

Dear

Thank you for your emailed letter dated 2012, in relation to whooping cough.

The Minister very much appreciates you taking the time to share with him your views and is sorry to hear that contracted the disease.

As detailed in your letter, whooping cough is a potentially very serious communicable disease. It is highly contagious and can be life threatening to babies. This is why young children receive the whooping cough vaccine at 2, 4, 6 months and at four years of age. In Queensland, teenagers are also offered a free booster dose in Year 10 through the School Based Vaccination Program.

In adults, whooping cough typically causes a cough that can persist for up to three months. Immunity from the disease does wane over time, so a booster dose is recommended for persons in contact with infants and others at increased risk from whooping cough. However, there is currently insufficient evidence to recommend routine 10-yearly booster doses of whooping cough vaccine for adults. Adults wishing to receive the whooping cough vaccine should speak to their doctor. The vaccine is available via prescription.

Queensland Health's free whooping cough vaccine to parents program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in whooping cough notifications in Queensland, with the aim to prevent whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

The Program has now ceased, as evidence suggests that the rate of whooping cough notifications in Queensland is declining. However, the Minister continues to strongly recommend whooping cough vaccination for adults planning a pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant; as well as other adult household members, grandparents and carers of young children.

The Minister agrees that the community needs to be aware of the severity of the disease and that vaccination offers the best protection. Promoting vaccination against whooping cough is an ongoing Queensland Health commitment evident in the Department's educational literature such as the:

- *Immunisation is Important* brochure
http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/documents/immunisation_child_br.pdf; and
- Whooping Cough and Immunisation Fact Sheet

http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ImmunisationandVaccination/whoopingCoughAndImmunisation_ap.pdf

Queensland Health remains committed to the health of Queenslanders and will strongly focus on the most effective whooping cough prevention strategies, including exploring the feasibility of transitioning the Year 10 whooping cough vaccination to Year 8.

For more information about whooping cough and vaccinations, ask your doctor or contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, the Minister has arranged for Immunisation Director, Communicable Diseases Unit, on telephone to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS DAVIS MP
Assistant Minister for Health

RTI Released

Prepared by: [redacted]
Principal Public Health Officer
Immunisation Program / Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
19 / 11 / 2012

Submitted through: [redacted]
Director
Immunisation Program / Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
/ 11 / 2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
A/Executive Director
Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
/ 11 / 2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
Chief Health Officer
Chief Health Officer Branch
[redacted]
/ 11 / 2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
Deputy Director General
Health Services and Clinical Innovation Division
[redacted]
/ 11 / 2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
Director General
Queensland Health
[redacted]
/ 11 / 2012

RELEASABLE

Whooping cough and immunisation

Description:

Change notification: end of free vaccination program for birth parents, grandparents and other adults in the home

The free whooping cough vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age (including other adults in the same household) will cease on 30 June 2012.

However the vaccine will continue to be provided free for:

- all children at 2 (can be administered at 6 weeks), 4 and 6 months of age
- children aged four years (booster)
- year 10 students (booster).

For further information:

- read the FAQs
- call your nearest Public Health Unit

About whooping cough

What is whooping cough? Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions (such as when sharing food or kissing).

Who is most at risk? Whooping cough is most serious in babies less than six months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Most babies with whooping cough catch it from a parent or other close family member or carer. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. Most hospitalisations and deaths occur in those less than six months of age.

How can whooping cough be prevented? Immunisation is the best way to prevent whooping cough. The vaccine is recommended and is free for:

- all children at 2 (can be administered at 6 weeks), 4 and 6 months of age
- children four years of age
- year 10 students (booster).

What is the whooping cough booster vaccine? The whooping cough booster vaccine is a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the post natal period and while breast feeding. The vaccine can be given at any time after a previous dose of a vaccine containing tetanus and diphtheria toxoids.

How long does protection last? Natural infection with whooping cough does not guarantee lifelong protection, and neither does vaccination against the disease. Protection after the disease or vaccination lasts up to ten years.

Practical Advice

Possible side effects of the vaccine

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects. Most side effects are minor, last a short time and do not lead to any long-term problems.

Whooping cough and immunisation

Possible side effects of whooping cough vaccine may include fever, redness and soreness or swelling where the injection was given, nausea, headache, tiredness and aching muscles. More serious side effects are extremely rare and can include severe allergic reactions.

Contact your immunisation provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination which you consider serious or unexpected.

Pre-vaccination checklist

This checklist helps your doctor/nurse decide about vaccinating you or your child

Please tell your doctor/nurse if the person about to be vaccinated:

- is unwell today
- has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS) or is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy)
- has had a severe reaction following any vaccine
- has any severe allergies (to anything)
- has had any vaccine in the past month
- has had an injection of immunoglobulin, or received any blood products or a whole blood transfusion within the past year
- is pregnant
- has a past history of Guillain-Barr syndrome
- was a pre-term infant
- has a chronic illness
- has a bleeding disorder.

A different vaccine schedule may be recommended if the person to be vaccinated:

- identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- does not have a functioning spleen
- is planning a pregnancy or anticipating parenthood
- is a parent, grandparent or carer of a newborn
- lives with someone who has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS), or lives with someone who is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy).

Care after vaccination

- For redness or swelling at the injection site, apply a cold compress.
- To lower temperature or relieve discomfort, paracetamol may be given.
- If fever persists, consult your doctor.
- If any reaction occurs that you consider serious or unexpected, seek medical advice.
- Contact the service provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination.

Where can I be immunised?

You can be immunised at your local doctor or medical centre. Some councils, community child health and community health centres may hold free immunisation clinics. Check with them for details.

Other Resources

For further information please contact:

Whooping cough and immunisation

- your doctor
- your nearest public health unit
- 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- Immunise Australia National Infoline: 1800 671 811.

Immunise Australia A website about childhood immunisation produced by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing.

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing Information about communicable diseases including vaccine preventable diseases.

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) A website about the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR), produced by Medicare Australia.

Heymann, D., ed. 2008. *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th edition* Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

Related Content

Communicable Diseases factsheet - Whooping cough (pertussis)

National Health and Medical Research Council, 2008. *The Australian Immunisation Handbook (9th Ed.)*

RTI Released

Whooping Cough Alert: FREE Vaccine for Parents

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to alert you to a current outbreak of whooping cough (also called pertussis) in Queensland. In recent months, there have been an increasing number of young babies contracting whooping cough.

Whooping cough in babies can cause severe health problems, such as episodes of violent coughing, vomiting, pneumonia and seizures, which can lead to permanent disability or death. Whooping cough is spread easily by coughing and the most common source of infection in babies is from a parent or sibling.

The best ways to protect your baby from whooping cough are:

1. **Ensure your baby is vaccinated on time.** Your baby will have the best protection from whooping cough after they have received all three doses of vaccine at 2, 4 and 6 months of age.
2. **Keep your baby away from anyone with a cough.**
3. **Ensure that other children in your household are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccines.** Vaccination is recommended for babies at 2, 4 and 6 months of age; a booster dose for children at 4 years of age; and a booster dose for Year 10 students as part of the School Based Vaccination Program.
4. **Ensure that you, and anyone who cares for your child (such as grandparents and childcare providers), have received a booster vaccine for whooping cough.** To obtain a booster dose, anyone who cares for young children, should ask their immunisation provider for a prescription to purchase the vaccine from a pharmacy.
5. **For a limited time, parents of infants born on or after 1 May 2009 can receive a free booster dose of whooping cough vaccine.** The vaccine is available from your doctor now.

Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment. Early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading. For more information about whooping cough and recommended vaccinations, you can ask your doctor, contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or see overleaf.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jeannette Young
Chief Health Officer
17 / 2009

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DOH-DL 16/17-024

RF Document No. 7

Whooping Cough Alert: FREE Vaccine for Parents

CHECKLIST – Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Vaccinate your baby on time
 - 1st dose (2 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
 - 2nd dose (4 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
 - 3rd dose (6 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
- All children in your household are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccinations (including the childhood booster vaccine for children at 4 years of age).
 - To check your children's vaccination status, have a look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than 7 years of age).
- See your doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated.
 - **For a limited time, parents of infants born on or after 1 May 2009 can receive a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine. See your doctor now.**
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to get vaccinated.
 - Vaccine can be purchased from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should administered by an immunisation provider immediately after buying. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (e.g they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Population Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf.

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germ). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms may include:

- Runny nose and sneezing early in the illness
- An irritable, dry cough that gets worse
- Coughing spasms that can end with a loud gasp (a "whooping sound")
- Vomiting after a coughing spasm
- Older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

Population Health Units

Brisbane Southside 3000 9148	Darling Downs 4631 9888	Mackay 4968 6611	Rockhampton 4920 6989
Brisbane Northside 3624 1111	Gold Coast 5509 7222	Mount Isa 4744 4846	Sunshine Coast 5409 6600
Cairns 4050 3600	Hervey Bay 4120 6000	Redcliffe 3142 1800	Townsville 4753 9000



Dear

Thank you for your email dated 2009, regarding help in developing a national response to the pertussis epidemic. The Deputy Premier has asked that I respond on his behalf.

As your letter indicates, there is a national epidemic of pertussis at present. During 2008 three Australian states (Western Australia, Northern Territory and NSW) experienced an increased incidence of pertussis in infants less than 6 months of age. This trend has continued in 2009 and is also now being seen in other states. Queensland did not experience an increase in incidence of pertussis in infants less than 6 months of age until the end of 2008; this has continued into 2009, with 48 cases year to date. The epidemic is now being monitored closely in all states.

Pertussis epidemics tend to occur every three to four years. This epidemic appears to be a particularly severe one, and the frequency of epidemics is not a reason for complacency. It has been known for several years that adolescents and adults whose immunity has waned over time present the greatest potential reservoir of infection, with, sadly, those at greatest risk being infants not old enough to have received at least two vaccine doses. It is for this reason that a booster dose of pertussis-containing vaccine has been recommended for adolescents since January 2004.

Yet, as your situation reveals, many parents and other adults in the community continue to spread pertussis. Your letter indicates that there is lack of information on low childhood vaccination rates in key areas. Within Queensland, similar to other states, childhood vaccination rates are monitored closely by Communicable Diseases Branch and Population Health Units, and specific information, for example flyers to immunisation providers, is targeted to areas of known lower immunisation coverage to try and increase rates. Immunisation nurses and other staff in population health also spend considerable time cleaning data and contacting immunisation providers to send reminder notices to parents if a child is overdue for an immunisation. However immunisation is an individual choice, and there still remain some areas where there are higher rates of people who choose not to vaccinate their children, resulting in lower immunisation coverage overall.

Queensland Health has done some investigations in regard to your concerns about lack of information on low childhood vaccination rates in key areas. Each quarter the Australian Government publishes immunisation coverage rates measured from the Australian Childhood

Immunisation Register. This information is available on the Medicare Australia website. The Australian Government also publishes data each quarter Division of General Practice boundaries, also via a link on the Medicare Australia website (<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/gpii/stats.jsp>). However this information is difficult to find and many people would not know of its existence. I believe a good strategy would be to make this information more obvious to the public. Queensland Health will undertake to work with Medicare Australia to identify if this information can be more readily accessible to enable parents to be better informed.

Your letter also expresses concern that there are no coordinated Federal or State Government campaigns to educate parents about the risk of preventable illnesses or proactively warn parents of outbreaks, and that there are no Federal or State Government campaigns to inform all adults to have regular boosters. At both a national and a state level, it is increasingly difficult to raise public awareness of the seriousness of communicable diseases (which occur in comparatively low numbers). This can make it difficult for some messages to get broadcast as they may not be viewed as a priority. National communicable disease campaigns have tended to focus on new vaccines and initiatives.

Queensland Health does endeavour to circulate information on disease outbreaks to immunisation service providers, as these situations arise. This information is coordinated within Communicable Diseases Branch and circulated to all immunisation service providers and all Population Health Units in Queensland for consistency and a statewide message.

Population Health Units and immunisation service providers then use this information to opportunistically encourage vaccination at the local level. This communication network tends to work well, with a generally high level of awareness of statewide information amongst immunisation providers. However as your letter rightly indicates, this does not necessarily translate into active uptake of the message by those who receive it. Informing other parts of the health system (such as maternity hospitals, obstetricians and paediatricians) which are not directly involved in immunisation service delivery is also an ongoing challenge which the Queensland Health Immunisation Program tries to address via tapping into other professional networks when possible.

In October 2008, when it became evident that the pertussis epidemic would also reach Queensland, Queensland Health established an internal Pertussis Working Group. This group has kept a close watch on pertussis rates within Queensland, and developed a range of initiatives to try and increase pertussis awareness.

These include statewide media releases; targeted pertussis brochures encouraging timely parent and infant vaccination to maternity units for distribution to new mothers; targeted pertussis posters encouraging timely parent and infant vaccination for child care centres, community child health clinics and maternity units; media alerts to all general practitioners through General Practice Queensland (GPQ) to encourage and promote adult pertussis vaccination to all new parents as well as timely vaccination of infants; using infection control practitioners as "champions" to follow up with staff, and maternity units and emergency departments to encourage adult pertussis vaccinations

for both parents and staff; and offering free pertussis vaccine to Queensland Health staff in high risk areas.

Queensland Health also intends, as a high priority, to undertake a second phase media campaign with a strong message promoting vaccination and pertussis prevention. Our aim is to increase awareness and prevent the type of tragedy that has befallen you from happening to anyone else.

All States and Territories and the Australian Government are now closely monitoring the pertussis epidemic. In terms of a national response, Queensland Health's representative on the National Immunisation Committee would be happy to table your letter at the next meeting of this committee to identify whether there are national activities that can be undertaken to further increase awareness of pertussis. [REDACTED]

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, [REDACTED] Manager, Immunisation, Communicable Diseases Branch, Queensland Health, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone (07) [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

MURRAY WATT MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier
and Minister for Health

Prepared by:

[Redacted]

Principal Policy Advisor, Immunisation
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

18 May 2009

Submitted through:

[Redacted]

A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

19 May 2009

Cleared by:

[Redacted]

Deputy Director-General
Division of the Chief Health Officer

[Redacted]

May 2009

RTI Release

From: QHIP-ADMIN
To:
CC: Cdu Cdu; Dlo Dlo; HProtSD_dchocorro
Date: Thursday, 25 August 2011 10:52 am
Subject: email enquiry - free Pertussis vaccination program

Hello and thank you for your enquiry.

Information about pertussis (Whooping Cough) vaccination can be found at the following web links:
http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/documents/whooping_cough_broch.pdf
http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ImmunisationandVaccination/whoopingCoughAndImmunisation_ap.asp
http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/documents/whooping_cough_check.pdf

The funded vaccination program does not currently have a specified end date.

If you require further information, please contact us via the details at the end of this email.

Queensland Health Immunisation Program

Level 1
15 Butterfield Street
HERSTON QLD 4006
Phone: 07 3328 9888
Fax: 07 3328 9720
Email: QHIP-ADMIN@health.qld.gov.au

>>> /2011 8:34 pm >>>

Name :

Phone Number :

Email Address :

Comments : Hello ? I wonder if you can help me.
trying to find out more about the free Pertussis vaccination programme you are rolling out to parents, grandparents and other household contacts of newborn babies in order to try and control Pertussis. It was mentioned in the April 2011 Disease Watch bulletin issued by the WA Public Health Department and I understand that they have extended their programme to the end of the year. I would be grateful if you could let me know if the programme has been extended to the end of the year in Queensland aswell and what advice is being given to tourists travelling to Queensland to visit new born babies. Many thanks

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Date: Friday, 17 June 2011 8:26 am
Subject: Fwd: ?Pertussis case in [redacted]
Attachments: [redacted].pdf

Good morning

QHIP has received the attached email from [redacted] who states [redacted] has had whooping cough on both [redacted] 2010 and [redacted] 2011. I have checked NOCS and can only find details for the first date, not the second. Have you received a pertussis notification for this person recently?

