



Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)

Summary of the 107th meeting, 15–16 August 2024

Vaccination and immunisation in Australia

- ATAGI noted that vaccine coverage rates have been declining since 2019 across Australia, for all populations and all vaccines.
- ATAGI noted that declining vaccination rates in children can be partially attributed to practical barriers to accessing vaccines. ATAGI noted a recent report about [increasing GPs' patient vaccine rates](#), and continues to advocate for better access to vaccines.
- ATAGI noted that the 2024 Annual Statement on Immunisation has progressed for publication on the [Department of Health and Aged Care's website](#).
- ATAGI discussed the 2025 Annual Statement on Immunisation. Members noted that the publication is valuable and discussed several ways to improve its impact.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

- ATAGI reviewed and discussed a model that is being developed to help inform decisions about the optimal RSV prevention program for Australia, considering both RSV vaccines and monoclonal antibodies.
- ATAGI noted and discussed the nirsevimab programs that have been rolled out in four Australian jurisdictions in 2024.
- ATAGI emphasised that maternal RSV vaccination and neonatal RSV monoclonal antibodies are both effective ways to protect infants from serious RSV disease. Maternal RSV vaccines and monoclonal antibodies are not currently available through the [National Immunisation Program](#), but are available privately and through some state and territory programs.
- ATAGI recommendations on vaccination and monoclonal antibody administration are published in the [RSV chapter](#) of the Australian Immunisation Handbook.

Pertussis (whooping cough)

- ATAGI noted that 1 in 5 women are not vaccinated against pertussis during pregnancy. ATAGI emphasised that maternal pertussis vaccination is best way to protect infants from whooping cough.
- ATAGI recommendations on vaccination are published in the [pertussis chapter](#) of the Australian Immunisation Handbook.

Pneumococcal disease

- ATAGI reviewed and discussed an update from the pneumococcal subgroup on the optimal pneumococcal vaccination schedule for Australia.

Meningococcal disease

- ATAGI discussed proposed updates to the [meningococcal chapter](#) of the Australian Immunisation Handbook. The chapter updates will be published later in 2024.

Mpox

- ATAGI noted that the World Health Organisation declared mpox a public health emergency on 15 August 2024. The clade I mpox strain currently circulating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is highly transmissible.
- ATAGI agreed to review its current interim statement on mpox vaccination. This [updated interim statement](#) has been published on the department's website. ATAGI continues to monitor the mpox epidemiology in Australia and overseas and will provide updated advice on mpox vaccination if required.

High pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)

- ATAGI noted the ongoing outbreaks of HPAI continuing to be reported in other countries in birds, mammals and occasionally humans. ATAGI will continue to monitor the HPAI epidemiology in Australia and overseas, and provide advice if required.

Human papillomavirus (HPV)

- ATAGI noted an update on the HPV surveillance and monitoring plan and reporting project, including the publication of the [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) Surveillance and Monitoring Plan 2023](#) earlier this year.
- ATAGI noted that [HPV vaccination coverage](#) is declining and discussed ways to improve uptake of the HPV vaccine.
- ATAGI's recommendations for HPV vaccination are published in the [human papilloma virus \(HPV\) chapter](#) of the Australian Immunisation Handbook.

COVID-19

- ATAGI noted that COVID-19 infections continue to spread in the community, and noted the 12-month booster coverage rates for people in aged care facilities.
- ATAGI emphasised the importance of remaining up to date with COVID-19 vaccination. ATAGI's recommendations for COVID-19 vaccination are published in the [COVID-19 chapter](#) of the Australian Immunisation Handbook and in the [ATAGI statement on the administration of COVID-19 vaccines in 2024](#).
- ATAGI noted and discussed the evidence for the potential role of COVID-19 vaccination in reducing the risk of long COVID. ATAGI committed to continuing to review emerging research on this topic. ATAGI discussed and received an update about the [COVID Vaccine Claims Scheme](#), as well as considered a presentation on recent research on people who have experienced thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS).

Vaccination for people who are immunocompromised

- ATAGI noted the updates to the Australian Immunisation Handbook section on [vaccination for people who are immunocompromised](#). The proposed updates will undergo targeted consultation later in 2024.

Collaboration with national immunisation technical advisory groups (NITAGs)

- ATAGI welcomed members from the Lao Peoples' Democratic Republic (PDR) NITAG for part of the meeting and discussed the achievements of recent collaborations and workshops. ATAGI is part of the WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO) and supports other WPRO NITAGs through online and face-to-face workshops and meetings.

Department and committee updates

- ATAGI noted progress on the National Immunisation Strategy by the interim CDC.
- ATAGI noted that updates to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) are being investigated to ensure it is fit for purpose for vaccine providers and stakeholders who rely on the data.
- ATAGI received an update from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) on vaccines that are currently under evaluation for [registration in Australia](#).
- ATAGI received an update from the Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) about the emerging global situations for mpox and HPAI.

Resources

- ATAGI's membership, terms of reference and policies and procedures information is available on the [Department of Health and Aged Care website](#).