

GP Connect

Keeping GPs informed in the changing primary health landscape



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Monitoring the safety of the maternal respiratory syncytial virus vaccine

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The WA Department of Health (WA Health) is monitoring the safety of Abrysvo for adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) and newborn outcomes as part of the [2025 WA Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Infant and Maternal Immunisation Program](#).

Key points:

- Abrysvo is an RSV maternal vaccination available for pregnant women under the National Immunisation Program (NIP).
- In WA, one AEFI report of anaphylaxis following Abrysvo has been reported and received clinical follow-up.
- As at 30 May 2025, 28.7 per cent of people (51/178) reported a common and expected AEFI following Abrysvo via the SmartVax survey.
- Two incorrect administrations of RSV immunisation products have been reported.

What has been published on the safety of Abrysvo?

- The Maternal Immunisation Study for Safety and Efficacy (MATISSE) vaccine trial recently reported¹ safety follow up of 3,000 maternal RSV vaccinations:
 - no maternal deaths or stillbirths were assessed as related to vaccination
 - no higher frequency of low birth weight, premature birth or developmental delays, compared to placebo control.



- In 2024, a US real-world study of over 1,000 patients who received a maternal RSV vaccine² reported:
 - no higher frequency of preterm birth, low birth weight or stillbirth
 - no higher frequency of NICU admission, jaundice, hypoglycaemia or sepsis
 - increased risk of overall hypertensive disorders of pregnancy but not pre-eclampsia or eclampsia.
- In 2024, a meta-analysis of six randomised clinical trials³ found no statistical difference for adverse events between women receiving RSV vaccine compared to controls.

How is WA Health monitoring the safety of Abrysvo?

Adverse events following Abrysvo vaccination are monitored via:

1. Reports of reactions to Western Australian Vaccine Safety Surveillance System (WAVSS) by providers or members of the public.
2. Reports of reactions to the Therapeutic Goods Administration by providers or members of the public which are shared with WAVSS.

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Monitoring the safety of the maternal respiratory syncytial virus vaccine (cont)

3. At participating GP clinics and Aboriginal Medical Services, SmartVax surveys are sent three days post-immunisation via SMS, asking recipients if they had a reaction and specific symptoms.
4. Data linkage to identify presentations to emergency departments or hospital admissions up to 60 days after Abrysvo vaccination for specific diagnoses including anaphylaxis, allergic reactions, Guillain Barre Syndrome, cardiac abnormalities, pre-eclampsia, eclampsia, hypertension, pre-term birth and foetal death.
5. Rapid cycle analysis to identify any increase in all-cause presentations to emergency departments up to 21 days post-Abrysvo vaccination.
6. Expert Clinical Review Group meetings every two months to assess referred reports of severe, significant and unusual adverse events following immunisation.

What adverse events following Abrysvo have been reported in WA?

As at 30 May 2025, over 6,500 doses of Abrysvo have been administered in WA.

- 71.3% of people (127/178) reported no reaction following Abrysvo vaccination via the SmartVax survey.
- For the 28.7% of people who did report a reaction after Abrysvo, 32.3% reported a local reaction, 26.2% systemic aches and pains, 24.6% fatigue, 7.7% chills, 5.4% gastrointestinal symptoms and 3.8% fever.
- SAFEVAC (WAVSS) has received six reports following Abrysvo vaccination:
 - one report of confirmed anaphylaxis (resolved)
 - one report of nausea and feeling faint (resolved)
 - one report of minor site reaction and myalgia (resolved)
 - one report of Arexvy incorrectly administered to a pregnant woman
 - one report of Abrysvo incorrectly administered to a child
 - one report of suspected shoulder injury related to vaccine administration.

No safety risks have been identified via rapid cycle analysis.