Could you please contact [redacted] to discuss and followup as necessary.

Many thanks, [redacted]

RTI Release



Dear

I refer to your email to the Honourable Campbell Newman, Premier of Queensland, Member for Ashgrove, dated 2012, regarding whooping cough (pertussis) vaccinations for parents of newborns, which has been referred to me for attention.

I arranged for this matter to be examined and wish to provide you with the following information.

The free pertussis vaccine program for parents of newborns was introduced in Queensland in August 2009 as a time limited program in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in pertussis notifications in Queensland. The aim was to prevent whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

Since 2009, analysis of notification data in Queensland and elsewhere has shown that the increase in notifications is substantially affected by increased testing and the increased use of a test that more sensitive in picking up pertussis infections (PCR). More milder cases of pertussis are being detected. In addition, it appears that the rate of pertussis notifications in Queensland is declining, although it remains higher than it was before the increase in 2009.

As you indicate in your email, The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has now rejected two separate applications for funding of adult pertussis vaccines for parents on the basis of uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy and uncertain cost effectiveness.

Based on the factors outlined above, the Queensland Government decided to cease providing free pertussis vaccine to parents, and this took effect from 1 July 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment to the health and well being of very young babies and your advocacy for the immunisation program. I can assure you that babies such as are not viewed as dispensable statistics. The government remains committed to the health of our youngest Queenslanders and will strongly focus on the most effective pertussis prevention strategies, such as ensuring all children are protected through the infant immunisation program. Other key messages will include promotion of the booster dose for parents and other family and household members of newborns.

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, I have arranged for Director Immunisation, Communicable Diseases Branch Queensland Health, on telephone to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP
Minister for Health

RTI Release

Prepared by: [redacted]
Director Immunisation
Communicable Diseases Branch
[redacted]
17 July 2012

Submitted through: [redacted]
Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
[redacted]
July 2012

Submitted through: [redacted]
Executive Director
Health Protection Directorate
[redacted]
July 2012

Submitted through: [redacted]
Chief Health Officer
Division of the Chief Health Officer
[redacted]
July 2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
Deputy Director General
Health Services and Clinical Innovation Division
July 2012

RTI Release



Dear

Thank you for your letter dated 2012, in relation to the 2012 Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Annual Conference Resolution Number 79.

I very much appreciate you taking the time to forward the delegates' request that the whooping cough (dTpa) vaccine for adults be funded by Queensland Health and placed on the National Immunisation Program Schedule Queensland. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the important role local government plays in delivering quality, convenient and free immunisation services to their respective communities. I also commend Logan City Council for raising this issue at your Annual Conference.

Whooping cough is a potentially very serious communicable disease. It is highly contagious and can be life-threatening to babies. This is why young children receive the whooping cough vaccine at two, four and six months, and at four years of age. In Queensland, teenagers are also offered a free booster dose in Year 10 through the School Based Vaccination Program.

In adults, whooping cough typically causes a cough that can persist for up to three months. Immunity from the disease does wane over time, so a booster dose is recommended for persons in contact with infants and others at increased risk from the disease. However, there is currently insufficient evidence to recommend routine 10-yearly booster doses of whooping cough vaccine for adults. Adults wishing to receive the whooping cough vaccine should speak to their doctor. The vaccine is available via prescription.

Whooping cough occurs in epidemic cycles, typically every three to four years.

Queensland Health's free, and time limited, Parent Pertussis Program was introduced in August 2009, because of an unprecedented and rapid increase in whooping cough notifications in Queensland. The aim of the program was to prevent whooping cough in babies too young to be protected by vaccination by reducing the risk of the parent transmitting pertussis to the infant. This strategy is known as "cocooning". It is not an outbreak control strategy.

The Program has now ceased, as evidence suggests that the epidemic is waning with a decline in the rate of whooping cough notifications in Queensland.

When the Program was implemented, there was very little published data on the effectiveness of cocooning programs to prevent whooping cough in infants, but at that time this was considered to be the best approach. Since then, no new robust evidence has become available to support cocooning as an effective strategy.

The funding of vaccines for national immunisation programs is a Commonwealth responsibility. The Commonwealth has a process via the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) to assess cost effectiveness of vaccines for population based vaccination programs.

In 2011, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee rejected two separate applications for funding of adult whooping cough vaccines for parents, on the basis of uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy and uncertain cost effectiveness.

Analysis of Queensland's, and elsewhere, notification data since 2009, indicates that the increase in whooping cough notifications may have been partly due to doctors testing a higher proportion of patients with cough illness (for whooping cough) and the increased use of a test that is more sensitive in detecting whooping cough infections (polymerase chain reaction). That is, more cases, and in particular, more milder cases, of whooping cough are being detected.

Please be assured that the Government remains committed to the health of Queenslanders and will continue to strongly focus on the most effective whooping cough prevention strategies. Vaccination remains the best means of protecting vulnerable babies from the disease and I continue to recommend:

- parents ensure their babies receive all their vaccinations on time;
- teenagers receive their free whooping cough vaccination through the School Based Vaccination Program;
- whooping cough vaccination for adults planning a pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant, as well as other adult household members, grandparents and carers of young children; and
- as much as possible, parents keep babies under six months of age away from adults and children who have an undiagnosed cough illness.

Should you require any further information in relation to this matter, I have arranged for [redacted] Immunisation Director, Communicable Diseases Unit, Health Service and Clinical Innovation Division, Queensland Health, on telephone [redacted] to be available to assist you.

Yours sincerely

LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP
Minister for Health

Prepared by: [redacted]
Principal Public Health Officer
Immunisation Program / Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
22/11/ 2012

Submitted through: [redacted]
Director
Immunisation Program / Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
23/11/ 2012

Updated: 11 January 2013

Cleared by: [redacted]
Executive Director
Communicable Diseases Unit
[redacted]
27 / 11 / 2012
14 January 2013

Cleared by: [redacted]
Chief Health Officer
Chief Health Officer Branch
[redacted]
27/11/2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
Deputy Director General
Health Services and Clinical Innovation Division
[redacted]
28 /11/2012

Cleared by: [redacted]
A/Deputy Director General
Health Services and Clinical Innovation Division
[redacted]
January 2013

RELEASE



Office of the Premier

30 JUN 2009

The Honourable Paul Lucas MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Health
GPO Box 48
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Executive Building
100 George Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone [REDACTED]
Facsimile +61 7 3221 3631
Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

Paul,

You will recall that I raised with you my concerns about increasing rates of Pertussis in Queensland, and also made a Ministerial Statement to the Parliament on 20 May 2009. I remain concerned about those parents who continue to leave their children unprotected and therefore vulnerable to contracting an illness that is preventable.

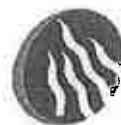
In May 2009, I forwarded to you a copy of my response to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 2009) who wrote to me about the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Pertussis on [REDACTED] 2009 at the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] requested that we urge the Commonwealth Government to coordinate a national response to stop the increase in Pertussis rates.

I requested that you respond directly to them and gave my assurances that their letter would receive your full attention. I would appreciate advice on your response to this matter.

My Ministerial statement also highlighted my request that you examine Queensland's current immunisation programs, with particular focus on Pertussis, and steps to increase community awareness and vaccination rates for adults and children. In addition, I stated that, on your request, this issue was raised at the recent Australian Health Ministers' Conference (AHMC) meeting in May.

I would therefore appreciate you reporting the outcomes of that meeting on this matter. I consider it important that the Queensland Health representative on the National Immunisation Committee raise the issue of Pertussis at the next committee meeting.

While I understand that Queensland Health has undertaken several awareness raising campaigns since October 2008, I believe more can be done. I am advised that there is a Pertussis Working Group currently developing initiatives to enhance vaccination and prevention messages. I would appreciate being provided with an update on this group's progress.



Queensland
Government

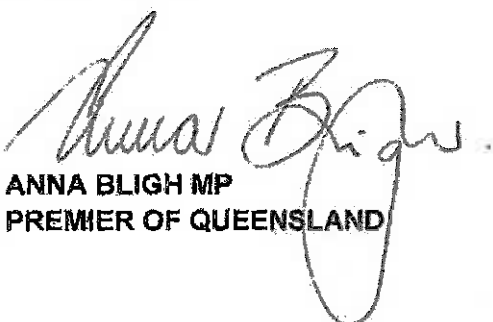
DOH-DL 16/17-024

Document No. 21

In addition to the matters raised above, I ask that you bring an urgent policy submission to Cabinet attaching the Queensland Health Response to Whooping Cough, outlining the measures your Department has, is, and will be undertaking, in response to this preventable disease. The submission should include options for immediate measures such as offering free whooping cough vaccinations for all Queensland children, and all adults of newborns in Queensland, as is the case in New South Wales, Victoria, and the Northern Territory.

I look forward to your advice.

Yours sincerely



ANNA BLIGH MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

RTI Release

Enquiries to:
Manager, Immunisation
Communicable Diseases Branch
Telephone:
Facsimile: 07 3328 9782
File Ref:



Dear

Thank you for your letter of 2009, to the National Health and Medical Research Council, with cc to Mr Michael Reid, Director-General of Queensland Health. Mr Reid has asked that I respond on his behalf. I apologise for the delay in this response.

As you note, in August 2009 Queensland Health commenced offering parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009 a free booster dose of pertussis vaccine. This is a time-limited program which is due to finish on 31 December 2009. It may be that by this time, pertussis incidence is reducing. Queensland Health is closely monitoring statewide and national pertussis rates, and will make decisions regarding extending this program based upon epidemiological information available closer to 31 December 2009.

In addition to funding free pertussis vaccine for parents of newborns, Queensland Health has undertaken extensive activities to raise awareness of the current pertussis epidemic. These include statewide media releases; development of targeted pertussis brochures encouraging timely parent and infant vaccination; media alerts to all general practitioners through General Practice Queensland (GPQ) to encourage and promote adult pertussis vaccination to all new parents as well as timely vaccination of infants; use of infection control practitioners as "champions" to follow up with staff, maternity units and emergency departments regarding encouraging adult pertussis vaccinations to both parents and staff; and offering free pertussis vaccine to Queensland Health staff in high risk areas.

I note your comment that other State and Territory Governments have adopted extended pertussis vaccination programs beyond parents of newborn babies to include all persons who have frequent close contact with infants. In my frequent contact with jurisdictional colleagues, I am aware that in March 2009, New South Wales began funding free pertussis boosters to parents, grandparents and carers of children up to 12 months of age. The Australian Capital Territory commenced a similar, but time limited program in April 2009 which was due to finish in July 2009. The Northern Territory has been offering the vaccine to mothers of newborns born since 1 October 2008 and only

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recently commenced offering the vaccine to fathers and carers living in the same household. Victoria recently ran a time limited program over a few weeks offering vaccine to parents of infants born since 15 June 2009. By no means are the programs being offered in other jurisdictions as extensive as your correspondence implies; Queensland Health's initiative in fact compares favourably with these other jurisdictional programs.

I note that [redacted] is lobbying the National Health and Medical Research Council to recommend the Federal Government adopt an extended whooping cough vaccination program to people who have frequent close contact with infants. Queensland Health would welcome the introduction of such a program at the national level. All states offering adult pertussis vaccination programs are funding these from within state government budgets and I am sure you appreciate the complexities that this involves.

Should you have any queries in relation to this letter, [redacted] Manager, Immunisation, will be happy to discuss these with you.

Yours sincerely

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director, Communicable Diseases Branch
/ 11 / 2009

RTI Release

Prepared by:

[Redacted]

Principal Policy Advisor, Immunisation
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

2 November 2009

Cleared by:

[Redacted]

Manager, Immunisation
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

2 November 2009

Document Name:

Corro\QHIP\letters\2009\08 [Redacted] Ltr [Redacted] re adult pertussis vaccination program

RTI Release

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DOH-DL 16/17-024

RTI Document No. 25

Your baby can catch whooping cough from you!



What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease spread by direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions eg. coughing, sneezing, sharing food or kissing. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. It can be fatal in young babies.

Why are babies at risk?

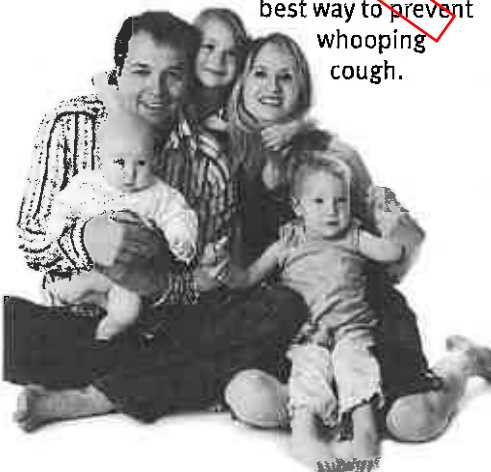
Whooping cough is most serious in babies who are less than 6 months of age as they are not yet fully protected by vaccination. Most hospitalisations and deaths from whooping cough occur in babies less than 6 months of age.

Babies receive some protection against whooping cough from their mother's antibodies during pregnancy, however these don't provide adequate long term protection.

How can whooping cough be prevented?

Most babies with whooping cough catch it from a parent, other close family member or a carer.

Vaccinating the whole family is the best way to prevent whooping cough.



Whooping cough can be fatal, especially for babies less than 6 months of age

Ensure all older children are up to date with the schedule. Booster doses are provided at 4 years, year 10 at school and for parents and carers of babies.

To check any older children's vaccination status, refer to their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for records of vaccinations up to 7 years of age).

The best protection against whooping cough for babies less than 6 months of age is for any adults who care for the baby to get a whooping cough booster vaccine.

Who can receive the free whooping cough booster vaccine?

For a limited time, a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine is available for:

- birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
- other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.
- Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.
- Other eligible people can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby.
- You can obtain this free vaccination from your doctor or immunisation provider.
- While the vaccine will be free, your provider might charge a consultation fee.

What is the whooping cough vaccine?

The whooping cough vaccine is given as part of a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the postnatal period and while breastfeeding.

How long will protection last?

Unfortunately, there is no way to guarantee lifelong protection against whooping cough. Even if you have had whooping cough or have been vaccinated previously, protection only lasts for about ten years. This is why having a booster dose now to protect your baby is so important, even if you have been vaccinated previously.



Are there any side effects of the vaccine?

After vaccination, there may be tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site for one to two days. Some people may experience headache, tiredness, muscle pains and fever. This can be relieved by putting a cold wet cloth on the site or giving paracetamol. Severe allergic reactions are very rare.

People who have had an allergic reaction to a previous vaccine containing tetanus, diphtheria or whooping cough should talk to their doctor.

What about baby's vaccinations?

Once your baby is old enough, you should ensure that vaccinations are given on time. Your baby is offered 3 doses of vaccine (at 2, 4 and 6 months of age). Once all three doses are given, the baby is considered fully immunised. Once the child turns 4 years of age, a booster dose should be given. Booster doses are also given to students in Year 10 at school.

To find out more about immunisation for you or your child:

- visit www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation
- visit www.immunise.health.gov.au
- talk to your doctor or immunisation provider
- call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

Telephone interpreter service: 131450



Timeline checklist

During pregnancy

- Time for Dad and the grandparents to check their vaccination status and get their free vaccination if necessary.
- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (eg. childcare providers) to check their vaccination status and get vaccinated if necessary.

After the birth

- Time for Mum to check her vaccination status and get her free vaccination if necessary. The vaccine is safe to use in the postnatal period and while breastfeeding.

As baby grows

- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in their Personal Health Record booklet.
 - 1st dose (2 months of age – can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (4 months of age)
 - 3rd dose (6 months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age – can be given from 3 years 6 months)

What about people not eligible for the free vaccine?

They should ask their doctor or immunisation provider about getting the whooping cough booster vaccine. It will need to be purchased on private prescription.

Vaccine can be bought from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should be administered by an immunisation provider immediately after purchase. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (eg. they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).



