

National Communicable Diseases Surveillance Report
Fortnight 17, 2021 Summary Notes for Selected Diseases
16 August to 29 August 2021

Infectious and congenital syphilis

Increases in infectious syphilis notifications are attributed to an on-going outbreak occurring in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people residing in northern and central Australia, continued increases among men who have sex with men (MSM) in urban areas, and increases in women (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous) residing in urban areas of Australia.

Outbreak in northern and central Australia

In January 2011, an increase of infectious syphilis notifications among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was identified in the North West region of Queensland, following a steady decline at a national level in remote communities. Subsequent increases in infectious syphilis notifications were reported in the Northern Territory in 2013, Western Australia in 2014 and South Australia in 2016, following sustained periods of low notification rates. The outbreak is of significant public health concern given the: elevated rates of infectious syphilis among women of child-bearing age, increasing the risk of congenital syphilis; and the concomitant risk of HIV transmission. For the latest information on the infectious syphilis outbreak and related national activities, refer to the [Department's website](#).

Increases among MSM

Since 2010 increases in notifications of infectious syphilis have been reported in MSM, predominately 20-39 years of age, residing in urban areas of Australia.

Increases among women (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous)

Since 2016, increases in notifications of infectious syphilis have been reported in women (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous) aged predominately 20-39 years of age residing in urban areas in Australia. As noted in the outbreak in northern and central Australia, increases in women of childbearing age is of significant public health concern given the increased risk of congenital syphilis.

Syphilis response

On 23 March 2021, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) endorsed the *National strategic approach for responding to rising rates of syphilis in Australia 2021* (Strategic Approach) prepared through the Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) and BBV STI Standing Committee (BBVSS). The Strategic Approach builds on and intersects with existing national activities related to syphilis and provides specific focus for efforts towards rising rates of syphilis and adverse outcomes in Australia.

The CDNA and BBVSS are, in collaboration, developing priority public health actions, including those related to workforce and community engagement, to ensure progress is made towards reducing the incidence of syphilis and elimination of congenital syphilis in Australia. These actions will be provided to AHPPC for endorsement in the coming months. For further information on national activities related to STIs, including syphilis, refer to the [Department's website](#).

Interpretative Notes

Selected diseases are chosen each fortnight based on either exceeding two standard deviations from the 90 day and/or 365 day five year rolling mean or other disease issues of significance identified during the reporting period. All diseases reported are analysed by notification receive date. Data are extracted each Monday of a CDNA week.

Totals comprise data from all States and Territories. Cumulative figures are subject to retrospective revision so there may be discrepancies between the number of new notifications and the increment in the cumulative figure from the previous period.

¹*The past quarter (90 day) surveillance period includes the date range (01/06/2021 to 29/08/2021).*

²*The quarterly (90 day) five year rolling mean is the average of 5 intervals of 90 days up to 29/08/2021. The ratio is the notification activity in the past quarter (90 days) compared with the five year rolling mean for the same period.*

³*The past year (365 day) surveillance period includes the date range (30/08/2020 to 29/08/2021).*

⁴*The yearly (365 day) five year rolling mean is the average of 5 intervals of 365 days up to 29/08/2021. The ratio is the notification activity in the past year (365 days) compared with the five year rolling mean for the same period.*

The five year rolling mean and the ratio of notifications compared with the five year rolling mean should be interpreted with caution. Changes in surveillance practice, diagnostic techniques and reporting may contribute to increases or decreases in the total notifications received over a five year period. Ratios are to be taken as a crude measure of current disease activity and may reflect changes in reporting rather than changes in disease activity.