Points to take away:

- Report adverse events following immunisation to SAFEVAC (WAVSS).
- Confirm the correct RSV immunisation product prior to administration:
 - Abrysvo for pregnant women.
 - Beyfortus for eligible infants.
 - Arexvy for older adults.
- Keep Abrysvo, Beyfortus and Arexvy separate in clinic fridges to avoid vaccine administration errors

Resources:

- WA Health:
 - [2025 WA Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Infant and Maternal Immunisation Program](#) (including provider fact sheet)
 - RSV immunisation decision aids (flowcharts) for [state-wide](#) and [Kimberley or Pilbara regions](#)
- The Australian Immunisation Handbook – [Respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\) SmartVax](#)
- SAFEVAC - [Western Australian Vaccine Safety Surveillance \(WAVSS\) System](#)
- AusVaxSafety – [RSV vaccine safety data](#)
- Clinician Assist WA – [Adverse Events Following Immunisation \(AEFIs\)](#)

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References:

1. Simões EAF, Pahud BA, Madhi SA et al. Efficacy, Safety, and Immunogenicity of the MATISSE (Maternal Immunization Study for Safety and Efficacy) Maternal Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prefusion F Protein Vaccine Trial. *Obstet Gynecol* 2025. doi: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000005816
2. Son M, Riley LE, Staniczenko AP et al. Nonadjuvanted Bivalent Respiratory Syncytial Virus Vaccination and Perinatal Outcomes. *Infectious Diseases* 2024 doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.19268
3. Mapindra MP, Mahindra MP, McNamara P et al. Respiratory Syncytial Virus Maternal Vaccination in Infants below 6 Months of Age: Meta-Analysis of Safety, Immunogenicity, and Efficacy. *Neonatology*. 2024. doi: 10.1159/000536031

Online tool to help guide RSV immunisation decisions

By A/Prof Hannah Moore^b, Ms Fiona Giannini^c and Prof Chris Blyth^d

Researchers from the Wesfarmers Centre of Vaccines and Infectious Diseases, based at The Kids Research Institute Australia, have launched an [online guidance tool](#) designed to help families and health care providers in WA learn the best way to protect babies and young children against life-threatening RSV.

Both the RSV vaccine in pregnancy (Abrysvo) and immunisation for newborns (Beyfortus, or Nirsevimab) offer excellent protection for young babies vulnerable to potentially serious RSV infections in their first few months of life, but it can be complex to determine which immunisation strategy families might be eligible for as part of Australia's new RSV Maternal and Infant Immunisation Program.

How does the tool work?

The new guidance tool clarifies for parents which RSV vaccines or immunisations they are eligible for and is equally useful for health care practitioners to help guide discussions with their patients on eligibility. It is simple and easy to use with pull down menus, which could be used in a short GP consultation with families.

Questions asked include:

- Stage of pregnancy
- If they reside in the Kimberley or Pilbara regions of WA (that see a different seasonal pattern of RSV infections)
- Presence of medical conditions
- Dates of birth for younger children and whether younger children have received a previous immunisation for RSV in 2024.

The tool then provides information according to criteria set by WA Department of Health, letting parents know their eligibility for a vaccine given to pregnant women and/or a monoclonal antibody for their baby at or after birth.

Why was the tool developed?

The guidance tool was developed in response to many families finding it hard to interpret the newly launched RSV immunisation program. The research group, led by Associate Professor Hannah Moore, were in discussions with their RSV community reference group and quickly realised how complex it could be for families to understand what the new immunisations were, and which one was best suited for their own situation. Equally this could be challenging for GPs and other health care providers to appropriately guide families in these discussions.

Each recommendation in the guidance tool has been reviewed by The Kids Research Institute Australia expert epidemiology research team and their RSV community reference group, and immunisation policy makers within WA Department of Health.

The tool has the potential to provide up to 200 unique combinations of answers to provide a truly individualised response on recommended RSV immunisation options. In the eight weeks since its launch, more than 580 users have accessed the online tool.

The RSV Immunisation Guidance Tool was developed as part of the [STAMP-RSV Program](#), funded by the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation.