Queensland
Government

Your baby can catch whooping cough from you!



**Whooping cough can be fatal,
especially for babies less than
6 months of age**

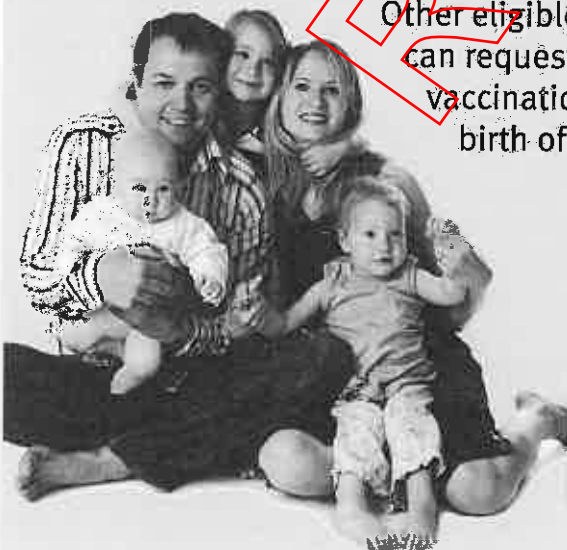
**The best protection for babies is for adults
to get a whooping cough booster vaccine.**

Who can receive the free* whooping cough booster vaccine?

- birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
- other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.

Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.

Other eligible people can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby.



Timeline checklist

During pregnancy

- Ensure the father is vaccinated.
- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to check their vaccination status and get vaccinated if necessary.

After the birth

- Ensure the mother is vaccinated.

As baby grows

- Vaccinate your baby on time.

* You can obtain this free vaccination from your doctor or immunisation provider. While the vaccine will be free, your provider might charge a consultation fee.



**Queensland
Government**

Your baby can catch whooping cough from you!



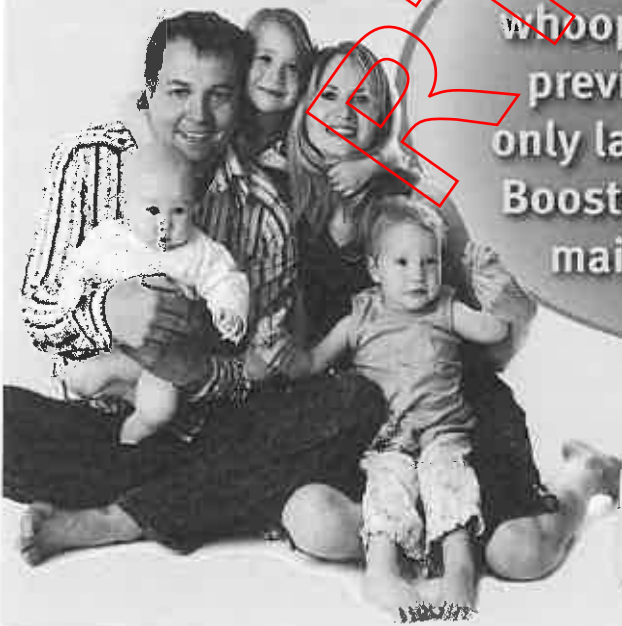
**Whooping cough can be fatal
especially for babies under
6 months of age**

The best protection for babies is for adults to get a booster vaccine

Who can receive the free* whooping cough booster vaccine?

- birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
- other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.

Immunity from having
whooping cough or from
previous vaccinations
only lasts up to 10 years.
Boosters are required to
maintain immunity.



To find out more, visit
www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation

* You can obtain this free vaccination from your doctor or immunisation provider. While the vaccine will be free, your provider might charge a consultation fee.



**Queensland
Government**

Protect your baby from Whooping Cough

Do antibodies from the mother protect the baby against whooping cough?

Maternal antibodies against whooping cough are transferred to your baby at birth and during breast feeding but they don't give adequate long term protection.

What is the adult whooping cough vaccine?

The adult whooping cough vaccine is a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the post natal period and while breast feeding.

How long will protection last?

Are there any side effects of the vaccine?

Following administration the vaccine can cause tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site for one to two days. Very rarely there is headache, tiredness, muscle pains and fever. Relief can be achieved by putting a cold wet cloth on the site and giving paracetamol. Severe allergic reactions are very rare. People who have had an allergic reaction to a previous vaccine containing tetanus, diphtheria or whooping cough should talk to their doctor.

Current data shows an adult whooping cough vaccine will last up to 10 years.

How can whooping cough be treated and controlled?

Whooping cough can be treated with antibiotics. Treatment can prevent the infection from being passed on but may not alter the course of infection for the individual. See your doctor if you have symptoms of whooping cough.

The best protection for babies less than 6 months of age against whooping cough is for you and any adults who care for your baby to get a booster vaccination for whooping cough.

To find out more about immunisation for you or your child:

- . Visit www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation or www.immunise.health.gov.au
- . Talk to your doctor or immunisation provider
- . Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)




Contact Details for Public Health Units		
Southern	Central	Northern
Brisbane South 3500 9148	Brisbane North 3624 1111	Cairns 4226 5501
Gold Coast 5509 7222	Sunshine Coast 5409 6600	Townsville 4753 9000
Darling Downs 4631 9888	Rockhampton 4920 6989	Mackay 4968 6611
Logan 3412 2989	Hervey Bay 4184 1800	Mt Isa 4744 9100
West Moreton 3413 1200	Moreton Bay 3142 1800	

This brochure has been reproduced with kind permission from the NT Department of Health and Families.

Updated October 2010

Protect your baby from
Whooping Cough

 Queensland Government
Queensland Health

Protect your baby from Whooping Cough

What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions such as sharing food or kissing.

What is the infectious period?

A person is infectious during the cold like symptoms in the early stages through to 5 days after starting antibiotics, or if left untreated for the first 3 weeks of coughing.

What are the symptoms of whooping cough?

Whooping cough starts with cold-like symptoms and an irritating cough. The irritating cough can develop into episodes of coughing bouts often followed by dry retching or vomiting.

In children, the cough may end with a crowing noise (the whoop) as air is drawn back into the chest. Adults and older children may have mild disease but are still able to pass the infection to others including babies.

Who is most at risk?

Whooping cough is most serious in babies who are less than 6 months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Most babies with whooping cough will have caught it from a parent or grandparent.



Babies may hold their breath and sometimes turn blue from lack of oxygen. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. Most hospitalisations and deaths occur in those less than 6 months of age.

How can whooping cough be prevented?

Immunisation is the best way to prevent whooping cough. A combination vaccine containing whooping cough is given at 2 months (can be given from 6 weeks of age), 4 months and 6 months of age; a booster dose at 4 years (can be given from 3 years and 6 months of age); and to students in year 10 at school. It is very important that vaccinations are given when they are due so you need to make sure that your baby is vaccinated on time.

Protection against whooping cough from vaccination or disease in childhood is not life long and wanes with time. A booster vaccine in adults is needed to maintain protection.

A whooping cough booster vaccine should be given to:

- adults planning a pregnancy
- all new parents as soon as possible after the birth of their baby (expectant fathers can request vaccination prior to the birth of their baby)
- adults working with or caring for young children i.e. child care workers, health care workers, grandparents
- any adult who wishes to protect themselves

What about baby's vaccinations?

Once your baby is old enough, you should ensure that vaccinations are given on time. Your baby is offered 3 doses of vaccine (at 2, 4 and 6 months of age). Once all three doses are given, the baby is considered fully immunised. Once the child turns 4 years of age, a booster dose should be given. Booster doses are also given to students in Year 10 at school.

What about people not eligible for the free vaccine?

They should ask their doctor or immunisation provider about getting the whooping cough booster vaccine. It will need to be purchased on private prescription.

Vaccine can be bought from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should be administered by an immunisation provider immediately after purchase. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (eg. they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).



To find out more about immunisation for you or your child:

- visit www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation
- visit www.immunise.health.gov.au
- talk to your doctor or immunisation provider
- call 13 HEALTH (13 43 75 84)

Telephone interpreter service: 131450



Timeline checklist

During pregnancy

- Time for Dad and the grandparents to check their vaccination status and get their free vaccination if necessary.
- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (eg. childcare providers) to check their vaccination status and get vaccinated if necessary.

After the birth

- Time for Mum to check her vaccination status and get her free vaccination if necessary. The vaccine is safe to use in the postnatal period and while breastfeeding.

As baby grows

- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in their Personal Health Record booklet.
 - 1st dose (2 months of age – can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (4 months of age)
 - 3rd dose (6 months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age – can be given from 3 years 6 months)

Your baby can catch
**whooping cough
from you!**



Get your
**free parent
booster vaccine**

Whooping cough can be
fatal, especially for babies
less than 6 months of age



What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease spread by direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions eg. coughing, sneezing, sharing food or kissing. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. It can be fatal in young babies.

Why are babies at risk?

Whooping cough is most serious in babies who are less than 6 months of age as they are not yet fully protected by vaccination. Most hospitalisations and deaths from whooping cough occur in babies less than 6 months of age.

Babies receive some protection against whooping cough from their mother's antibodies during pregnancy, however these don't provide adequate long term protection.

How can whooping cough be prevented?

Most babies with whooping cough catch it from a parent, other close family member or a carer.

Vaccinating the whole family is the best way to prevent whooping cough.



The best protection against whooping cough for babies less than 6 months of age is for any adults who care for the baby to get a whooping cough booster vaccine.

Who can receive the free whooping cough booster vaccine?

- For a limited time, a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine is available for:
 - birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
 - other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age
- Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.
- Other eligible people can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby.
- You can obtain this free vaccination from your doctor or immunisation provider.
- While the vaccine will be free, your provider might charge a consultation fee.

Ensure all older children are up to date with the schedule. Booster doses are provided at 4 years, Year 10 at school and for parents, grandparents and adults living in the same household as babies.

To check an older child's vaccination status, refer to their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for records of vaccinations up to 7 years of age).

What is the whooping cough vaccine?

The whooping cough vaccine is given as part of a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the postnatal period and while breastfeeding.

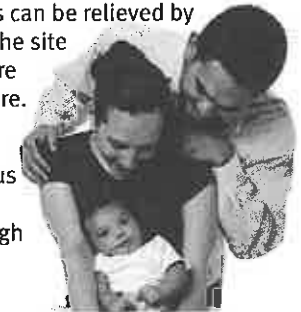
How long will protection last?

Unfortunately, there is no way to guarantee lifelong protection against whooping cough. Even if you have had whooping cough or have been vaccinated previously, protection only lasts for about ten years. This is why having a booster dose now to protect your baby is so important, even if you have been vaccinated previously.

Are there any side effects of the vaccine?

After vaccination, there may be tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site for one to two days. Some people may experience headache, tiredness, muscle pains and fever. This can be relieved by putting a cold wet cloth on the site or giving paracetamol. Severe allergic reactions are very rare.

People who have had an allergic reaction to a previous vaccine containing tetanus, diphtheria or whooping cough should talk to their doctor.



Queensland Health helping parents give new babies the best start in life.

From 1 August 2009, Queensland Health is offering free pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine for parents of newborn babies.

Parents whose baby is born on, or after, 1 May 2009 are eligible to receive a free booster dose of adult formulation diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis (dTpa) vaccine, for a limited time.

Australia is currently experiencing a pertussis epidemic, and this program aims to protect babies too young to be fully protected by vaccination.

Pertussis is most serious in young babies as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Many babies with pertussis will have caught it from a parent.

Pertussis in infants can cause severe health complications resulting in permanent disability or death.

Vaccination is the best way to prevent pertussis. Protection from pertussis is not life-long and hence adults require a booster dose to maintain protection.

To protect their babies, all new parents should receive pertussis vaccine as soon as possible after their baby is born. The adult dTpa vaccine is safe to have while breastfeeding.

Parents can be vaccinated against pertussis at their regular health service. (A consultation fee may be charged by GPs).



Contact Details for Population Health Units			
Southern Area			
Brisbane South	3000 9148	Gold Coast	5509 7222
Darling Downs	4631 9888		
Central Area			
Brisbane North	3624 1111	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Moreton Bay	3142 1800	Wide Bay	4120 6000
Rockhampton	4920 6989		
Northern Area			
Cairns	4050 3600	Mount Isa	4744 4846
Mackay	4968 6611	Townsville	4753 9000

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Population Health Unit.



From:
To:
Date: Wednesday, 3 November 2010 12:38 pm
Subject: Parent pertussis programs

SA offers free whooping cough vaccine for new parents and grandparents who hold health care cards or pensioner concession cards:

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+information/news/health+alerts/24+sep+10+-+free+whooping+cough+vaccine+for+new+parents+and+grandparents>

WA - only funded for Year 7 school students

<http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/481/2/Pertussis%20Fact%20Sheet%20July%202010.pdf>

TAS - only funded for Year 10 students

http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/52529/Immunisation_Schedule_for_Children_in_Tasmania_2010.pdf

NSW - new parents, grandparents and people in regular contact with newborn babies are eligible for free vaccination

<http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/mediacentre/mediareleases/2009/090327.pdf>

VIC - The vaccine is available free until 30 June 2011 to parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of newborn babies.

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/fact-sheets/factsheets/free-whooping-cough-vaccine>

ACT - Free whooping cough vaccination program for parents and eligible grandparents has been extended until the end of the year

<http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=9687>

NT - free for all parents, carers and siblings of babies under 7 months of age

<http://newsroom.nt.gov.au/index.cfm?d=5&fuseaction=viewRelease&id=5622>

Regards

RECEIVED



THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
Minister for Health and Ageing

MEDIA RELEASE

21 February 2011

Protecting Bubs: Whooping Cough Epidemic

As the current whooping cough epidemic continues, Health and Ageing Minister Nicola Roxon has reminded parents to protect their children with vaccinations, which can begin six weeks after birth.

“All parents should take advantage of the free vaccines provided by the Australian Government to protect young children from whooping cough,” Ms Roxon said.

“Babies can be protected with vaccinations at six to eight weeks after birth, then at four months, and then when they reach six months old.

“Vaccines worth about \$86 million will be provided in 2010-2011—free of charge for infants, children and adolescents.

“Babies are not fully protected until their third dose of the vaccine, so it is important for those around new babies to be free of infection.

“While the vaccine for adults is not on the National Immunisation Program Schedule, several states and territories have funded a booster-vaccination program for adults, and the vaccine is available for private purchase.

“Parents of new babies should ask their GP about a whooping cough vaccination for themselves to prevent passing on infection to their unprotected baby.

“Fathers can be immunised before the baby’s birth, while mothers should be immunised soon after the baby is born.

“Vaccinations should also be considered for siblings, parents and close family members and their immunisation should be up to date before a new baby arrives.

“The Australian Government is working with states and territories to promote the uptake of vaccines.”

For more information, contact Ms Roxon’s Office: (02) 6277 7220

Queensland Health Immatisation Program

Whooping cough alert: vaccine **FREE** for parents, grandparents and adult household members

checklist

Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Ensure parents, grandparents and adult household members are vaccinated.
For a limited time, a free* adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine is available for:
 - birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
 - other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.

Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.

Other eligible people can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of the baby.

- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
 - To check your children's vaccination status, look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than seven years of age).
- Encourage other adults who are in contact with your baby (such as relatives, friends and childcare providers) to get vaccinated. The vaccine can be purchased with a prescription from a doctor.
- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in the child's Personal Health Record.
 - 1st dose (two months of age – can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (four months of age)
 - 3rd dose (six months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age – can be given from 3 years 6 months)

* Although the vaccine is free, some providers might charge a consultation fee. Unfortunately people who have already purchased the vaccine privately can not be reimbursed.

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germs). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms may include:

- runny nose and sneezing early in the illness
- an irritable, dry cough that gets worse
- coughing spasms that can end with a loud gasp (a "whooping sound")
- vomiting after a coughing spasm
- older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away.

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact

- your doctor,
- 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- your local Public Health Unit.