ADT FN17/2021			State or Territory											Totals for Australia				Historical 90 Day Period				Historical Yearly Period			
Disease group	Disease name	Disease code	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	This reporting period	Previous reporting Period	Same reporting period last year	Current year YTD	Past Quarter	Quarterly rolling 5 year mean	Ratio past quarter/5 year mean*	Exceeds quarterly rolling mean +2 SD by	Past Year	Yearly rolling 5 year mean	Ratio past year/5 year mean*	Exceeds yearly rolling mean +2 SD by			
											16/08/2021 29/08/2021	02/08/2021 15/08/2021	16/08/2020 29/08/2020	01/01/2021 29/08/2021	01/06/2021 29/08/2021					30/08/2020 29/08/2021	30/08/2015 29/08/2020				
Bloodborne diseases	Hepatitis B (newly acquired)	039	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	64	26	35.4	0.7	-	99	149.6	0.7	-			
	Hepatitis B (unspecified)	052	3	46	-	44	-	4	57	18	172	170	216	3,073	1,069	1,447.8	0.7	-	4,667	5,835.4	0.8	-			
	Hepatitis C (newly acquired)	040	-	-	-	28	-	-	1	1	30	28	25	500	187	165.2	1.1	-	717	709.4	1.0	-			
	Hepatitis C (unspecified)	053	2	80	4	63	1	9	47	48	254	229	257	4,691	1,676	2,240.2	0.7	-	7,188	9,582.2	0.8	-			
	Hepatitis D	050	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	2	4	54	18	18.8	1.0	-	81	68.2	1.2	-			
Gastrointestinal diseases	Botulism	045	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	0.2	5.0	-	3	1.0	3.0	-			
	Campylobacteriosis	005	15	303	11	326	125	31	243	114	1,168	1,265	1,185	23,977	8,194	6,799.0	1.2	-	36,162	30,151.4	1.2	-			
	Cryptosporidiosis	061	-	9	8	15	5	1	21	4	63	66	40	1,321	459	531.0	0.9	-	1,741	3,827.8	0.5	-			
	Haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS)	055	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	3.6	-	-	6	16.0	0.4	-			
	Hepatitis A	038	-	1	-	6	-	-	-	-	7	6	1	28	22	40.8	0.5	-	33	234.2	0.1	-			
	Hepatitis E	051	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	6	9.2	0.7	-	12	47.2	0.3	-			
	Listeriosis	018	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	3	30	12	12.8	0.9	-	48	67.4	0.7	-			
	Paratyphoid	080	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	9.4	0.3	-	3	81.8	0.0	-			
	Salmonellosis	030	8	57	9	59	9	8	32	31	213	197	232	7,598	1,581	2,626.4	0.6	-	10,452	15,452.6	0.7	-			
	Shigellosis	031	-	1	5	3	1	-	1	5	16	19	27	308	95	463.0	0.2	-	547	2,102.2	0.3	-			
	STEC	054	-	2	-	-	-	5	-	4	4	15	17	17	378	97	97.6	1.0	-	557	497.8	1.1	-		
	Typhoid Fever	035	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	8	3	19.2	0.2	-	17	149.0	0.1	-		
Quarantinable diseases	Avian influenza in humans (AIH)	076	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Cholera	008	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.2	-	-			
	COVID-19	081	238	12,152	2	22	1	-	862	25	13,302	4,937	2,420	24,613	22,764	3,659.6	6.2	2,738.2	27,468	5,155.4	5.3	-			
	Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)	079	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Plague	025	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Rabies	028	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)	071	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Smallpox	069	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Viral haemorrhagic fever (NEC)	036	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
Yellow fever	041	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				
Sexually transmissible infections	Chlamydial infection	007	41	715	70	904	215	70	366	400	2,781	2,831	3,364	54,852	19,052	24,253.0	0.8	-	83,691	100,381.6	0.8	-			
	Donovanosis	010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Gonococcal infection	011	6	201	72	198	49	8	133	90	757	958	1,104	18,117	6,243	7,100.0	0.9	-	26,946	28,846.8	0.9	-			
	Syphilis < 2 years	066	1	22	5	32	10	-	57	26	153	186	197	3,666	1,280	1,184.8	1.1	-	5,400	4,715.0	1.1	-			
	Syphilis > 2 years or unspecified duration	067	-	-	2	5	-	-	47	7	61	48	61	1,183	368	525.4	0.7	-	1,857	2,136.6	0.9	-			
	Syphilis congenital	047	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	13	5	2.0	2.5	1.0	20	8.0	2.5	4.9			
Vaccine preventable diseases	Diphtheria	009	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	1.8	1.1	-	8	8.2	1.0	-			
	Haemophilus influenzae type b	012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	13	4	6.0	0.7	-	20	18.8	1.1	-			
	Influenza (laboratory confirmed)	062	-	4	3	12	1	-	2	-	22	28	58	502	184	70,754.6	0.0	-	750	156,953.2	0.0	-			
	Measles	021	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.8	-	-	-	123.2	-	-			
	Mumps	043	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	14	4	125.4	0.0	-	34	591.4	0.1	-			
	Pertussis	024	-	1	-	3	3	-	12	4	23	26	34	398	150	2,471.6	0.1	-	571	14,346.2	0.0	-			
	Pneumococcal disease (invasive)	065	2	13	1	8	4	1	6	17	52	56	49	971	474	634.4	0.7	-	1,344	1,839.0	0.7	-			
	Poliovirus infection	026	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Rotavirus	077	1	13	5	17	9	-	NN	8	59	52	34	865	377	942.0	0.4	-	1,228	4,568.0	0.3	-			
	Rubella	029	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3.0	-	-	2	12.8	0.2	-			
	Rubella congenital	046	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	-	-			
	Tetanus	033	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	0.8	-	6	4.0	1.5	-			
	Varicella zoster (chickenpox)	073	3	NN	1	6	11	-	18	15	54	53	116	1,341	451	917.0	0.5	-	2,489	3,599.2	0.7	-			
	Varicella zoster (shingles)	074	22	NN	5	9	79	12	93	78	298	352	619	6,991	2,125	2,990.2	0.7	-	12,214	11,829.6	1.0	-			
Varicella zoster (unspecified)	075	4	NN	8	423	37	23	357	77	929	825	466	13,011	5,381	3,553.4	1.5	236.1	17,971	14,079.4	1.3	-				
Vectorborne diseases	Barmah Forest virus infection	048	-	1	1	5	-	-	-	1	8	11	24	274	79	103.8	0.8	-	454	410.0	1.1	-			
	Chikungunya virus infection	078	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	14.0	-	-	2	79.4	0.0	-			
	Dengue virus infection	003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	270.8	-	-	3	1,283.0	0.0	-			
	Flavivirus infection (unspecified)	001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	6.8	0.1	-	8	32.6	0.2	-			
	Japanese encephalitis virus infection	059	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0.6	1.7	-	1	1.2	0.8	-			
	Malaria	020	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	-	1	31	17	79.8	0.2	-	50	338.4	0.1	-			
	Murray Valley encephalitis virus infection	049	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1.0	-	1	0.2	5.0	-			
	Ross River virus infection	002	-	6	2	21	-	1	2	9	41	50	64	2,809	549	746.0	0.7	-	3,645	4,712.6	0.8	-			
	West Nile/Kunjin virus infection	060	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	-	-	-	1.6	-	-			
Zoonoses	Anthrax	058	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Australian bat lyssavirus infection	063	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	Brucellosis	004	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	13	4	5.0	0.8	-	17	19.2	0.9	-			
	Leptospirosis	017	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3	5	1	2											

Footnotes:

* Ratio of the 90 day prior surveillance period to the past 90 day