About the authors:

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Hospital Liaison GP updates

Sir Charles Gairdner Osborne Park Health Care Group

New secure feedback form for GPs

Feedback from GPs on hospital services is important to ongoing improvement and is welcomed at Sir Charles Gairdner Osborne Park Health Care Group (SCGOPHCG). The new, secure feedback form, developed using the REDCap platform, allows GPs to provide feedback which may contain sensitive information quickly and easily.

Submissions are reviewed by the Hospital Liaison GP (HLGP) and actioned or escalated as appropriate. The HLGP can be contacted through phone or email. Please note that the form is not for medical record requests.

[Access the referral form directly](#) or through the [For GPs](#) section of the SCGH website.

Older Adults Services Directory for GPs 2025

SCGOPHCG provides a comprehensive range of services to support older adults in the community including the Frailty Rapid Access Clinic, RAILS Rapid Response Team, Geriatrician Residential Outreach Service and more.

The newly published [Services Directory](#) makes it easier to understand the scope of these services, who they may be suitable for and how to make a referral.

Hard copies of the directory are also available and may be requested by emailing SCGOPHCG.HLGP@health.wa.gov.au

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Optimised pathway for hip and knee replacement surgery at Fremantle Hospital

Fremantle Hospital has spent the last year designing an optimised pathway for hip and knee replacement surgery. This pathway will align the care at Fremantle Hospital with international best practice, improving the patient experience and reducing length of stay. Key changes to the clinical pathway include:

- Improved patient education, providing consistent advice and managing patient expectations
- Supporting early post-operative mobilisation
- Minimising and managing post operative pain, swelling and side effects
- Providing continuity and supportive care through care coordination.

The joint replacement nurse team (clinical nurse specialist and clinical nurse) provide care coordination throughout the patient pathway including a contact point for patients before and after their surgery. When a patient is waitlisted for knee or hip arthroplasty they are given information including:

- Role and availability of the joint replacement nurses
- Expected length of stay (zero to one day/s for most patients)
- Anticipated levels of post operative pain and how this will be managed.
- Importance of early (day zero) mobilisation
- Recovery time and support required
- Preparing for surgery including prehabilitation, organising transport and support at home and preparing the home environment.

Available resources:

Patient information is available on the [Fiona Stanley Fremantle Hospitals Group website](#).

Patient information sessions are held fortnightly alternating between in person and video call (via healthdirect).

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Clinical updates

New Chronic Wound Consumables Scheme

The Australian Government's Chronic Wound Consumables Scheme (CWCS) covers the full cost of wound consumable products for patients with diabetes and a chronic wound, and who are aged 65 and over (or aged 50 and over for Aboriginal patients).

The CWCS is patient centred and will enable GPs and other eligible primary health practitioners to enrol an [eligible patient](#) to participate in the scheme and order fully subsidised wound consumable products through an online portal or over the phone. The ordered products will be delivered to the patient's home to support ongoing wound self-management.

Eligible health professionals will need to complete specified training to use the online portal.

More information is available on the [Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website](#).

WAPHA GP LEARNING

STI and BBV Refresher Series

Webinar 2: Interpreting STI results and initiating treatment

DETAILS

- Thursday 24 July 2025
- 6pm to 6:15pm (AWST)
- Virtual webinar

REGISTER TODAY

OTHER WEBINARS IN THE SERIES

- Thursday 7 August 2025
Contact tracing and other follow-up of STI diagnoses
- Thursday 21 August 2025
Hepatitis C testing and interpretation

SPEAKER

Dr Lewis Marshall
Sexual Health and Public Health Physician at Boorloo PHU and former Head of Service at South Tce Clinic

WA Department of Health update on abortion legislation reform

The implementation of new abortion legislation in WA just over 12 months ago (April 2024), has removed clinically unnecessary barriers for women accessing an abortion by:

- Enabling GPs, nurse practitioners and endorsed midwives to prescribe the medical abortion medicine (MS-2 Step) within their scope of practice and training
- Removing the mandatory counselling requirement
- Increasing the gestational limit at which an abortion may be performed
- Specifying mandated obligations for all medical practitioners, even those who conscientiously object.