A copy of a whooping cough fact sheet for new parents is also available at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation



Queensland Government

Whooping cough alert: vaccine FREE for parents

checklist

Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Vaccinate your baby on time.
- Ensure all children in your household are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccinations (including the childhood booster vaccine for children at four years of age).
 - To check your children's vaccination status, have a look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than seven years of age).
- See your doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of your baby.
 - **For a limited time, parents of infants born on or after 1 May 2009 can receive a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine*. See your doctor now.**
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to get vaccinated.
 - Vaccine can be bought from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should be administered by an immunisation provider immediately after purchase. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (eg. they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).

* Unfortunately, parents who have purchased the vaccine privately can not be reimbursed.

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Population Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germs). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

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- vomiting after a coughing spasm
- older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

Population Health Units

Brisbane Northside	3624 1111
Brisbane Southside	3000 9148
Cairns	4050 3600
Darling Downs	4631 9888
Gold Coast	5509 7222
Hervey Bay	4120 6000
Mount Isa	4744 9113
Mackay	4968 6611
Redcliffe	3142 1800
Rockhampton	4920 6989
Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Townsville	4753 9000



Queensland Government

Queensland Health Immunisation Program

Whooping cough alert: vaccine **FREE** for parents, grandparents and adult household members

checklist

Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Ensure parents, grandparents and adult household members are vaccinated.
For a limited time, a free* adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine is available for:
 - birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age
 - other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.

Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.

Other eligible people can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of the baby.

- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
 - To check your children's vaccination status, look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than seven years of age).

- Encourage other adults who are in contact with your baby (such as relatives, friends and childcare providers) to get vaccinated. The vaccine can be purchased with a prescription from a doctor.

- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in the child's Personal Health Record.
 - 1st dose (two months of age – can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (four months of age)
 - 3rd dose (six months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age – can be given from 3 years 6 months)

* Although the vaccine is free, some providers might charge a consultation fee. Unfortunately people who have already purchased the vaccine privately can not be reimbursed.

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Public Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germs). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms may include:

- runny nose and sneezing early in the illness
- an irritable, dry cough that gets worse
- coughing spasms that can end with a loud gasp (a "whooping sound")
- vomiting after a coughing spasm
- older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

Public Health Units

Brisbane Northside	3624 1111
Brisbane Southside	3000 9148
Cairns	4226 5501
Darling Downs	4631 9888
Gold Coast	5509 7222
Hervey Bay	4184 1800
Logan	3412 2989
Mackay	4968 6611
Moreton Bay	3142 1800
Mount Isa	4744 9100
Rockhampton	4920 6989
Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Townsville	4753 9000
West Moreton	3413 1200



Queensland Government

Queensland Health Immunisation Program

Whooping cough alert: vaccine FREE for parents

checklist

Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in the child's Personal Health Record.
 - 1st dose (two months of age - can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (four months of age)
 - 3rd dose (six months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age - can be given from 3 years 6 months)
- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
 - To check your children's vaccination status, look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than seven years of age).
- Ensure parents are vaccinated.

For a limited time, parents of infants younger than 6 months can receive a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine*. See your doctor now.

 - Mothers of newborn babies should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.
 - Expectant fathers can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to get vaccinated.
 - Vaccine can be bought from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should be administered by an immunisation provider immediately after purchase. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (eg. they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).

* Unfortunately parents who have purchased the vaccine privately can not be reimbursed.

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Public Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germs). It can affect babies, children and adults.

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Queensland Government

Protect your baby from

Whooping Cough

Whooping cough can be deadly, especially for babies less than 6 months of age. Parents can protect their baby from whooping cough, by protecting themselves with a free whooping cough booster vaccine.



What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions (such as when sharing food or kissing).

Who is most at risk?

Whooping cough is most serious in babies less than 6 months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Most babies with whooping cough catch it from a parent or other close family member or carer.

Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. Most hospitalisations and deaths occur in those less than 6 months of age.

Do antibodies from the mother protect the baby against whooping cough?

Maternal antibodies against whooping cough are transferred to your baby at birth and during breast feeding, but they don't give reliable long term protection against whooping cough.

How can whooping cough be prevented?

Immunisation is the best way to prevent whooping cough. A combination vaccine protecting against whooping cough is given at 2 months (can be given from 6 weeks of age), 4 months and 6 months of age; and booster doses are given at 4 years (can be given from 3 years and 6 months of age) and to students in year 10 at school. It is very important that vaccinations are given when they are due so you need to make sure that your baby is vaccinated on time.

The best protection against whooping cough for babies less than 6 months of age is for any adults who care for your baby to get a whooping cough booster vaccine.

What is the whooping cough booster vaccine?

The whooping cough booster vaccine is a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the post natal period and while breast feeding. The vaccine can be given at any time after a previous dose of a vaccine containing tetanus and diphtheria toxoids.

How long does protection last?

Natural infection with whooping cough does not guarantee lifelong protection, and neither does vaccination against the disease. Protection after the disease or vaccination lasts up to ten years.

Who can receive the free whooping cough booster vaccine?

Birth, adoptive and foster parents of children less than 6 months of age are eligible for free whooping cough booster vaccine.

Expectant fathers can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby.

You can obtain this free vaccination from your doctor or immunisation provider.

Are there any side effects from the whooping cough booster vaccine?

Following administration the vaccine can cause tenderness, redness and swelling at the injection site for one to two days. Very rarely there is headache, tiredness, muscle pains and fever. Relief can be achieved by putting a cold wet cloth on the site and giving paracetamol. Severe allergic reactions are very rare.

What if I am not eligible for the free vaccine?

Ask your doctor or immunisation provider about getting the whooping cough booster vaccine – it will need to be purchased on private prescription.



Queensland Government

To find out more about immunisation for you or your child:

- Visit www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation or www.immunise.health.qld.gov.au/
- Talk to your doctor or immunisation provider
- Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

Change in brand of dTpa vaccine used in the funded ADULT PROGRAM

- This vaccine order contains **Boostrix[®]** instead of **Adacel[®]** which has previously been supplied for the funded adult pertussis vaccine program. Birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, all grandparents and other adults living in the household with a baby under six months of age are eligible for free vaccine.
- All of the above groups can be vaccinated prior to the birth of the baby except for the expectant mother who should seek dTpa vaccination as soon as possible following the birth of her baby.
- To avoid wastage of vaccine please use your **existing stock** of Adacel[®] **FIRST** before you commence using Boostrix[®].

Year 10 students

You will still need to provide the **student's name, date of birth and year level** to QHIP when requesting the vaccine. Remember to record any school based vaccinations given at your practice/clinic.

- Please count your stock on hand for Adacel[®] and Boostrix[®] separately and include the expiry dates of both vaccines when placing your vaccine order.
- For further information about the supply of dTpa vaccine please phone **QHIP** on **3328 9888**.



Pertussis Vaccine for Parents

- ❖ This is your initial supply of pertussis vaccine for the free pertussis vaccine program for parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009.
- ❖ The vaccine is the adolescent/adult formulation diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis dTpa.
- ❖ The eligible target group is birth, adoptive and foster parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009.

Follow up orders:

- 2 weeks after you receive your initial delivery of vaccine you will be able to reorder. You will need to include a full stock count of all vaccines held by your practice/clinic when you place your next order.
- monthly orders will then resume.

- ❖ Enclosed is a **"DATA COLLECTION SHEET"** to record the dTpa vaccine you administer to parents. Please photocopy this sheet for ongoing use.
- ❖ Please forward this sheet to **VIVAS, PO Box 2368, FORTITUDE VALLEY BC 4006** at the end of each week.
- ❖ Please complete an Immunisation Record Card (enclosed with this order) so that parents have a record of their vaccination.

Please ensure that vaccinations of all other groups, e.g. Year 10 students and refugees receiving dTpa, are recorded appropriately and forwarded to VIVAS in the usual way. Vaccine for these groups should be ordered with your monthly order.

- ❖ If you have any further enquiries about pertussis vaccination please contact your local Population Health Unit listed below:

Contact Details for Population Health Units					
Southern Area		Central Area		Northern Area	
Brisbane South	3000 9148	Brisbane North	3624 1111	Cairns	4050 3600
Gold Coast	5509 7222	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600	Townsville	4753 9000
Darling Downs	4631 9888	Rockhampton	4920 6989	Mackay	4968 6611
		Wide Bay	4120 6000	Mount Isa	4744 4846
		Moreton Bay	3142 1800		



DATA COLLECTION SHEET for FREE dTpa

VSP No.

VSP Phone no. _____

Please record all FREE dTpa vaccine given to birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age and other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.

Post this sheet at the end of each week to
QHIP, PO Box 2368, FORTITUDE VALLEY BC 4006

	Patient Name	Date of vaccination	Child's date of birth
Eg.	Sample record	15/5/2011	30/6/2011
1		/ /201	/ /
2		/ /201	/ /
3		/ /201	/ /
4		/ /201	/ /
5		/ /201	/ /
6		/ /201	/ /
7		/ /201	/ /
8		/ /201	/ /
9		/ /201	/ /
10		/ /201	/ /
11		/ /201	/ /
12		/ /201	/ /
13		/ /201	/ /
14		/ /201	/ /
15		/ /201	/ /
16		/ /201	/ /
17		/ /201	/ /
18		/ /201	/ /
19		/ /201	/ /
20		/ /201	/ /

RTI REQUEST

Whooping Cough

Whooping Cough

① IDENTIFY *the disease*

What is whooping cough?

- Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a serious respiratory infection that causes a long coughing illness. In babies, it can lead to pneumonia and brain damage.
- Whooping cough can be life-threatening for babies. Newborns are not immune and they often get extremely sick.
- Older children and adults can get whooping cough and can spread it to others, including babies.
- Antibiotics can prevent whooping cough spreading if given early but the cough often continues after treatment.

What are the symptoms?

- Whooping cough starts like a cold with a blocked or runny nose, sneezing, a mild fever and an occasional cough.
- The cough gets worse and severe bouts of uncontrollable coughing develop. Coughing bouts can be followed by vomiting, choking or taking a big gasping breath which causes a 'whooping' sound. The cough can last for many weeks and can be worse at night.
- Some newborns don't cough at all but stop breathing and turn blue.
- Older children and adults may just have a mild cough that doesn't go away.

How is whooping cough spread?

- A person with whooping cough can spread it to others in the first 3 weeks of illness. Bacteria coughed into the air can be inhaled by babies, children or adults nearby. These people are then in danger of getting whooping cough.

② PROTECT *your child*

Protect your baby

- Newborns are not immune until they have had their whooping cough vaccines. To protect them until they are immune, keep people with a cough away from your baby.

- The vaccine for babies is given at 2, 4 and 6 months. The first dose can be given as early as 6 weeks. Immunise your baby on time so they can be protected as soon as possible. If your baby's vaccines are overdue, speak to your GP about catching up.
- Whooping cough vaccine is effective but doesn't fully protect all babies. You still need to watch out, even if your baby is immunised.

Older children

- By immunising older children with boosters at 4 years and in high school, you give them some protection against whooping cough. This also helps to reduce spread to others.
- Check if your child has been vaccinated. Speak to your immunisation provider or GP or ring the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809.
- Remember that even immunised children can sometimes catch whooping cough.

Adults

- Adults can get whooping cough and can spread the infection to babies. They may just have mild symptoms and may not realise that their cough could cause harm.
- If you're a new parent, you can top-up your immunity by getting a whooping cough booster. Boosters are also recommended for grandparents, couples planning a pregnancy, and for child care workers and health care workers.
- Whooping cough vaccines can be accessed from your GP, Aboriginal Medical Service, community health centre or council clinic.

3 PREVENT *the spread*

How can I prevent the spread of whooping cough?

- Whooping cough is highly infectious in the first 3 weeks. It spreads easily through families, childcare centres and schools, so it's important to act fast.
- Anyone with symptoms should see a doctor as soon as possible. Your GP can test for whooping cough. Early diagnosis is especially important for new parents and people who have regular contact with babies.
- If whooping cough is detected early enough, your doctor may prescribe a course of antibiotics. After 5 days of treatment, enough bacteria are killed to stop the spread to others.
- In some situations, other people who have been in contact with an infectious person may also need antibiotics to help prevent the infection, especially if they are babies or if they have close contact with babies.
- People diagnosed with whooping cough should stay away from work, school or childcare until no longer infectious. Ask your doctor when it's safe to return.

For more information about whooping cough and immunisation, contact

- Your doctor
- 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- your local Public Health Unit
- www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation
- www.immunise.health.gov.au/

Acknowledgement for the Department of Health and Ageing required before publication???



RTI Release

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/consumers/adults.asp>

Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) (dTpa)

Why is immunisation recommended?

Whooping cough is highly contagious. It can cause serious complications in young children. Tetanus is a painful illness. It causes spasms of the jaw and other muscles. It can be fatal. Diphtheria can cause breathing difficulties and damage the heart and nervous system.

Adult immunisation is recommended for:

- those planning pregnancy
- expectant partners or new mothers
- anyone in regular contact with babies under six months of age (for example, family members, childcare and healthcare workers)
- any adult wanting to protect themselves against whooping cough
- adults with a tetanus prone wound (if more than 5 years since last dose)

Vaccination requirements:

- One booster dose (provided that no documented dTpa booster dose has been received) given as combined dTpa injection.

More information is available on the factsheets -

- [Diphtheria and immunisation](#)
- [Tetanus and immunisation](#)
- [Whooping cough \(pertussis\) and immunisation](#)

Topic: Whooping cough and immunisation

Change notification: end of free vaccination program for birth parents, grandparents and other adults in the home

The free whooping cough vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age (including other adults in the same household) will cease on 30 June 2012.

However the vaccine will continue to be provided free for:

- all children at 2 (can be administered at 6 weeks), 4 and 6 months of age
- children aged four years (booster)
- year 10 students (booster).

For further information:

- [read the FAQs](#) [link to FAQs]
- call your nearest Public Health Unit [www.health.qld.gov.au/healthservices/byFacility.asp].

About whooping cough

What is whooping cough?

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing and direct contact with infected nose or mouth secretions (such as when sharing food or kissing).

Who is most at risk?

Whooping cough is most serious in babies less than six months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Most babies with whooping cough catch it from a parent or other close family member or carer. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen. Most hospitalisations and deaths occur in those less than six months of age.

How can whooping cough be prevented?

Immunisation is the best way to prevent whooping cough. The vaccine is recommended and is free for:

- all children at 2 (can be administered at 6 weeks), 4 and 6 months of age
- children four years of age
- year 10 students (booster).

What is the whooping cough booster vaccine?

The whooping cough booster vaccine is a combination vaccine that provides protection against whooping cough, diphtheria and tetanus. It is safe to use in the post natal period and while breast feeding. The vaccine can be given at any time after a previous dose of a vaccine containing tetanus and diphtheria toxoids.

How long does protection last?

Natural infection with whooping cough does not guarantee lifelong protection, and neither does vaccination against the disease. Protection after the disease or vaccination lasts up to ten years.

Practical advice

Possible side effects of the vaccine

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects. Most side effects are minor, last a short time and do not lead to any long-term problems.

Possible side effects of whooping cough vaccine may include fever, redness and soreness or swelling where the injection was given, nausea, headache, tiredness and aching muscles. More serious side effects are extremely rare and can include severe allergic reactions.

Contact your immunisation provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination which you consider serious or unexpected.

Pre-vaccination checklist

This checklist helps your doctor/nurse decide about vaccinating you or your child.

Please tell your doctor/nurse if the person about to be vaccinated:

- is unwell today
- has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS) or is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy)
- has had a severe reaction following any vaccine
- has *any* severe allergies (to anything)
- has had any vaccine in the past month
- has had an injection of immunoglobulin, or received any blood products or a whole blood transfusion within the past year
- is pregnant
- has a past history of Guillain-Barr syndrome
- was a pre-term infant
- has a chronic illness
- has a bleeding disorder.

