



**The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**  
Minister for Health

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Record vaccinations slash flu rates in Australia**

Australia experienced the lowest rates of the influenza since 2013 after a record 11 million Australians got a flu jab, nearly a third more than the previous year,

To date, only 52,000 cases of influenza have been reported, compared with nearly 250,000 cases in the same period last year.

In response to the 2017 season which had the highest flu activity in Australia in almost a decade, the Liberal National Government made new enhanced vaccines available for the elderly to provide better protection against influenza for the 2018 season.

More than 3.4 million more doses of the influenza vaccine were made available, enough to vaccinate more than 85 per cent of all individuals aged 65 years and older.

There was also unprecedented demand for influenza vaccine early in the 2018 season, which led the Government to secure an additional 1.3 million doses of the vaccine for the National Immunisation Program, state programs and the private market.

The vaccines were made available ahead of the peak period of seasonal influenza transmission, which occurred in early September this year.

The number of deaths from influenza reduced substantially compared to last year, with 73 deaths reported compared to 1,137 deaths in the same period last year.

This is a timely reminder to everyone - vaccinations work. I am absolutely committed to strengthening Australia's world-class National Immunisation Program and urge all Australians to get vaccinated.

Influenza is complex and unpredictable. Its impact on the community can vary from year to year and the action our Government took means more families have been spared the tragedy of losing someone they love because of this preventable, infectious disease.

Delivering vaccines to people in most need of protection would not have been possible without the collaboration between GPs and other vaccination providers across Australia, as well as community pharmacies which encouraged and administered the uptake of this important, life-saving vaccination.

Authorised by Greg Hunt MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Somerville, Victoria.

Our Government's strong economic management ensures we continue to invest record amounts of funding into vital health initiatives including life-saving medicines, Medicare, hospitals and vaccination programs.

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