A free WA Department of Health helpline 1800 4 Choice (1800 424 642) is available to GPs for clinical queries regarding abortion care and to patients for information about pregnancy choices and abortion care options across Western Australia.

New WA Department of Health patient resources are also now available:

- [1800 4 Choice Poster](#)
- [Information for patients](#)

Visit the [WA Department of Health website](#) for further information.

New syphilis resources from the Australian Centre for Disease Control

The Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has published two new web pages to improve patient understanding and support best practice responses:

- [Syphilis for everyone](#)
- [Syphilis for health professionals](#)

Quit Centre resources and training supporting effective smoking cessation care



The National Best Practice Support Service for Nicotine and Smoking Cessation (Quit Centre) provides GPs and other health professionals with clinical resources and training supporting effective smoking cessation care. Some of the latest training and resources include:

Smoking cessation management plans

Developed for patients receiving cardiology or oncology care, these plans support a continuity of care from specialists to the patient's GP and other health professionals. The plans incorporate behavioural support and/or pharmacotherapy and provide next steps for the patient to take. This includes engaging with Quitline, their pharmacist (if medication is required) and importantly, with their GP to incorporate communication from the specialist into the patient's primary care. Visit the [Quit Centre website](https://www.quitcentre.org.au) for more information.

Useful infographics

New infographics are available for health professionals looking for quick references to display in your practice and support conversations on smoking and vaping cessation. [Download from the Quit Centre website](https://www.quitcentre.org.au).

Explore the [Quit Centre website](https://www.quitcentre.org.au) for latest news and research, events, online training and clinical tools and guidelines, and refer your patients to Quitline [here](https://www.quitcentre.org.au).

Clear the Air Community of Practice Launch

The Cancer Council WA has launched a new online engagement platform for connection, collaboration and knowledge sharing to prevent vaping and support young people to break free from vaping.

For more information or to join the platform, please visit [Clear the Air Community of Practice](https://cleartheaircommunityofpractice.org.au)

New childhood immunisation video hub is live

New video resources are available from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's (DHDA) 'One more way you keep them safe' campaign. The collection of 18 videos can help patients to understand the importance of childhood vaccination including:

- Every childhood disease and vaccine on the schedule, explained by experts
- What to expect when your child is immunised.

Explore the collection on the [DHDA website](https://www.dhda.gov.au)

AIHW fact sheets on vaccine preventable diseases

AIHW has released a series of fact sheets and accompanying visualisations about the Australian Government funded vaccines provided to eligible people through the National Immunisation Program. The resources provide an overview of vaccine preventable diseases and their impact in Australia, including the number of cases notified to public health authorities, hospitalisations, and deaths.

View the [summary information](https://www.aihw.gov.au), [data visualisations](https://www.aihw.gov.au) and [fact sheets](https://www.aihw.gov.au) on the AIHW website.

National bowel cancer screening program monitoring report 2025

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) estimates in 2024 about 7,265 people aged 50 to 74 were diagnosed with bowel cancer and 1,793 people in this age group died from the disease (around 34 per cent of all bowel cancer deaths).

The latest AIHW monitoring report on the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) targeting 50 to 74 year olds reveals:

- 42 per cent of the 6.3 million people invited to screen between January 2022 and December 2023 participated in the NBCSP.
- One in 26 people screened were diagnosed with a confirmed or suspected cancer.

Read the summary or full report and more on the [AIHW website](#).

Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation Report features innovative local approach to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease testing

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has just released the [Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation \(Atlas\) Focus Report: COPD](#). The Atlas Focus Report examines MBS subsidised spirometry and PBS subsidised chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) medicines - two elements of care in the [COPD Clinical Care Standard](#).

The report features a local solution addressing the low rates of spirometry testing for diagnosing COPD: [A two-pronged solution for COPD testing: respiratory hubs and mandatory spirometry in WA](#).

The success story profiles the Respiratory Care WA respiratory hubs model, funded by WA Department of Health, and the mandatory spirometry for referrals policy – a local solution addressing the low rates of spirometry testing for diagnosing COPD.

