



National Indigenous Immunisation message stick newsletter February 2018

Ample supplies of Zostavax[®] vaccine available now nationally for people 70- 79 years

Since November 2016, a free shingles vaccine program has been funded under the Australian Government's National Immunisation Program (NIP) for 70 year olds, with a time-limited catch-up program for people 71 to 79 years old until October 2021.

At the commencement of the program, the interest in the vaccine was unprecedented. Early shortages have been addressed and there is now ample stock available to meet ongoing demand under the program.

Zostavax[®] is available nationally and the vaccine is readily accessible to immunisation providers.

To assist in promoting the program and ensuring people 70 to 79 years old are protected against shingles, it is now timely that providers:

- Follow up with patients or other eligible people 70 to 79 years old who would benefit from the vaccine and who may have missed out earlier in the program.
- Promote the vaccine to eligible people 70 to 79 years old through displaying the program posters and brochures in your clinic or health care facility.
- Report vaccinations to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

Zostavax[®] supplies can be ordered through the same process currently used to order vaccines for the NIP through your state or territory Health Department.

For further information, clinical advice and promotional materials for the National Shingles Vaccination Program are available for download online at the Department of Health's [immunisation website](#)



ACWY Meningococcal vaccine

The Australian Government announced it will add a quad-strain meningococcal vaccine to the National Immunisation Program. The new vaccine Nimenrix® covers against the A,C, W and Y strains and will be added to the NIP ahead of the next peak meningococcal season. Further details about how this vaccine will be implemented will be made available as soon as possible.

Two new ground -breaking flu vaccines for the elderly

The two new vaccines will be available in April through the National Immunisation Program following a recommendation from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee.

These new trivalent (three strain) vaccines work in over 65s by generating a strong immune response and are more effective for this age group in protecting against influenza.

We encourage all Australians aged over six months old to get a flu vaccination this year before the peak season starts in June.

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/ground-breaking-flu-vaccines-protect-millions-aussie>

It's almost time for your annual

Influenza/flu vaccination!

Talk to your doctor now.



Wonderful support shown in response to the Meningococcal Campaign



AHCWA staff members, Stacey and Veronica recently visited the Central Communities including, Warburton, Warakurna, Blackstone, Jameson, Tjirrkarli, Tjukurla, Wanarn, Wingellina, Cosmo Newberry, Punmu, Jigalong, Parngurr, Kunawarrtji, and Kiwirrkurra to help with a vaccination campaign planned to protect the people living in Central Communities from the recent outbreak of Meningococcal W and to help prevent further spread of the disease.

Under this program, the Meningococcal A, C,W,Y vaccine was offered to all people aged 2 months and older living in these communities.

The team involved were truly amazed at the way the Communities got behind the campaign and encouraged all people, young and old, to have their Meningococcal needles.

The children were incredibly brave and if upset, the families would speak in language to the children.



It was obvious to the team that the children were really listening and took in what the family was saying about how important the needle was.

AHCWA would like to thank all the people from Communities in the NG Lands and Pilbara for the wonderful support that was shown in response to the Meningococcal vaccination campaign.

Meningococcal symptoms can include:

- Fever, headache, vomiting/nausea and neck stiffness, particularly in older patients
- Irritability, poor feeding or lethargy; particularly in younger children
- Drowsiness, confusion and severe muscle or joint pain
- The blotchy rash is also a symptom, but may not appear in all



Fever



Headache



Drowsiness
or confusion



Neck stiffness
or joint pains



Rash of
purple spots



Dislike of
bright lights



Vomiting



What should people do if they have any of these symptoms?

Go to your health clinic or doctor immediately. Antibiotics need to be given as soon as possible if the health staff think you have meningococcal disease.

Didja know AusVaxSafety exceeds 200 SmartVax sites nationwide!



SmartVax is a software program using SMS technology, designed to actively monitor the safety of all vaccines given in general practice and vaccination clinics in Australia. SmartVax is free for practices, fully automated and runs in the background, requiring no interaction.

Smartvax active vaccine surveillance for Aboriginal Medical Services and General Practices.

- A wonderful service to your patients and very popular with patients.
- Improved duty of care following immunisation.
- All vaccines, all ages



- A quality improvement initiative.
- Fully integrated and automated SMS from practice management software ie no ad-ditional data entry: SmartVax is currently compatible with: - Best Practice, Medical Director, MedTech32, ZedMed, PractiX, WINVaccs, ImPS
- Contribute to world leading AusVaxSafety vaccine safety surveillance with de-identified data regularly reported to Commonwealth Department of Health and TGA
- AusVaxSafety vaccine safety data is posted on open website for GP's, nurses and the community able to see vaccine safety data in near real time.

Influenza: From 1 April 2017 to 3 September 2017, 102,663 individuals aged 6 months and older were enrolled for influenza vaccine surveillance. With an over 70% response rate, 73,560 participants consistently replied that any events after vaccination were generally mild and within expected ranges.

Zoster: As of 3 December 2017, a total of 10,739 persons aged 70–79 years have participated in zoster surveillance since 1 November 2016, yielding a response rate of 68%.

Pertussis: As of 10 December 2017, 29,592 children aged 12 months–<7 years have participated in pertussis surveillance since 14 March 2016, yielding a response rate of 72.4%.

As of December 2017, there are 201 SmartVax sites nationwide. A live map can now be accessed on the [SmartVax website](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

16th National Immunisation Conference

Immunisation for all: Gains, gaps and goals

Tuesday 5 to Thursday 7 June 2018

Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide SA



<https://www.nic2018.com/>

Who is the National Indigenous Immunisation Coordinator (NIIC)

1. Where do you work and what is your role? I work at the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance at Westmead Children's Hospital. My role involves working with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Immunisation Network to advise the National Immunisation Committee, help with development and delivery of effective strategies for combating infectious diseases and the uptake of immunisation amongst Aboriginal communities through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) and support those involved in providing immunisation services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

2. What Nation are you from? I am a proud Barkindji woman from far Western NSW – grew up in Ivanhoe and have family in Wilcannia, Broken Hill, Mildura, Wagga Wagga and Yamba that just the mob I grew up with, still to this day I'm meeting new family members and re- connecting.

3. What is your passion? I am very passionate to ensure that local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities receive the best possible outcomes today, but also the way in which immunisations service are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities for future generations.

4. What is your favourite place? Although I love going bush to visit the mob and sit around the open fires, I now call Newcastle home where I've lived and worked



on the lands of the Awabakal people for over 20 years. While no city could ever be perfect I think Newcastle is close to it – just two hours' drive north of Sydney, with beautiful soft yellow sand and miles and miles of sparkling blue coastline, 35mins drive to Williamstown airport where I can hop on a plane and fly direct to Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide or Melbourne.

5. What is your favourite meal? Thai Penang chicken, but I do enjoy a nice kangaroo curry with freshly cooked Johnny cakes.

6. What are five things you can't do without? My son, affectionately known as my SonShine, our dog family Titan, family & work family and laughter.

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Acknowledgment and thanks to NACCHO Aboriginal Health news alerts for AHCWA Meningococcal vaccination campaign good news story.