



Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)

Summary of the 109th meeting, 5 and 6 December 2024

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

- ATAGI was pleased to note that Abrysvo, a [maternal RSV vaccine](#) has been approved for listing on the National Immunisation Program (NIP). The RSV vaccine is recommended for people at 28 to 36 weeks of pregnancy to protect their newborn from RSV. It will be available for free to all pregnant people from early 2025. [World-leading approach to protect babies from RSV | Health Portfolio Ministers | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#).
- ATAGI received an update on the 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 reviewed draft clinical guidance on RSV immunisation product administration errors. This provides advice on the management of a range of possible vaccine administration errors, including when a replacement (repeat) dose is recommended. It will be published in early 2025.

Pertussis (whooping cough)

- ATAGI reviewed data on the continuing high notifications of pertussis in Australia. Between January and November 2024, more than 47,000 cases of pertussis have been notified. This is more than double the number of notifications in previous epidemic years.
- ATAGI emphasised the importance of every dose in the routine vaccination schedule to protect against pertussis (whooping cough). Pertussis vaccines are available for free under the NIP for people aged 2, 4, 6 and 18 months, 4 years and 12–13 years. Pertussis vaccine is also free for pregnant people in every pregnancy, and this is an important way to protect newborns from pertussis, noting they are at highest risk of severe disease from whooping cough

COVID-19

- ATAGI discussed its draft COVID-19 vaccination recommendations for 2025, which will be published early in the new year.
- ATAGI noted rates of severe disease and death from COVID-19 continue to be highest in older age groups, particularly people aged 75 years and older. ATAGI emphasised that regular vaccination is particularly important in older age groups.
- ATAGI also supports the ongoing COVID-19 vaccination activities in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

- ATAGI reviewed the evidence on a further dose of COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy. ATAGI concluded that based on the data presented, no changes were required to the current recommendations.
- ATAGI noted JN.1 COVID-19 vaccine formulations are now available for use and recommends using the latest COVID-19 vaccine formulation.

Influenza

- ATAGI welcomed representatives from the United Kingdom (UK) Health Security Agency, who presented information about the UK's influenza vaccination program in school-aged children.
- ATAGI discussed the draft statement on the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2025 and related Handbook updates. Final versions will be endorsed at the February 2025 ATAGI meeting and published soon after that.

Mpox

- ATAGI reviewed the latest epidemiology on local and international mpox cases, particularly the Clade I cases in Africa.
- ATAGI noted that travellers who are returning from, or going to, countries with confirmed cases are at risk of mpox. ATAGI reiterated that [people at risk of exposure to mpox are recommended to receive mpox vaccine](#).
- ATAGI agreed to update its [advice for the use of vaccines for prevention of mpox](#) which will be published in late 2024.

Pneumococcal disease

- ATAGI discussed future updates to pneumococcal vaccination recommendations in the Handbook.
- ATAGI continued its discussions on an updated pneumococcal vaccination schedule in Australia across the life course.

Monoclonal antibodies

- ATAGI discussed and endorsed a guidance document that outlines the principles for when ATAGI should consider providing advice on the use of monoclonal antibodies for national public health programs to prevent infectious diseases.

Vaccination for risk groups

- ATAGI endorsed a substantial update to the Australian Immunisation Handbook chapter on vaccination for people who are immunocompromised. The updates aim to streamline and clarify advice for providers in this complex area of immunisation. The updated chapter will be published by March 2025.
- ATAGI endorsed a new Handbook resource of immunisation recommendations for people with medical risk factors for vaccine-preventable diseases. This resource will provide a high-level overview of which vaccines are recommended for people with various medical risk factors and will be a quick reference guide for providers. It will be published in 2025.
- [Subscribe for updates to the Handbook](#) to be notified when major changes are published, including the updated chapter on people who are immunocompromised.

Data and modelling

- ATAGI noted the publication of the [annual immunisation coverage report 2023](#). Data highlighted that immunisation coverage in children and adolescents has continued to show modest but concerning declines, and that coverage in adults is also suboptimal. ATAGI emphasised the importance of timely vaccination across the life course to protect against vaccine-preventable diseases.
- ATAGI noted a presentation on the Victorian [Vaccine Safety Health Link \(VSHL\)](#). VSHL links data on vaccination, notifiable diseases, hospitalisation, mortality, pregnancy and birth to produce de-identified linked datasets on adverse events following immunisation for epidemiological analysis. ATAGI was enthusiastic about VSHL's capabilities in the important role of vaccine safety monitoring and research in Australia.
- The Department of Health and Aged Care is working to develop a governance framework for the independent mathematical modelling that is used as needed to support ATAGI's work.

Industry updates

- ATAGI welcomed several vaccine sponsor companies to present specific data and updates regarding vaccines of interest to ATAGI.

Department and committee updates

- 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) on notifications of vaccine-preventable diseases in Australia and overseas.
- ATAGI received an update on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee's recent consideration of vaccines for inclusion on the NIP.

Resources

- ATAGI noted that [expressions of interest for new ATAGI Members](#) from 1 July 2025 will be sought during a 5-week period across December 2024 and January 2025.
- ATAGI's membership, terms of reference and declaration of interest information is available on the [Department of Health and Aged Care website](#).