GP education and training

WA Department of Health Voluntary Assisted Dying training workshops

Medical and nurse practitioners interested in undertaking voluntary assisted dying (VAD) approved training are invited to participate in these thoughtfully designed workshops from WA Department of Health providing an introduction to VAD in Western Australia.

Participants will gain valuable insights from key stakeholders, including the Statewide Pharmacy Service, Statewide Care Navigator Service, the VAD Board, and experienced VAD practitioners. With a focus on real-world care practices, the workshops offer practical relevance, equipping attendees with the knowledge and confidence to better support patients considering or accessing VAD services:

- **Kalgoorlie**
Friday 8 August | 9am to 5pm | Kalgoorlie Health Campus
More information and/or register via VADcarenavigator@health.wa.gov.au
- **Perth**
Friday 22 August | 8.30am to 4.30pm | Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
More information and/or register via nmhs.vad@health.wa.gov.au

Practitioners based in regional areas may be eligible for funding through the Regional Access Support Scheme to complete aspects of the training.

Updated smoking cessation training module for GPs

Online | 1.5 RACGP CPD EA hours | 1.5 ACRRM CPD hour

Updated in June 2025, this free module by the Quit Centre is designed to equip GPs with the skills, confidence and knowledge to provide smoking cessation brief advice to patients who smoke.

Access Smoking Cessation Brief Advice Training for General Practitioners [here](#).

New podcast on best practice for working with people with intellectual disability

The new Excellence in Practice: Voices for Better Care podcast from the National Centre of Excellence in Disability Health is for health care professionals who want to improve their practice when working with people with intellectual disability.

Each episode features conversations with experts, health care professionals, and people with lived experience. They share real stories and practical advice to help you build your skills and confidence.

Available wherever you listen to podcasts and on [The Centre website](#).

RACGP Early Career Conference

Saturday 9 to Sunday 10 August | 10am to 3pm |
The Vines Resort | 7+ RACGP EA Hours

Designed by GPs for GPs, the weekend offers relevant topics for new fellows, GPs in training and international medical graduates. This year's theme is "Building our futures" and the conference includes sessions covering finance, career sustainability, conquering CPD and technology in general practice.

Cost: \$250 (includes access to social events).

[Find out more and register](#)

Immunisation Coalition - COVID-19 update

23 July | 4pm to 5pm | Online | Immunisation Coalition

GPs, immunisation nurses and other immunisation professionals are invited to join former Director of Immunobiology, Professor Gary Grohmann at the Immunisation Coalition's annual update on COVID-19 and available vaccines in Australia.

[Find out more and register](#)



WAPHA LEARNING WEBINAR

National Lung Cancer Screening Program

What you need to know about the newly launched National Lung Cancer Screening Program.

DETAILS

- Thursday 7 August
- 7pm to 8pm (AWST)
- For GPs and practice staff

REGISTER TODAY

SPEAKERS

Video presentation from Professor Fraser Brims from the Institute for Respiratory Health

John Lee
National Cancer Screening Register

Dr Claire Forde
WA Primary Health Alliance Clinical Editor

Aboriginal Health Council of WA - WA Ear and Hearing Health Forum 2025

Thursday 7 to Friday 8 August | 8.30am – 5.30pm |
Pan Pacific Perth | AHCWA

The two-day forum hosted by the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA) for health care professionals who are passionate about improving ear and hearing health in WA children. The forum will be preceded by an [Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service Members Forum](#) and a [non-accredited practical skills workshop](#).

[Find out more and register](#)

Navigating newborn and infant RSV immunisation

22 July | 5pm to 6pm | Online | Immunisation Coalition

Join Consultant Paediatric Immunologist and Paediatrician at Perth Children's Hospital, Professor Peter Richmond, alongside a multi-disciplinary panel as they discuss RSV immunisation in newborns and eligible infants in their second RSV season. They will also clarify the use of Beyfortus (nirsevimab) under different seasonal and patient situations.

[Find out more and register](#)