



Vaccine Update # 496 – RSV vaccination, diphtheria outbreak, FluMist expiry, vaccine safety in twin pregnancies, new translated childhood immunisation resources, SBIP SMS reminders, aged care webinar recording available

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination

RSV season has commenced in Western Australia (WA), with [RSV notifications](#) and hospitalisations higher compared to the previous four-year average. Almost half of the notifications have been among children aged less than 5 years.

Many newborns and infants still need protection from RSV. The WA Department of Health encourages providers to recommend Abrysvo® to pregnant women from 28 weeks' gestation, and

Beyfortus® to parents of [eligible infants](#). There is ample supply of RSV immunisation products available for ordering via [Onelink](#).

It is not too late to immunise infants ahead of peak RSV season. Beyfortus® provides almost immediate protection against RSV infection and remains highly effective for at least 5 months. See here for more information about RSV immunisation: [WA Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Immunisation Programs](#)

Diphtheria outbreak vaccination

There have now been [179 cases](#) of diphtheria reported as part of the outbreak in regional WA, with the majority occurring among Aboriginal people. Cases have been reported in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields, with recent transmission also identified in the Midwest region.

A [media statement](#) was released on 03 July 2026 with an update on the outbreak response, including expansion of the vaccination program to the Midwest and extension of eligibility for booster vaccines to all Aboriginal people living in WA.

Immunisation providers located in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields or Midwest regions may now order **outbreak-funded** diphtheria-containing vaccines via [Onelink](#) for eligible individuals as per the updated [WA Immunisation Schedule](#) and [WA Aboriginal Immunisation Schedule](#).

To support access to vaccination, Aboriginal Medical Services, Community Health and Public Health Units, and pre-approved general practices outside these regions may also now order outbreak-funded diphtheria-containing vaccines for eligible individuals.

All immunisation providers can support the outbreak response by:

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- ensuring children and adolescents are up to date with scheduled diphtheria-containing vaccines under the National Immunisation Program, including school-based programs, via proactive review at healthcare encounters

Immunisation providers with access to outbreak-funded vaccine stock can also support the outbreak response by:

- offering outbreak-funded diphtheria vaccines to Aboriginal people, and patient-facing healthcare workers in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Midwest regions, who have not received a diphtheria-containing vaccine in the past 5 years
- supporting access to outbreak-funded diphtheria vaccination for other eligible individuals who have not received a diphtheria-containing vaccine in the past 5 years and request vaccination at healthcare encounters.

The [Education Requirements for Immunisation Provision table](#) includes the education requirements for administering diphtheria-containing vaccines.

More information about diphtheria is available on the [Diphtheria alert for regional WA](#) page. The Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) can be contacted at PHEOC@health.wa.gov.au should further advice, clarification or support be required.

FluMist® expiry date

Several FluMist® batches expire on **16 July 2026** and **must not be administered after this date**. Providers should check existing stock and ensure no doses are used beyond the expiry.

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All new orders placed from today onward will be supplied from a new batch with an expiry date of 7 August 2026.

Any unused or expired FluMist® doses should be recorded as wastage using the [WA Health wastage incident reporting on-line tool](#).

Vaccine safety in twin pregnancies

A large Australian study of twin pregnancies found that influenza and pertussis vaccination during twin pregnancies is not associated with an increased risk of preterm birth, stillbirth, or babies being small for their gestational age.

As vaccine safety remains a common concern among pregnant women, these local data provide additional reassurance about the safety of recommended maternal vaccinations.

Please see the [published study](#) for more information.

New translated childhood immunisation resources

The Australian Government [Department of Health, Disability and Ageing](#) recently released new childhood immunisation [translated resources and videos](#), including:

childhood vaccinations consumer brochure, available in 14 languages
videos explaining why childhood immunisations are important,
available in Arabic, Cantonese, Korean and Vietnamese.

SMS reminder sent to parents of Year 7 and Year 10 students

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In collaboration with the WA Department of Education, the WA Department of Health has recently issued SMS reminders to guardians of Year 7 and Year 10 students who are due for their school-based vaccinations but had not yet received them or completed immunisation intent (consent or decline).

The SMS advised parents that if their adolescent missed the opportunity to be vaccinated through the School-based Immunisation Program (SBIP), they can still access these vaccines through other immunisation providers. As such, immunisation providers may experience an increase in enquiries and bookings from families seeking catch-up vaccinations for school-aged adolescents. Providers are encouraged to check [immunisation eligibility](#) whenever adolescents attend for an appointment.

See [Adolescent immunisation](#) for more information.

Residential aged care webinar recording now available

In collaboration with the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), the Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD) at the WA Department of Health hosted the Immunisation in Residential Aged Care webinar on 26 June 2026. The webinar recording is now available for view Classification: [sation events](#).

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