A different vaccine schedule may be recommended if the person to be vaccinated:

- identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- does not have a functioning spleen
- is planning a pregnancy or anticipating parenthood
- is a parent, grandparent or carer of a newborn
- lives with someone who has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS), or lives with someone who is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy).

Care after vaccination

- For redness or swelling at the injection site, apply a cold compress.
- To lower temperature or relieve discomfort, paracetamol may be given.
- If fever persists, consult your doctor.
- If any reaction occurs that you consider serious or unexpected, seek medical advice.
- Contact the service provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination.

Where can I be immunised?

You can be immunised at your local doctor or medical centre. Some councils, community child health and community health centres may hold free immunisation clinics. Check with them for details.

Other resources

For further information please contact:

- your doctor
- your nearest public health unit
- 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 34)
- Immunise Australia National Infoline: 1800 671 811. Website: www.immunise.health.gov.au

A website about childhood immunisation produced by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing.
[Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing](#)

Information about communicable diseases including vaccine preventable diseases.
[Australian Childhood Immunisation Register \(ACIR\)](#)

A website about the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR), produced by Medicare Australia.
Heymann, D., ed. 2008. *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, 19th edition*. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

Related content

[Communicable Diseases factsheet—Whooping cough \(pertussis\)](#)
National Health and Medical Research Council, 2008. *The Australian Immunisation Handbook (9th Ed.)*

DRAFT CDNA Statement on whooping cough (pertussis) vaccination for parents and others who care for babies

Whooping cough is an infection that can affect people of any age, but is most serious in young babies. Babies require a primary course of 3 vaccinations to be best protected. These should be given on time, starting as early as 6 weeks, and then at 4 months and 6 months of age. However, immunity declines after a few years and a booster is required at 4 years and again at 12 to 17 years. Whooping cough vaccine is provided free at all these ages under the National Immunisation Program.

Whooping cough is circulating in the community all the time, with larger epidemics every few years. The most recent epidemic began in 2008 in some parts of Australia; all regions had experienced epidemic activity by 2011. During this epidemic, large numbers of cases were identified, in part because of the more sensitive throat swab tests (PCR) that are now more commonly used, especially in children.

The *Australian Immunisation Handbook* recommends a single booster for adults planning a pregnancy, new parents and other household and non-household members in regular contact with young children, such as grandparents and carers. Since 2009, as an emergency measure in the context of the epidemic, Australian states and territories – for variable periods of time – have offered free whooping cough vaccine to parents of babies in an attempt to protect babies too young to be immunised. This strategy, often called “cocooning”, is based on studies, including some from Australia, which show that young babies with whooping cough are most commonly infected by a parent, especially their mothers in the period before the first dose can be given at 6 weeks. The principle was to create a “cocoon” to protect against whooping cough by vaccinating the people in closest contact with the baby to indirectly protect the baby from infection.

This emergency measure was implemented on the basis of the best knowledge at the time, but how well it works depends on the completeness of the “cocoon” and how soon after birth these people are immunised. It is very difficult to maintain a full cocoon as infections can be spread from people other than parents and carers. As it takes up to 10 days after vaccination before protection is optimal, even vaccinating mothers immediately after their baby’s birth leaves the mother vulnerable to infection and the possibility of infecting her baby before she is immune. In light of this uncertainty, the intention was to fund the program for a limited period only, to help protect young babies during the epidemic.

In 2011 the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee rejected two applications for funding of adult whooping cough vaccines for new parents as part of routine funding through the National Immunisation Program, on the basis of *uncertain clinical effectiveness* and *highly uncertain cost effectiveness*.

As the whooping cough epidemic activity has now decreased in many regions of Australia, and with the uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy, CDNA recommends that:

- health authorities continue to review the evidence on the effectiveness of cocooning in preventing severe whooping cough infections in new babies
- whooping cough vaccination for parents and carers is likely to protect them and may thereby be expected to reduce the transmission of whooping cough from parents and carers to babies. In the current absence of definitive evidence on this matter, practitioners should advise parents and other carers of infants less than 6 months of age to consider the potential benefits to themselves and their family of boosting their whooping cough immunity. Providing vaccination when planning pregnancy or very soon after birth will maximise any such benefits.

- whooping cough vaccine is available on prescription for parents and other carers who choose to receive it.

RTI Release

Key messages for immunisation providers and the community regarding cessation of the parent pertussis program in Queensland

- The Queensland Government's free pertussis booster vaccine program for eligible adults will no longer be available after 30 June 2012.
- The government remains committed to the health of our youngest Queenslanders and will strongly focus on the most effective pertussis prevention strategies, such as ensuring all children are protected through the infant immunisation program.
- The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in pertussis notifications in Queensland, with the aim to prevent whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.
- The program was introduced as a time limited program, similar to those of other Australian states and territories. The intention was to fund the program only until the rate of pertussis notifications declined. Other states and territories are also finishing their programs.
- Current data appear to indicate that the rate of pertussis notifications in Queensland is declining, although it remains higher than it was before the increase in 2009.
- When the program was implemented, there was very little published data on the effectiveness of 'cocooning' programs to prevent pertussis in infants, but at that time this was considered to be the best approach. Since then no new robust evidence has become available since to support cocooning.
- Since 2009, analysis of notification data in Queensland and elsewhere has shown that the increase in pertussis notifications is substantially affected by increased testing and the increased use of a test that more sensitive in picking up pertussis infections (PCR). More milder cases of pertussis are being detected.
- The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has rejected two separate applications for funding of adult pertussis vaccines for parents on the basis of uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy and uncertain cost effectiveness.
- The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation continues to recommend pertussis vaccination for adults planning a pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant; other adult household members, grandparents and carers of young children.
- After 30 June, parents, grandparents and other care-givers can pay for a pertussis booster vaccination if they choose. Vaccine is available via prescription.
- For more information about whooping cough and vaccinations, ask your doctor, contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or refer to the fact sheet on the Queensland Health website.

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Frequently asked questions

End of program information—whooping cough program for parents, grandparents, carers and other members of the household.

When does the program end?

The free Whooping Cough (pertussis) Vaccine Program for eligible adults will end 30 June 2012. This means the whooping cough vaccine will no longer be provided free to birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age—as well as other adults living in a household.

Why is the program ending?

The free vaccine program was designed as a time-limited outbreak control measure to address an increase in reported cases of whooping cough in 2008.

Current reported rates of whooping cough infection indicate a statewide downward trend.

Has the recommendation for who should get the vaccine and when changed?

No. The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation continues to recommend the whooping cough vaccine for:

- babies at two (can be administered at six weeks), four and six months of age, children four years of age and adolescents in Year 10 or age equivalent (vaccine for these groups is provided free under the National Immunisation Program)
- those planning a pregnancy
- expectant partners or new mothers
- anyone in regular contact with babies under six months of age (for example, family members, childcare and healthcare workers)
- any adult wanting to protect themselves against whooping cough.

If the recommendations have remained unchanged why is the program ending?

The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in whooping cough notifications in Queensland, with the aim of preventing whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

When the program was implemented there were very little published data on the effectiveness of 'cocooning' programs to prevent whooping cough in infants, but at that time, this was considered to be the best approach. Since then no new robust evidence has become available to support cocooning.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has rejected two separate applications for funding of adult whooping cough vaccines for parents on the basis of uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy and uncertain cost effectiveness.

Since 2009, analysis of notification data in Queensland, and elsewhere, has shown that the increase in whooping cough notifications is substantially affected by increased testing and the

increased use of PCR testing, which is more sensitive in detecting whooping cough infections than serology or culture.

How is the government going to manage whooping cough after the program ends?

Vaccination of infants against whooping cough remains our best means of protecting vulnerable babies from the disease, reducing and controlling its spread.

The government remains committed to protecting our youngest Queenslanders through effective whooping cough management strategies including:

- prevention through vaccination
- earlier detection
- early and effective treatment.

Is the vaccine still free for babies and children?

Yes. The whooping cough vaccine will continue to be provided free under the current National Immunisation Program to:

- babies at two (can be administered at six weeks), four and six months of age
- children four years of age
- adolescents in Year 10 of secondary school or age equivalent.

If I am not eligible for the free vaccine (up until 30 June) how do I get vaccinated?

Ask your doctor or immunisation provider about getting the whooping cough booster vaccine—it will need to be purchased on private prescription.

How do I get vaccinated after the free program ends?

From 1 July 2012, you can ask your doctor or immunisation provider about getting the whooping cough booster vaccine—it will need to be purchased on private prescription.

Those currently eligible for the free vaccine are encouraged to take up the offer prior to the program ceasing on 30 June 2012.

How much does the vaccine cost for adults?

The cost of the vaccine can vary depending on the supplier but it is usually between \$35 and \$50. Your doctor may charge you an additional consultation fee.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about whooping cough and vaccinations:

- ask your doctor
- contact 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- visit www.health.qld.gov.au or <http://immunise.health.gov.au/>



Queensland Health Immunisation Program

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888
Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

PARENT PERTUSSIS PROGRAM ENDS 30 JUNE

The free pertussis booster vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age (as well as other adults in the same household) will cease on 30 June 2012.

The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in pertussis notifications in Queensland, with the aim of preventing whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

When the program was implemented there were very little published data on the effectiveness of 'cocooning' programs to prevent pertussis in infants, but at that time, this was considered to be the best approach. Since then no new robust evidence has become available to support cocooning.

Since 2009, analysis of notification data in Queensland and elsewhere has shown that the increase in pertussis notifications is substantially affected by increased testing and the increased use of PCR testing, which is more sensitive in detecting pertussis infections than serology or culture.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has rejected two separate applications for funding of adult pertussis vaccines for parents on the basis of uncertain effectiveness of the cocooning strategy and uncertain cost effectiveness.

Immunisation providers are advised that:

- Boostrix vaccine orders will be accepted throughout June 2012
- to avoid vaccine wastage, any remaining stocks of Boostrix should be used to vaccinate parents/grandparents/adult household members until the stock runs out
- promotional material for the free vaccine should be removed from display on or before 30 June 2012
- those currently eligible for the free vaccine should be encouraged to take up the offer prior to the program ceasing on 30 June 2012.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation continues to recommend pertussis vaccination for adults planning a pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant; other adult household members, grandparents and carers of young children.

Vaccination of infants against whooping cough remains our best means of protecting vulnerable babies from the disease, reducing and controlling its spread.

Further information about the cessation of the program is available online at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation

Thank you for your participation in the program.

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director, Communicable Diseases Branch
18/6/2012



Queensland
Government

Queensland Health **Immunisation Program**

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888
Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

ATTENTION: ALL VACCINE SERVICE PROVIDERS

The free whooping cough vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age (as well as other adults in the same household) will cease on 30 June 2012.

The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in pertussis notifications in Queensland, with the aim of preventing whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

The program has been successful and current figures indicate the outbreak is waning, with reported cases of whooping cough having declined compared to the same period last year.

Immunisation providers are advised that:

- Boostrix vaccine orders will be accepted throughout June 2012
- any remaining stock of Boostrix should be used to vaccinate eligible individuals until the stock is finished
- promotional material for the free vaccine should be removed from display on or before 30 June 2012
- those eligible for the free vaccine should be encouraged to take up the offer prior to the program ceasing on 30 June 2012.

The government remains committed to the health of our youngest Queenslanders. It will strongly focus on the most effective pertussis prevention strategies, such as ensuring all children are protected through the infant immunisation program.

Vaccination of infants against whooping cough remains our best means of protecting vulnerable babies from the disease, reducing and controlling its spread.

Further information about the cessation of the program is available online at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation or by calling your nearest Public Health Unit.

Thank you for your participation in the program and in raising the awareness of whooping cough in the community.

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director, Communicable Diseases Branch
15/2012



Queensland
Government

Queensland Health **Immunisation Program**

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888

Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

ATTENTION: ALL VACCINE SERVICE PROVIDERS

The free whooping cough vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age, as well as other adults in the same household, will cease on 30 June 2012.

Current figures indicate the outbreak is waning, with reported cases of whooping cough having declined compared to the same period last year.

Vaccination against whooping cough remains our best means of protecting vulnerable babies from the disease, reducing and controlling its spread.

Immunisation providers are advised that:

- Boostrix vaccine orders will be accepted throughout June 2012
- any remaining stock of Boostrix should be used to vaccinate eligible individuals until the stock is finished
- promotional material for the free vaccine should be removed from display on or before 30 June 2012
- those eligible for the free vaccine should be encouraged to take up the offer prior to the program ceasing on 30 June 2012.

Recommendations regarding who should have the vaccine and when remain unchanged.

The whooping cough vaccine is recommended for:

- babies at two, four and six months of age
- children four years of age
- adolescents in Year 10 or age equivalent (provided free under the National Immunisation Program)
- those planning a pregnancy
- expectant partners or new mothers
- anyone in regular contact with babies under six months of age (for example, family members, childcare and healthcare workers)
- any adult wishing to protect themselves from whooping cough.

Further information about the cessation of the program is available online at www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation or by calling your nearest Public Health Unit.

Thank you for your participation in the program and in raising the awareness of whooping cough in the community.

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director, Communicable Diseases Branch
/6/2012



Queensland
Government

Queensland Health **Immunisation Program**

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888
Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

Updated Advice to Vaccine Service Providers

Expansion of Free Pertussis Vaccine Program

❖ Provision of dTpa: diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis acellular vaccine (Boostrix/Adacel)

Eligibility for the current Queensland Government free pertussis program for parents has been expanded.

Free pertussis vaccine is now available for:

- **birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents of babies under 6 months of age**
- **other adults in a household with a baby under 6 months of age.**

This advice supersedes all previous advice about eligibility for the free pertussis vaccine program.

Vaccine can be ordered from the Queensland Health Immunisation Program (QHIP) in the usual way.

Dr. Christine Selvey
Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch

18 February 2011

NOT FOR PUBLIC RELEASE
APPROVAL REQUIRED FROM COMMUNICABLE DISEASES BRANCH PRIOR TO
RELEASE

- Whooping cough epidemics in Australia usually occur every three to four years and last for about six months. The current epidemic commenced in late 2008 and is still continuing.
- The current epidemic is occurring across the state and other regions of Australia.
- The whooping cough vaccine is very safe and effective. All vaccines - including the adult whooping cough vaccine - available in Australia are registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA assesses all vaccines from both safety and effectiveness.
- There have been no known deaths of Queensland babies since the current epidemic began.
- Since 2008, Queensland Health has received 16,531 pertussis notifications. 71% (or 11,774) of notifications occurred in persons over 19 years of age (i.e. adults) and 336 children under the age of 6 months were notified with a test result that confirms whooping cough.
- The number of notifications in children less than six months of age increased three-fold since 2008 from 47 notifications in 2008 to 148 notifications in 2010. Similarly, the number of notifications in adults (over 19 years of age) also increased three-fold from 1,857 notifications in 2008 to 5,420 notifications in 2010.
- Immunity from both the disease and the vaccine is not life long and wanes over several years. Adults whose immunity has waned over time present the greatest potential reservoir of the disease.
- The concern is the long term nature of this epidemic and the increase in notifications of adults. The risk is for those children too young to be fully vaccinated.
- The disease is most severe and can be fatal in children less than six months of age. This cohort of children is too young to be fully protected by vaccination. Three doses of vaccine are required for protection of infants, and these are usually completed at six months of age.
- Community vaccination for whooping cough began in 1942. The number of deaths from whooping cough significantly decreased in the immediate years following introduction and continued to fall throughout the 50's, 60s and 70s. Today, deaths from whooping cough are considered rare.

REDACTED

Speaking points

Move to extend protection for babies against whooping cough

Queensland Health is expanding the free vaccination program for whooping cough.

Parents of newborns already have access to free vaccination.

And now the vaccine will also be free to grandparents and other adults in a household with a baby under six months of age.

Whooping cough continues to be a problem in Queensland – as it is in the rest of Australia.

Whooping cough can lead to serious health problems, including pneumonia, seizure, permanent disability and even death.

