

A health behaviour overview

an example from HEALTHeRESOURCE

Adult influenza vaccination across the Hunter New England Health Region 1997–2009

Immunisation is one of the most cost-efficient and effective population health strategies to prevent disease. Immunisation for Australians aged 65 years and older is of particular importance, as this age group, is at high risk from influenza and its related complications particularly pneumonia, with the majority of deaths from influenza occurring in this age group. Influenza vaccines are free of charge to this age group and other priority populations (Department of Health and Ageing accessed 13 May 2010, NSW Health 2009).

The NSW Population Health Survey investigates the prevalence of NSW residents aged over 65 years who report that they were vaccinated or immunised against influenza in the last 12 months.

General trends

Between 1997 and 2009 there has been an increase in the reported rate of influenza vaccinations across both the Hunter New England Health region and NSW. In 2009, adults aged 65 years and over in the HNE Health region (76.6%; CI 72.6-80.6) reported a higher rate of immunisation than their NSW (72.6%; CI 70.8-74.4) counterparts with approximately 3 out of

every 4 HNE Health region residents, within this age group, reporting that they were vaccinated in 2009 (HealthResource, 2010).

Gender breakdown

In 2009, there was no significant gender difference between HNE Health region males and females (73.0%; CI 66.2-79.9, compared to 79.7%; CI 75.1-84.2). Similarly, no significant difference was observed between NSW males (70.0%; CI 67.1-72.8) and females (74.8%; CI 72.6-77.0) [graph 1].

Age breakdown

Consistent with NSW (60.4%; CI 56.9-63.8), residents of HNE Health region (69.4%; CI 61.5-77.4) aged 65-69 years reported slightly lower rates of vaccination compared to older age groups [graph 2].

CONCLUSION

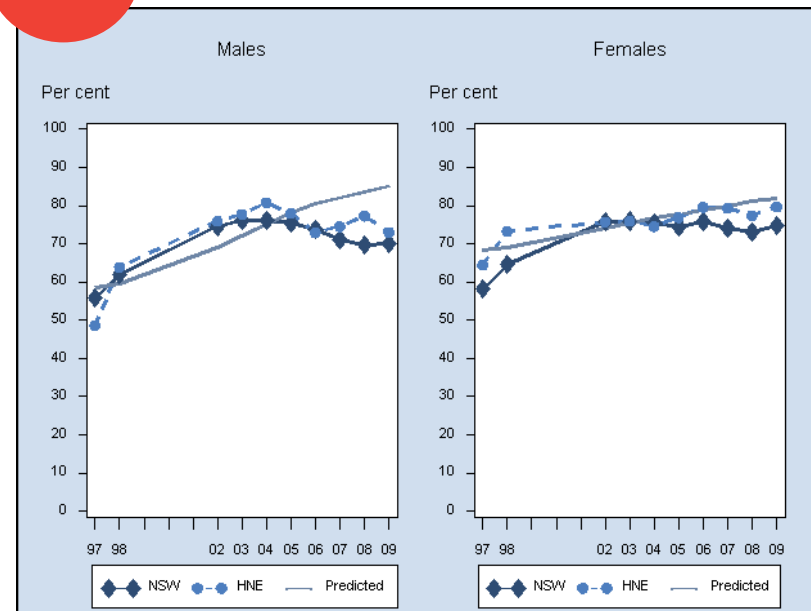
There has been a pleasing increase in the uptake of influenza vaccine amongst HNE Health region residents aged 65 and over in recent years. Additional efforts to increase the uptake of influenza vaccine in NSW residents aged 65-69 years is required.

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HUNTER NEW ENGLAND
NSW HEALTH

Graph 1

Hunter & New England, vaccinated against influenza in the last 12 months by year, persons aged 65 years and over, NSW, 1997-



Graph 2

Hunter & New England, vaccinated against influenza in the last 12 months by age, persons aged 65 years and over, NSW, 2009

