another milestone with the addition of John Hunter Hospital in New South Wales to the national AEFI-CAN clinical database. The database continues to grow with plans to onboard more specialist immunisation clinics in 2019.

### [Vaccine safety in Australia AusVaxSafety summary report 2016-17](#)

The *Vaccine safety in Australia AusVaxSafety summary report 2016-17* is now available on the Department of Health website. The report shows how parents and carers responded to an SMS about their child's health a few days after their vaccination, and includes infographics providing a visual representation of the results at each schedule point in the National Immunisation Program (NIP) in Australia in 2016-17. Read the AusVaxSafety summary report 2016-17 [here](#).

### [Completion of active surveillance of zoster vaccine safety](#)

In the context of no safety signals identified during two years of surveillance in 18,000 participants, AusVaxSafety concluded active surveillance of zoster vaccine safety in November 2018.

### [New AusVaxSafety website in progress](#)

Work is underway to develop the new AusVaxSafety website and we anticipate launching in early 2019. This has been a huge project and we thank all our collaborators for their efforts, particularly the AusVaxSafety Communication Working Group for their advice and direction.

## About AusVaxSafety

Led by NCIRS and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, AusVaxSafety is a world-leading national active vaccine safety system.

AusVaxSafety components include active surveillance using solicited feedback from consumers; nationally collaborative clinical investigation and management of complex adverse events following immunisation via AEFI-CAN; and novel zoster vaccine safety analysis using National Prescribing Service (NPS) MedicineInsight data.

AusVaxSafety is a collaboration between immunisation providers, private enterprise, research institutions, state and territory governments and the Australian Government Department of Health. This collaboration has significantly enhanced Australia's ability to monitor, detect and respond to potential vaccine safety signals.

**AusVaxSafety is made possible by the contributions of our collaborators and funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.**