The disease is most severe in babies aged less than six months old.

Babies are not fully protected until they have had all three doses of the vaccine – at two, four and six months.

Unprotected babies can become severely ill if an adult or carer with the disease passes it on to them.

Babies have died recently in Australia from this disease.

This vaccine will help prevent the spread of whooping cough to babies who aren't old enough to be fully immunised themselves.

I urge new parents, grandparents and other adults in a household with a baby under six months to be vaccinated against whooping cough.

To receive the vaccine, just ask your GP.

Responses for potential questions:

The epidemic

Whooping cough outbreaks in Australia usually occur every three to four years and last for about six months.

The current outbreak started late in 2008 and is still continuing. It is occurring across Queensland and other regions of Australia.

The number of notifications of whooping cough in Queensland trebled between 2008-2010 to more than 16,500 (16,531).

71% (or 11,774) of notifications occurred in adults (people aged over 19).

330 notifications were in babies aged under 6 months.

In 2008, there were 47 notifications of whooping cough in babies aged less than six months. This grew to 148 in 2010.

In 2008, there were about 1850 (1857) notifications of whooping cough in adults (over 19 years of age) in 2008, which increased to 5420 in 2010.

Vaccine is important for adults

Immunity from both the disease and the vaccine is not life long and wanes over several years.

Adults whose immunity has waned over time present the greatest potential reservoir of the disease.

Vaccine is safe

The whooping cough vaccine is very safe and effective.

All vaccines available in Australia are registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), which first assesses them to ensure they are both safe and effective.

Importance of vaccinations

Community vaccination for whooping cough began in 1942. The number of deaths from whooping cough significantly decreased in the immediate years following introduction and continued to fall throughout the 50s, 60s and 70s.

Today, deaths from whooping cough are considered rare; however, deaths still occur.

Comment : This sentence may raise questions about the urgency or need to vaccinate if deaths are rare. Additional wording suggested

Vaccine in Queensland

Free vaccines have been provided to parents of newborns in Queensland since 2009.

Tips for parents

Apart from vaccination, other precautions parents and carers can take to help prevent a baby catching whooping cough include:

- Keep your baby away from anyone with a cough. Adults and older children may have only mild disease, but can still pass the infection to others including babies.
- Ensure other children in the house are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccines – vaccination is recommended for babies at 2, 4 and 6 months of age (the 2 month vaccinations can be given from 6 weeks of age to provide earlier protection) with a booster dose at four years of age and a second booster for Year 10 students as part of the School Based Vaccination Program

- Make sure you, and anyone who cares for your child (such as grandparents and childcare providers), have had a booster vaccine for whooping cough. People not eligible for free vaccine should talk to their GP or other provider about getting a prescription. (The vaccine costs around \$35-\$45)

Recognising symptoms

The disease starts with cold-like symptoms and an irritating cough. The cough can develop into bouts of coughing that may be followed by dry retching or vomiting.

In children, the cough may end with a crowing noise (the whoop) as air is drawn back into the chest.

Treatment

Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment, as early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading.

Further information

- Ask your doctor
- Contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- Refer to the brochure on the Queensland Health website:
www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf

RTI Release

Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment, as early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading. The disease starts with cold-like symptoms and an irritating cough. The cough can develop into bouts of coughing often followed by dry retching or vomiting.

In children, the cough may end with a crowing noise (the whoop) as air is drawn back into the chest. Adults and older children may have only mild disease, but can still pass the infection to others including babies.

For more information about whooping cough and vaccinations, ask your doctor, contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or refer to the brochure on the Queensland Health website: www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf

ENDS

Media contact:

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Written by: Principal Media Advisor

Date: 17 Feb 2011

Authorised by: CHO

Date: xx Feb 2011

RTI RELEASED



Australian Government

Medicare Australia

5 August 2009

<Addressee>
<Address 1>
<Address 2>
<Locality> <State> <Postcode>

Dear Parent/Carer

Re : **Whooping cough vaccine FREE for new parents**

Queensland Health has asked Medicare Australia to forward the enclosed information.

As the personal information which Medicare Australia holds about you is protected by legislation, your personal details cannot be provided to a third party. Medicare Australia has, however, agreed to forward the enclosed information to you on behalf of Queensland Health.

Medicare Australia assures you that your details have not been disclosed to the Queensland Health.

Medicare Australia is forwarding this material to you for information only, and is not involved or otherwise associated with the initiative being conducted by the Queensland Health.

If you choose to take part in the initiative, or require more information, please refer to the enclosed documentation.

Any queries relating to this mail-out by Medicare Australia should be directed to
Team Leader Information Delivery on

Yours sincerely

Manager
Privacy and Information Release Section



Australian Government

Medicare Australia

[Date]

[Addressee]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[Address 3]

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Whooping cough vaccine FREE for new parents

Queensland Health has asked Medicare Australia to forward the enclosed information.

As the personal information which Medicare Australia holds about you is protected by the *Privacy Act 1988* and either the *Health Insurance Act 1973* or *National Health Act 1953*, your personal details cannot be provided to a third party. Medicare Australia has, however, agreed to forward the enclosed information to you on behalf of Queensland Health.

Medicare Australia assures you that your details have not been disclosed to Queensland Health.

Medicare Australia is forwarding this material to you for information only, and is not involved or otherwise associated with the initiative being conducted by Queensland Health.

If you choose to take part in the initiative, or require more information, please refer to the enclosed documentation or **contact Queensland Health on 13 43 25 84.**

Should you have any queries relating to your privacy, please contact Team Leader Information Delivery on . Any other queries relating to the whooping cough vaccine should be directed to the given telephone numbers on the attached information sheet.

Yours sincerely

Manager
Privacy and Information Release Section

Whooping cough alert: FREE vaccine for parents

Dear Parent

Keeping young babies healthy is a priority for new parents and carers. The State Government is committed to helping parents do everything they can to ensure newborn babies are happy and healthy.

You may be aware Australia, including Queensland, has been experiencing an outbreak of whooping cough (also called pertussis). There is always some of this disease in the community, especially in adolescents and adults. This places young babies at risk.

Whooping cough in babies can cause severe health problems, from coughing, vomiting, pneumonia and seizures to, in some cases, permanent disability or death. The infection is spread easily by coughing and the most common source of infection in babies is from a parent, brother or sister.

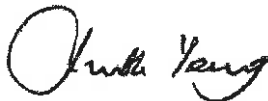
To better protect the most vulnerable babies in our community, **birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of infants younger than 6 months can receive a free booster dose of whooping cough vaccine.** Most babies who catch whooping cough are too young to be vaccinated and have caught the illness from their parents or carers. One of the most important things you can do to protect them is to make sure your vaccinations are up to date.

Other important ways to protect your baby from whooping cough are:

1. **Ensure your baby is vaccinated on time.** Your baby will have the best protection after they have received all three doses of vaccine at two, four and six months of age.
2. **Keep your baby away from anyone with a cough.**
3. **Ensure other children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccines.** Vaccination is recommended for babies at two months (can be given at 6 weeks), four months and six months of age, a booster dose at four years of age (can be given at 3 years 6 months) and a second booster for Year 10 students as part of the School Based Vaccination Program.
4. **Make sure you, and anyone who cares for your child (such as grandparents and childcare providers), have had a booster vaccine for whooping cough.** For those not eligible for free vaccination (as indicated above) this can be obtained by asking an immunisation provider for a prescription to buy the vaccine from a pharmacy.

Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment as early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading. For more information about whooping cough and recommended vaccinations, ask your doctor, contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or see overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jeannette Young
Chief Health Officer

6 / 8 / 2010

Office
Queensland Health
15 Butterfield St
HERSTON QLD 4006

Postal
PO Box 2368
FORTITUDE VALLEY BC
QLD 4006

Phone

Fax
(07) 3328 9782

Queensland Health Immunisation Program

Whooping cough alert: vaccine FREE for parents

checklist

Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Vaccinate your baby on time and make sure vaccinations are recorded in the child's Personal Health Record.
 - 1st dose (two months of age - can be given from 6 weeks)
 - 2nd dose (four months of age)
 - 3rd dose (six months of age)
 - booster dose (4 years of age - can be given from 3 years 6 months)
- Ensure all children in your household are up to date with their whooping cough vaccinations.
 - To check your children's vaccination status, look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than seven years of age).
- Ensure parents are vaccinated.

For a limited time, parents of infants younger than 6 months can receive a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine*. See your doctor now.

 - **Mothers of newborn babies** should see their doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated as soon as possible after the birth of the baby.
 - **Expectant fathers** can request their free vaccination prior to the birth of their baby
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to get vaccinated.
 - Vaccine can be bought from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should be administered by an immunisation provider immediately after purchase. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (eg. they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).

* Unfortunately parents who have purchased the vaccine privately can not be reimbursed.

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Public Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germs). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms may include:

- runny nose and sneezing early in the illness
- an irritable, dry cough that gets worse
- coughing spasms that can end with a loud gasp (a "whooping sound")
- vomiting after a coughing spasm
- older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

Public Health Units

Brisbane Northside	3624 1111
Brisbane Southside	3000 9148
Cairns	4226 5501
Darling Downs	4631 9888
Gold Coast	5509 7222
Hervey Bay	4184 1800
Logan	3412 2989
Mackay	4968 6611
Moreton Bay	3142 1800
Mount Isa	4744 9100
Rockhampton	4920 6989
Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Townsville	4753 9000
West Moreton	3413 1200



Queensland Government

Funded Pertussis Vaccine for New Parents Program
Communication Plan

Phase 1: Initial Communication

Target audience	Strategy	Responsibility	Progress	File location
Consumers	Use tear-off pads to be distributed through Maternity Units	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft <input type="checkbox"/> to get quotes	Being printed and distributed now.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\PROJECTS\pertussis program
Consumers	Send letter to all new parents via ACIR mailout	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Purchase order signed. Due for mail out 5 August.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\PROJECTS\pertussis program
Consumers	Website information sheet	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Submitted to web publishing team 30/7/09.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\PROJECTS\pertussis program
Vaccine Service Providers	Send letter to all VSPs	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Letter sent 15/7/09.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\PROJECTS\pertussis program
Maternity Units	Send letter and tear-off pads to all Maternity Units	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Being printed and distributed now.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\PROJECTS\pertussis program
Divisions of GP	Send alert to GPQ	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Sent.	data6\PHS\CDU\CORRO\QHIP\Memo\2009
Pharmacy Guild	Distribute tear-off pads to pharmacies	<input type="checkbox"/> to follow-up	Not viable	n.a
13HEALTH	Factsheet	<input type="checkbox"/> to draft	Submitted to <input type="checkbox"/> for approval.	data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\RESOURCES\WEBSITE\HID Disease and Immunisation Factsheets

RTI Review

Previous communications:

- Promotional brochure (saved data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\RESOURCES\PRINTING\Misc\2009)
- Promotional poster (saved data6\PHS\CDU\QHIP\RESOURCES\PRINTING\Misc\2009)
- Letter to childcare centres (saved data6\PHS\CDU\CORRO\QHIP\Letter\2009)
- Second letter to maternity units (saved data6\PHS\CDU\CORRO\QHIP\Letter\2009)
- Letter to VSPs (??? see)

Phase 2: Communication Review

Review of advice:

- Beginning of September, need to review advice to the above stakeholders according to when the program will conclude.

Evaluation of pertussis program:

- Process: Communication mechanisms for stakeholders and consumers. **Consider focus groups of parents.**
- Impact: Vaccine coverage for parents. **Not measurable.**
- Outcome: Hospitalisations and deaths from pertussis. **Again difficult to attribute to free vaccine program for parents.**

RTI Release



**Queensland
Government**
Queensland Health

Enquiries to: Queensland Health Immunisation
Program
Telephone: (07) 3328 9888
Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720
File Ref: n/a

Director of Nursing
Maternity Unit

Dear Director

RE: Free pertussis vaccine for new parents

Queensland Health will fund free pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine, commencing 1 August 2009 for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009.

As you would be aware, there has been an epidemic of pertussis in Queensland this year. Babies are most at risk of serious health complications from whooping cough because they are not fully protected by vaccination.

We are seeking your assistance to promote the free pertussis vaccine by providing new parents with the enclosed tear-off information sheet. This program will be time limited. The tear-off sheet can be easily inserted into the pertussis brochures for new parents that were sent to maternity units earlier this year.

Ensuring new parents and carers are properly vaccinated against pertussis provides even more protection for newborn babies. Parents are therefore encouraged to get their free vaccine as soon as possible.

Thank you once again for your assistance in promoting this important public health message. Should you require further copies of the tear-off sheets, the brochure or the promotional poster, please contact [redacted] A/Senior Program Advisor, Queensland Health Immunisation Program on telephone (07) 3328 9888.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]
A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
/ 7/2009

Office
Communicable Diseases Branch
15 Butterfield Street
Bowen Hills 4006

Postal
PO Box 2368
Fortitude Valley BC 4006

Phone
(07) 3328 9888

Fax
(07) 3328 9720

DOH-DL 16/17-024 **Document No. 72**

Prepared by:

[Redacted]

A/ Senior Program Advisor, Immunisation Program
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

6 July 2009

Cleared by:

[Redacted]

Manager, Immunisation Program
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

July 2009

Document Name:

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pertussis vaccine - Info for maternity units.doc

RTI Release



**Queensland
Government**
Queensland Health

Queensland Health Immunisation Program Communicable Diseases Branch

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888

Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

Advice to General Practice Queensland

Free Funded dTpa Vaccine for New Parents

Queensland Health is funding a free pertussis vaccine program for new parents to commence 1 August 2009.

The program will provide free pertussis vaccine in a combined vaccine (adolescent/adult formulation diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis - dTpa) for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of **children born on or after 1 May 2009**.

How will GPs be able to access dTpa for this program?

- In the second half of July Queensland Health will commence the first delivery of dTpa to all vaccine providers – there is no need to place an order for this first delivery
- Two weeks after the initial delivery is received providers will be to reorder dTpa (with a full stock count of all vaccines held) if more vaccine is required
- Monthly orders will then resume

GPs have been asked to advise eligible parents who attend their practice/clinic of the following:


- Queensland Health is providing free pertussis vaccine for a limited time;
- babies should be vaccinated on time; and
- to keep their baby away from anyone with a cough.

Vaccine Service Providers should encourage new parents to get their free vaccine as soon as possible.

For further information or advice, contact your local Population Health Unit.

Population Health Units			
Brisbane Northside	3624 1111	Mackay	4968 6611
Brisbane Southside	3000 9148	Redcliffe	3142 1800
Cairns	4050 3600	Mt Isa	4744 4846
Darling Downs	4631 9888	Central Qld	4920 6989
Gold Coast	5509 7222	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Wide Bay	4120 6000	Townsville	4753 9000

AUTHORISED & SIGNED


A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
17 / 2009



Pertussis Vaccine for Parents

- ❖ This is your initial supply of pertussis in a combination vaccine of diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis (dTpa), first order - Adacel
- ❖ This vaccine is provided free to vaccinate **parents** of babies born on or after 1st May 2009
- ❖ **Parents are designated as the following:**
 - ⇒ birth parents
 - ⇒ adoptive parents
 - ⇒ foster parents

Follow up orders:

- **2 weeks after you receive your initial delivery** of vaccine you will be able to reorder and you will need to **include a full stock count of all vaccines** held by your practice/clinic when you place the order
- **following the 2nd order, monthly orders will then resume**

❖ Please advise all eligible parents of babies born on or after 1st May 2009 that Queensland Health is providing free pertussis vaccination

❖ Enclosed is a **“DATA COLLECTION SHEET”** to record the dTpa you administer to parents. Please forward this sheet to **VIVAS, PO Box 2368, FORTITUDE VALLEY BC 4006** at the end of each week.

Please ensure all other groups e.g. Year 10 students and refugees receiving dTpa are recorded appropriately and forwarded to the Vaccination Information and Vaccination Administration System (VIVAS) in the usual way.

