

Hunter New England and Central Coast Public Health Units

Communicable Diseases Report

March 2018

2018 Influenza vaccination: ATAGI advice / new vaccines
Arboviruses – increased activity anticipated
Listeriosis outbreak update
Communicable disease notifications

2018 Influenza vaccination: The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has developed [advice for immunisation providers regarding the administration of 2018 seasonal influenza vaccines](#).

- Two new age-specific influenza vaccines will be available free to those ≥65 years
- 2018 influenza vaccines will be available from mid-April, subject to vaccine supply.
- Recent evidence suggests that protection following influenza vaccination may begin to wane after three to four months, therefore, timing of vaccination should aim to achieve the highest level of protection during the period of influenza virus circulation (typically from June to September in Australia, and usually peaking from August).

For adults aged ≥65 years, in addition to the quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIVs), two higher-immunogenicity trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV) formulations (one a 'high-dose' vaccine and another containing an adjuvant) are available and NIP-funded. These TIVs are preferentially recommended over QIVs for adults aged ≥65 years and there is no preference for use between these TIVs.

From April 2018, all NSW children aged from six months to under five years of age will be offered free influenza shots.

Seasonal influenza vaccines available for use in Australia in 2018, by age

Vaccine	Quadrivalent					Trivalent (for age ≥65 years only)	
	FluQuadri Junior 0.25 mL (Sanofi)	FluQuadri 0.50 mL (Sanofi)	Fluarix Tetra 0.50 mL (GSK)	Afluria Quad 0.50 mL (Seqirus)	Influvac Tetra 0.50 mL (Mylan)	Fluzone High-Dose 0.50 mL (Sanofi)	Fluad 0.50 mL (Seqirus)
<6 months	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6 to 35 months (<3 years)	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x
≥3 to 17 years	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	x
≥18 years	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x
≥65 years	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: <https://beta.health.gov.au/resources/publications/atagi-advice-on-seasonal-influenza-vaccines-in-2018>

Arboviruses: HNE and CC are heading into the peak arbovirus season. Conducive weather conditions are supporting breeding and mosquito survival and clinicians may see increased Ross River virus and Barmah Forest virus activity. People are reminded of the importance of [protection against mosquito bites](#).

Listeriosis outbreak update: 19 people have been affected by the national listeriosis outbreak linked to contaminated rockmelon; 6 of these cases were from NSW (none were from HNE or CC). There have been 6 deaths associated with this outbreak. NSW Health are advising people who are most vulnerable to listeriosis (such as older persons, and people who have weakened immune systems due to illness or pregnancy) to discard all rockmelon purchased before 1 March 2018. There have been no new cases since the outbreak was identified on February 19. Given the long incubation period, up to 70 days, it is still possible that more cases will be linked to the outbreak. This outbreak serves as a general reminder that people most vulnerable to listeriosis should avoid the following foods:

- pre-cut melons such as rockmelon or watermelon
- pre-packed cold salads including coleslaw and fresh fruit salad
- pre-cooked cold chicken, cold delicatessen meats, pâté
- raw seafood, uncooked smoked seafood (e.g. smoked salmon)
- unpasteurised milk/milk products, soft cheeses (e.g. brie, camembert, ricotta or blue-vein)
- sprouted seeds.

For further information: [Listeriosis - NSW Health](#)

Communicable disease notifications:

Table 1. Summary of selected notifiable conditions (YTD* by year), 2014 – 13 Mar 2018

	Hunter New England (YTD* by year)					Central Coast (YTD* by year)				
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Cryptosporidiosis	24	61	31	45	25	8	13	19	9	6
Gonorrhoea	119	77	72	53	60	54	40	17	28	19
Syphilis	14	15	9	8	11	4	4	2	7	4
Chlamydial Infection	595	533	647	533	545	218	259	206	209	252
Influenza	138	99	58	48	37	66	30	22	13	11
Meningococcal Disease	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Pertussis	115	155	340	146	61	8	21	183	16	6
Ross River Virus	18	141	24	91	22	0	8	2	22	3
Salmonellosis	109	107	104	119	111	48	109	38	54	66

*YTD, Year to date for each year (reporting delays may result in changes to 2018 figures)

Population Health contact details (note, 1300 066 055 will find your local PHU)

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This [Communicable Disease Report](#) and previous editions are available on the internet

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