



Vaccine Update 497 – Free Influenza vaccine program and HPV catch up reminder

Free influenza vaccine program

This winter influenza season, the Government of Western Australia is asking more Western Australians to '[Be Wise, Immunise.](#)' The [2026 Winter Strategy](#) targets were set to encourage as many people as possible to get vaccinated. Visit [Access Health](#) to review progress towards achieving these [targets](#).

A reminder that the **Free Influenza Vaccine Program ends on 31 July 2026**. This program has been in place since 1 May 2026, providing free influenza vaccines for all individuals aged 12 to less than 65 years who are not eligible for a free influenza vaccine through the National Immunisation Program.

[Subscribe](#) to the WA Department of Health [VirusWAtch](#) newsletter to track influenza notification rates.

HPV vaccination catch up reminder

As a trusted immunisation provider, you play a vital role in **protecting young Australians from vaccine-preventable HPV-related cancers**, including cervical cancer, and your advice is crucial in influencing vaccination decisions.

- [Cervical Cancer](#) is almost entirely preventable and caused by [human papilloma virus \(HPV\)](#), a common but highly contagious sexually transmitted infection.
- In Australia, around [950 women](#) are expected to be diagnosed with cervical cancer this year; an estimated 250 will die from it.
- Australia's [national HPV vaccination program](#) has significantly reduced HPV infections and is credited with saving lives.

- The [HPV vaccine](#) is offered to all [school](#) aged Year 7 adolescents, both male and female, across Western Australia (WA). For those who haven't received a HPV vaccine, a free catch-up dose is available up until the age of 26.
- Australia has a [target](#) to eliminate cervical cancer by 2035, with a goal of 90% HPV vaccination coverage by 2030.

Many adolescents may have missed their HPV vaccination at school due to illness or being absent from school. It is important to **routinely [check the immunisation status](#) of your patients aged 12 to less than 26 years** while they remain eligible for free HPV vaccination.

HPV vaccination [coverage in adolescents at 15 years](#) of age in WA is lower than the 90% coverage target. In order to eliminate cervical cancer, it is crucial to increase [HPV vaccine uptake](#) in those aged 12 to less than 26 years.

While the majority of HPV vaccines will be administered as part of the [School-based Immunisation Program](#), other health professionals play an important role in ensuring access to vaccination for adolescents who miss the opportunity to be vaccinated at school. By doing so, you are supporting improved vaccine coverage across Australia.

This includes:

- ensuring all of your patients are up-to-date with their vaccines by using an appropriate recall system.
- administering the HPV vaccine to individuals aged 12 to less than 26 years who missed out on getting it at school.
- educating parents and carers about the benefits and risks of the HPV vaccine through [supportive conversations](#).
- informing your patients to notify your clinic if they wish to receive the vaccine for themselves or their child so you can order stock if necessary.
- recording HPV doses administered to the [Australian Immunisation Register \(AIR\)](#).

[Subscribe](#) to the WA Department of Health Vaccine Updates newsletter to stay up-to-date on important immunisation news and changes to immunisation programs and vaccines.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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