❖ If you have any further enquiries about pertussis vaccination please contact your local Population Health Unit listed below:

Contact Details for Population Health Units

Southern Area		Central Area		Northern Area	
Brisbane South	3000 9148	Brisbane North	3624 1111	Cairns	4050 3600
Gold Coast	5509 7222	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600	Townsville	4753 9000
Darling Downs	4631 9888	Rockhampton	4920 6989	Mackay	4968 6611
		Wide Bay	4120 6000	Mount Isa	4744 4846
		Moreton Bay	3142 1800		

DATA COLLECTION SHEET – dTpa for PARENTS

VSP No. VSP Phone No. _____

Please post this sheet at the end of each week to
VIVAS, PO Box 2368, FORTITUDE VALLEY BC 4006

	NAME of PARENT	Date of vaccination	CHILD'S DATE of BIRTH
1		/ /20	/ /20
2		/ /20	/ /20
3		/ /20	/ /20
4		/ /20	/ /20
5		/ /20	/ /20
6		/ /20	/ /20
7		/ /20	/ /20
8		/ /20	/ /20
9		/ /20	/ /20
10		/ /20	/ /20
11		/ /20	/ /20
12		/ /20	/ /20
13		/ /20	/ /20
14		/ /20	/ /20
15		/ /20	/ /20
16		/ /20	/ /20
17		/ /20	/ /20
18		/ /20	/ /20
19		/ /20	/ /20
20		/ /20	/ /20
21		/ /20	/ /20
22		/ /20	/ /20
23		/ /20	/ /20
24		/ /20	/ /20
25		/ /20	/ /20

RTI REQUEST



Printing for Pertussis Vaccination Campaign
Printing Brief

Purpose

The purpose of this brief is to invite your organisation to provide a quote for the printing and distribution of the attached creative concept.

Required Components

Please provide quotation according to the following specifications. Quotation will need to be divided into printing costs for each of the three Jobs and distribution.

1. PRINTING

	Job 1- A3 Poster	Job 2- A4 Poster	Job 3- Cover Letter
Client:	Queensland Health	Queensland Health	Queensland Health
Size:	A3	A4	A4
Quantity:	6,000 (with 1,000 run-on)	6,000 (with 1,000 run-on)	2,450
Stock:	170gsm celloglaze matte finish	170gsm celloglaze matte finish	80gsm Bond
Printing:	Full colour	Full colour	One colour
Artwork:	To be supplied as art file.	To be supplied as art file.	To be supplied.

2. DISTRIBUTION

Insert 2 X A3 posters (or 2 x A4 posters) and 1 letter into C4 envelope. Address on front of envelopes from file supplied. Printing on front of envelopes to read "Protect Babies from Whooping Cough". Lodge for mailing with QH account. Quantity: 2450.

Timeframe

Quotation is required by COB Friday 21 January 2009. Timeframe for printing and distribution to be negotiated.

Queries

on telephone or alternatively via email to @health.qld.gov.au.



Queensland Health

Enquiries to:
Telephone:
Facsimile:
File Ref:

(07) 3234 0057
n/a

Dear Child Care Provider

We are seeking your assistance to promote whooping cough vaccinations by displaying the enclosed promotional posters on your centre's notice board.

Queensland Health is concerned about the increasing number of young babies contracting whooping cough. Whooping cough in infants can cause severe health problems, such as episodes of violent coughing, vomiting, pneumonia and seizures, which can lead to permanent disability or death.

Babies under 6 months of age are at most risk of whooping cough as they are not fully protected by vaccination. The most common source of infection in unprotected babies is a parent or sibling.

To protect young babies against infection, we recommend:

1. New parents have a whooping cough booster vaccination as soon as possible after their baby is born.
2. Parents ensure that their babies receive their vaccinations on time at 2, 4 and 6 months of age.

Adults working with children should also be vaccinated against whooping cough. Vaccination is especially recommended for child care workers. We ask that you strongly encourage the staff in your centre to make sure that they are fully vaccinated.

For more copies of the poster, please contact Queensland Health Communicable Diseases Branch on (07) 3234 1155. Should you have any queries about whooping cough disease or the immunisation schedule, please contact 13 HEALTH (43 25 84).

Thank you again for your assistance in promoting this important public health message.

Yours sincerely

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
09 / 03 / 09

Office
Communicable Diseases Branch
Queensland Health Building
157-163 Charlotte Street
Brisbane 4000

Postal
GPO Box 48
Brisbane 4001

Phone

Fax
(07) 3234 0057

Protect your baby from whooping cough

To protect your baby, new parents have a **whooping cough (pertussis) vaccination** as soon as possible after your baby is born.

The most common source of infection in unprotected babies is a parent or sibling.

PNEUMONIA

SEIZURES

VIOLENT COUGHING FITS

DEATH

- Whooping cough is most serious in babies under 6 months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination.
- Whooping cough in infants can cause severe health complications resulting in permanent disability or death.
- The number of cases of whooping cough in children younger than 6 months of age is increasing.
- Ensure your baby is vaccinated on time at 2, 4 and 6 months of age.
- See your doctor or vaccine service provider now.

Babies younger than 6 months of age are most at risk of whooping cough.



Queensland Government
Queensland Health



Clarification Letter for direct mailouts

Contact Details:

Title (Mrs/Miss/Mr/Dr. etc.)

First Name

Surname

Occupation

Institution/Company Name

Type of Institution

Address

State

Postcode

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

A/ Senior Program Advisor
Queensland Health Immunisation
Program

State Government

PO Box 2368

FORTITUDE VALLEY BC

QLD

4006

n.a

@health.qld.gov.au

Information Requirements:

Medicare Australia is committed to improving Australia's health through the provision of information to health consumers.

1. How will the mailout(s) you are requesting contribute to improving Australia's health?

The mailout is a targeted health promotion strategy aimed at (i) increasing new parents' awareness of the risk to babies of serious complications from whooping cough and (ii) encouraging the timeliness and uptake whooping cough vaccination. The mailout is in response to a recent increase in the number of cases of whooping cough in Queensland and therefore aims to reduce the incidence of vaccine-preventable disease in the community.

2. Are you requesting this mailout(s) on behalf of someone else?

No.

3. Will research findings be published/presented as a result?

No.

4. Is ethics committee approval required?

No.

5. Target group criteria for direct mailout

Inclusion criteria:

1. Parents of children up to 12 months of age (at the time of mailout)
 2. Parents of newborns as they register with ACIR (until advised otherwise)
- Similar to the process undertaken by the NSW Immunisation Program.

6. List the tasks to be undertaken by Medicare Australia and the quantities required. For example: sample selection, printing of letter(s), printing of brochure(s),

Task	Quantity or sample size
Sample selection	To be determined.
Printing of letter	Determined by sample selection.

7. Contents of the direct mail pack- please specify. If there is more than one type of direct mail pack eg for study group/control group etc, please list the contents of each mail pack separately.

Group 1: New Parents

When is the mailout required?: As soon as possible

Weight of contents (g): To be determined

Method of allocating people to Group 1: n.a

Contents	Format/artwork to be supplied to Medicare Australia eg PDF file	Paper/stock name/type, envelope size (if known) and Full or single colour (black) Single sided print Double sided print	Quantity
Letter	PDF file	Double sided colour print	To be determined by sample selection

Additional Comments/Requirements:

This request will be similar to the process undertaken by the NSW Immunisation Program

Queensland Health helping parents give new babies the best start in life.

Queensland Health is offering free pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine for parents of newborn babies.

Parents whose baby is 6 months of age or younger are eligible to receive a free booster dose of adult formulation diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis (dTpa) vaccine.

Australia is currently experiencing a pertussis epidemic, and this program aims to protect babies too young to be fully protected by vaccination.

Pertussis is most serious in young babies as they are not fully protected by vaccination. Many babies with pertussis will have caught it from a parent.

Pertussis in infants can cause severe health complications resulting in permanent disability or death.

Vaccination is the best way to prevent pertussis. Protection from pertussis is not life-long and hence adults require a booster dose to maintain protection.

To protect their babies, all new parents should receive pertussis vaccine as soon as possible after their baby is born. The adult dTpa vaccine is safe to have while breastfeeding.

Parents can be vaccinated against pertussis at their regular health service.

(A consultation fee may be charged by GPs).



Contact Details for Public Health Units			
Southern Area			
Brisbane South	3000 9148	Gold Coast	5509 7222
Darling Downs	4631 9888		
Central Area			
Brisbane North	3624 1111	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Moreton Bay	3142 1800	Wide Bay	4184 1800
Rockhampton	4920 6989		
Northern Area			
Cairns	4050 3600	Mount Isa	4744 4846
Mackay	4968 6611	Townsville	4753 9000

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, **13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)**, or your local Public Health Unit.





Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Dear Colleague

Prevention of pertussis in young infants

I am writing to advise you of measures to protect infants from pertussis.

Australia has experienced an epidemic of pertussis since mid 2008. Between 1 January 2008 and September 2011, seven infants have died of pertussis, all of whom were under the age of three months. The current epidemic is prolonged, with increased pertussis activity continuing in 2011 in some states.

To provide direct protection to infants as early as possible, the vaccine due at two months of age can be given as early as six weeks. Subsequent doses should be administered at four months and then at six months of age, according to the National Immunisation Schedule.

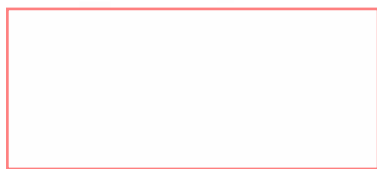
Indirect protection of young infants can be provided by minimising their exposure to pertussis. Australian data indicate that young infants acquire pertussis most commonly from their mother, their father or young siblings. With respect to young siblings, the first booster dose on the Schedule is at three-and-a-half to four years of age and should not be delayed.

Given the current high rates of pertussis in the community, several states and territories are temporarily providing free pertussis immunisation programs for parents of newborns and, in some cases, grandparents and other household contacts. I encourage you to discuss vaccination with couples planning a pregnancy, new parents and other close contacts of new babies including grandparents. While the evidence for adult immunisation in preventing transmission to infants is limited, immunisation of adults will assist in reducing disease in those immunised.

Pertussis is a notifiable disease and when suspected or confirmed, it is important to ascertain whether a young infant may be in contact with such a case, as preventative antibiotic treatment will be indicated. General practitioners are best placed to identify when this may be the case and preventative antibiotics can be facilitated by urgent notification to local Public Health authorities.

The enclosed brochure and poster provide further information to assist your discussions with patients. Copies are also available through the Immunise Australia Call Centre on 1800 671 811 or the Immunise Australia website: www.immunise.health.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Australian Government Chief Medical Officer



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Dear Parent/Carer

Protecting new born babies from whooping cough

Since mid 2008 Australia has experienced an epidemic of pertussis. Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is a highly infectious respiratory infection causing a severe and persistent cough.

Pertussis infection may be mild in adults and older children, but it can be very serious in babies. The bouts of coughing can lead to a lack of oxygen to the brain, causing brain damage and possibly death.

Babies are at greatest risk of disease before they have had three doses of the vaccine. To protect infants early, the first dose can be given as early as six weeks and subsequent doses should be given at four months and then at six months of age.

Parents, grandparents and other close family members can be a source of infection in babies.

In addition to immunising your baby in time, you can increase your baby's protection by:

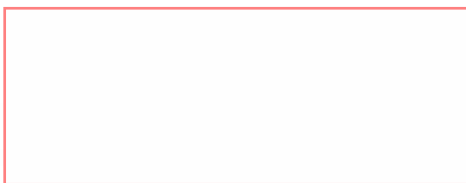
1. keeping your baby away from people who are sick, especially those with a cough;
2. talking to your general practitioner about your vaccination options;
3. learning to identify the symptoms of pertussis to ensure you seek treatment early; and
4. ensure older siblings are up to date with their vaccinations.

More information is available in the enclosed brochure.

Immunity from the whooping cough vaccine fades over six to ten years so even if you have been vaccinated in childhood, you should discuss the need for a booster dose with your doctor or health provider.

For more information you should contact your immunisation provider, state or territory health department or public health authority. Contact details are provided on the enclosed brochure.

Yours sincerely



Australian Government Chief Medical Officer



Whooping Cough



1 IDENTIFY

The infection can be deadly in babies but anyone can get whooping cough

- Babies and young children can stop breathing or develop severe coughing bouts that end with vomiting or gasping for breath.
- People of all ages can get whooping cough and can spread it to babies.
- Adults often just have a mild cough that lingers.



2 PROTECT

Immunise your baby on time to get the best protection

- Keep anyone with a cough away from your newborn especially until your baby has had 3 whooping cough vaccines.
- Immunity fades. You can still get whooping cough, even if you've been immunised.
- Booster vaccines for children and adults are available.



3 PREVENT

Whooping cough spreads quickly when people cough in the early stages of the infection

- If you have symptoms, see a doctor fast and get tested.
- Early detection and early treatment prevents spread to others.
- Stay home until no longer infectious. Ask your doctor when it's safe to return to work, school or childcare.



Dana's story

Baby Dana was born a happy, healthy girl. She was breastfeeding well and putting on weight. At 11 days old, she developed a blocked nose and was unsettled at night. Dana's parents acted quickly and saw the GP. When she was three weeks old, Dana developed an occasional cough and appeared to gag, and her parents returned to the GP. As soon as Dana tested positive for whooping cough, she went straight to hospital. Soon after arriving, Dana had her first coughing bout where she turned blue and needed oxygen. On the third day at hospital, Dana developed pneumonia and she was placed on a ventilator. She was transferred to intensive care. On the fifth day, the whooping cough toxins caused her organs to shut down and Dana had a cardiac arrest. She was only 32 days old when she died. Nobody knows where Dana was infected with whooping cough. It may have been at her sibling's school or preschool. A loving relative or friend, or a complete stranger may have unknowingly passed the infection on. Whooping cough affects people of all ages, but the real danger of the devastating disease is on young babies like Dana.



Where do I go for further information?

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Immunisation Inquiry Line
(02) 6205 2300

New South Wales

Contact the local Public Health Units (look under "Health" in the White Pages)

Northern Territory

(08) 8922 8044

Queensland

Contact the local Public Health Units (look under "Health" in the White Pages) or 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) 24 hour health hotline

South Australia

South Australia Immunisation Coordination Unit
(08) 8226 7177

SA (24-hour) Parent Help-line (Child and Youth Health)
1300 364 100

Tasmania

1800 671 738

Victoria

1300 882 008

Western Australia

(08) 9321 1312

Websites

National Centre for Immunisation Research & Surveillance
www.ncirs.edu.au

Immunise Australia Program
(Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing)
www.immunise.health.gov.au

This material is reproduced by the Department of Health and Ageing under arrangement with the NSW Ministry of Health.

All information in this document is correct as at November 2011.

Whooping Cough

- 1 IDENTIFY**
the disease
- 2 PROTECT**
your child
- 3 PREVENT**
the spread

D0578 November 2011



An Australian, State and Territory Governments Initiative

That's why it's up to everyone to

IDENTIFY • PROTECT • PREVENT

1

IDENTIFY

What is whooping cough?

- Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a serious respiratory infection that causes a long coughing illness. In babies, it can lead to pneumonia and brain damage.
- Whooping cough can be life-threatening for babies. Newborns are not immune and they often get extremely sick.
- Older children and adults can get whooping cough and can spread it to others, including babies.
- Antibiotics can prevent whooping cough spreading if given early but the cough often continues after treatment.

What are the symptoms?

- Whooping cough starts like a cold with a blocked or runny nose, sneezing, a mild fever and an occasional cough.
- The cough gets worse and severe bouts of uncontrollable coughing develop. Coughing bouts can be followed by vomiting, choking or taking a big gasping breath which causes a "whooping" sound. The cough can last for many weeks and can be worse at night.
- Some newborns don't cough at all but stop breathing and turn blue.
- Older children and adults may just have a mild cough that doesn't go away.

How is whooping cough spread?

- A person with whooping cough can spread it to others in the first 3 weeks of illness. Bacteria coughed into the air can be inhaled by babies, children or adults nearby. These people are then in danger of getting whooping cough.

2

PROTECT

Protect your baby

- Newborns are not immune until they have had their whooping cough vaccines. To protect them until they are immune, keep people with a cough away from your baby.
- The vaccine for babies is given at 2, 4 and 6 months. The first dose can be given as early as 6 weeks. Immunise your baby on time so they can be protected as soon as possible. If your baby's vaccines are overdue, speak to your GP about catching up.
- Whooping cough vaccine is effective but doesn't protect all babies. You still need to watch out, even if your baby is immunised.

Older children

- By immunising older children with boosters at 4 years and in high school, you give them some protection against whooping cough. This also helps to reduce spread to others.
- Check if your child has been vaccinated. Speak to your immunisation provider or GP or ring the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809.
- Remember that even immunised children can sometimes catch whooping cough.

Adults

- Adults can get whooping cough and can spread the infection to babies. They may just have mild symptoms and may not realise that their cough could cause harm.
- If you're a new parent, you can top-up your immunity by getting a whooping cough booster. Boosters are also recommended for grandparents, couples planning a pregnancy, and for child care workers and health care workers.
- Whooping cough vaccines can be accessed from your GP, Aboriginal Medical Service, community health centre or council clinic.

3

PREVENT

How can I prevent the spread of whooping cough?

- Whooping cough is highly infectious in the first 3 weeks. It spreads easily through families, childcare centres and schools, so it's important to act fast.
- Anyone with symptoms should see a doctor as soon as possible. Your GP can test for whooping cough. Early diagnosis is especially important for new parents and people who have regular contact with babies.
- If whooping cough is detected early enough, your doctor may prescribe a course of antibiotics. After 5 days of treatment, enough bacteria are killed to stop spread to others.
- In some situations, other people who have been in contact with an infectious person may also need antibiotics to help prevent the infection, especially if they are babies or if they have close contact with babies.
- People diagnosed with whooping cough should stay away from work, school or childcare until no longer infectious. Ask your doctor when it's safe to return.



RTI Review



Queensland
Government

Queensland Health **Immunisation Program**

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888

Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

Updated Advice to Vaccine Service Providers

Provision of Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis Vaccine

For a time limited period, Queensland Health will be offering adult diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (dTpa) vaccine to residents living in flood affected areas who:

- Live with a baby less than six months of age;
OR
- Provide care to a baby less than six months of age.

This is in addition to the current Queensland Government program for parents and may include grandparents, extended family, childcare workers and healthcare workers.

The vaccine can be ordered from the Queensland Health Immunisation Program (QHIP) by phoning (07) 3328 9888 between 8.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday or by faxing QHIP on (07) 3328 9720.

Queensland Health Immunisation Program (QHIP)

20 January 2011

Important Queensland Health PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNIQUE

Pertussis

18 November 2010

Queensland Health is advising all immunisation providers that:

The pertussis epidemic is continuing in Queensland, with 2010 notifications at levels more than twice the average of the previous 5 years.

The epidemic is being experienced in most areas of the state.

Babies up to 6 months of age who are too young to be fully protected by vaccination are at highest risk for severe disease or death from pertussis infection.

Most babies who contract pertussis are infected by a parent or sibling.

The National Immunisation Program Schedule recommends that a DTPa containing vaccine should be given at 2 months, 4 months and 6 months. The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has advised that the first dose of pertussis containing vaccine (Infanrix-hexa) can be given as early as six weeks of age to provide earlier protection against whooping cough. Note that Prevenar and Rotateq are also licensed for use in infants from 6 weeks of age and should be given concurrently. The next scheduled vaccinations should be given at 4 and 6 months of age.

ATAGI has also advised that the booster dose of pertussis scheduled at 4 years of age (in combination with diphtheria, tetanus and polio) can be given from 3 years and 6 months. This should be given concurrently with the measles, mumps, rubella booster (MMR).

How can you assist?

1. Encourage parents to have their baby's scheduled 2 month vaccinations at 6 weeks of age.
2. Promote the funded parent pertussis vaccine for parents of infants up to 6 months.
3. Promote pertussis vaccination for anyone working with or caring for young children.
4. Encourage the administration of the scheduled 4 year old vaccinations from 3 years 6 months of age.

Authorised by
A/Senior Director, Communicable Diseases Branch
Queensland Health



Current Jurisdiction Pertussis Information

Document	Location
NCIRS	
Use of adult formulations of diphtheria toxoid and pertussis – Boosterix or Adecel -- in breast-feeding mothers	
Fact Sheet – Pertussis vaccines for Australian children/adults: Information for immunisation providers	http://www.ncirs.usyd.edu.au/facts/Pertussis%20fact%20sheet_final_010609_temp%20logo.pdf
NSW	
Outbreak response advice free pertussis vaccine for new parents – Information for all NSW General Practitioners	http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/publichealth/immunisation/Pertussis_outbreak_GP_letter_and_form.pdf
Pertussis Outbreak Response	http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/publichealth/immunisation/Pertussis_Outbreak_Order_Form_2009.pdf.asp
Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Fact Sheet	http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/infectious/pertussis.html
TAS	
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/information/whooping_cough_pertussis
Media Release: Vaccination alert following steep rise in whooping cough cases	http://www.media.tas.gov.au/print.php?id=26191
ACT	
Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Fact Sheet	http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sendfile&ft=p&fid=1238625657&sid=

P R E L E A S E

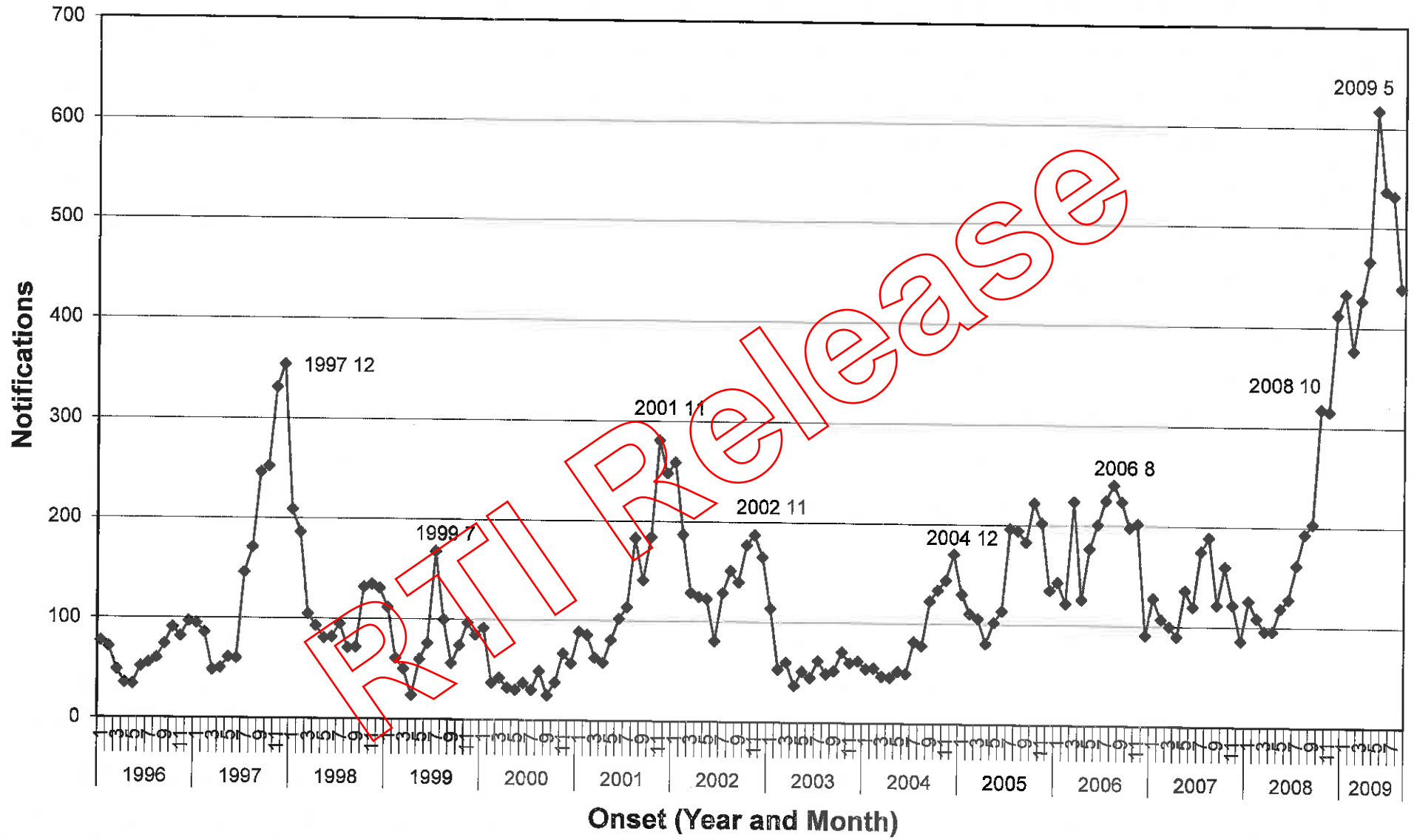
NT	
Whooping cough warning in the NT	http://www.health.nt.gov.au/Agency/News_Archive/Whooping_cough_warning_in_the_NT/index_dl_1373.aspx
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	http://www.health.nt.gov.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx?file=pdf/21/72.pdf&siteID=1&str_title=Pertussis%20(Whooping%20Cough).pdf
VIC	
Free whooping cough vaccine for new parents – Media Release	http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-health/free-whooping-cough-vaccine-for-new-parents.html
Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Fact Sheet	http://www.health.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/19958/pert_facts.pdf
Better Health Channel – Whooping Cough	http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Whooping_cough
Pertussis (Whooping Cough) for clinicians	http://www.health.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/329216/pertussis_clinicians_01.pdf
WA	
Fact Sheet - Pertussis	http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/481/2/Pertussis%20Fact%20Sheet%20March%202009.pdf
National Guidelines for the Public Health Management of Pertussis	http://www.health.wa.gov.au/circularsnew/circular.cfm?Circ_ID=12399
Pertussis GP Guidelines 2008	http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/1777/2/Pertussis%20Guidelines%20for%20GPs%202008.pdf
Whooping cough risk for newborns	http://radiologicalcouncil.wa.gov.au/press/view_press.cfm?id=827
QLD	
Protect your baby from whooping cough (brochure)	http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf
Protect your baby from whooping	http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whoopingcough_poster.pdf

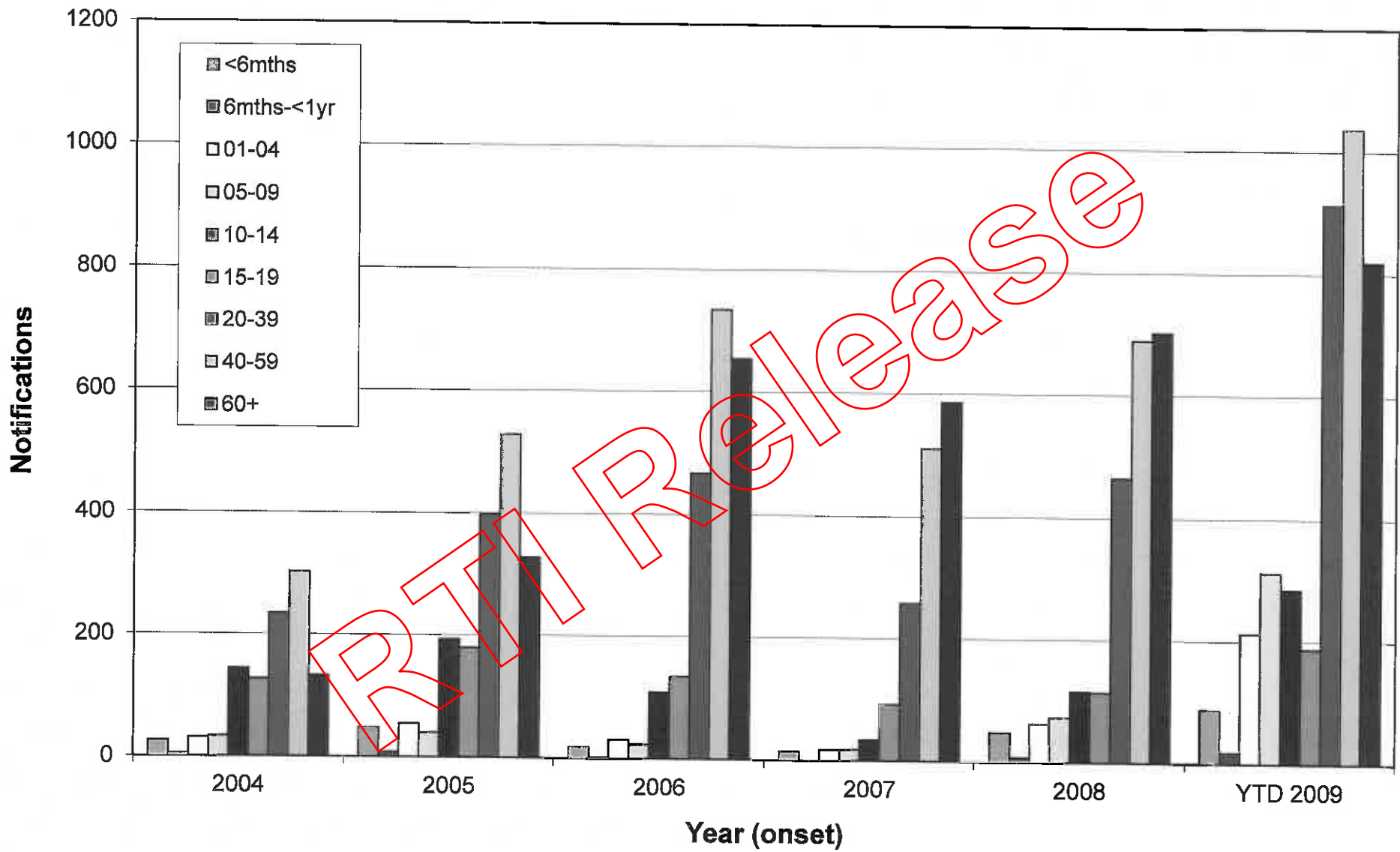
P T I R I S S I S E

cough (poster)	
Free whooping cough vaccine for new parents (checklist)	http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_check.pdf
Whooping cough and immunisation factsheet	http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ImmunisationandVaccination/whoopingCoughAndImmunisation_ap.pdf
Whooping cough factsheet	http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/BacterialInfections/whoopingCoughPertussis_fs.pdf
School Based Vaccination Program: Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccination – Year 10 students	http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ImmunisationandVaccination/schoolBasedVaccinationProgramDiphtheriatetanuspertussisVaccinationYear10Students_ap.asp
Tear-off pads (for use in maternity units)	Attached.
Letter to maternity units	Attached.
Letter to child care centres (accompanying posters)	Attached.
Memo to GP Divisions	Attached.
Advice to General Practitioners Increase in pertussis in Queensland	http://icampaign.imagin8.com/download/files/06164/666525/12%20KP%20Advice%20to%20Divisions%20re%20increase%20in%20pertussis%20in%20Qld.pdf
Parent/Teacher letter – Pertussis	http://www.northside.qld.edu.au/PDFs/cough.pdf (??link not working)
SA	
Immunisation Fact Sheet Whooping cough (Pertussis)	http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/Immunisation/imm-fs-whooping-cough.pdf
Whooping Cough (Pertussis) – Information for the public	http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/Immunisation/pertussis-facts-oct04.pdf
Travel Clinics Australia	
Whooping Cough (Pertussis) Fact Sheet	http://www.travelclinic.com.au/factsheets-whooping-cough-pertussis.asp
DOHA	

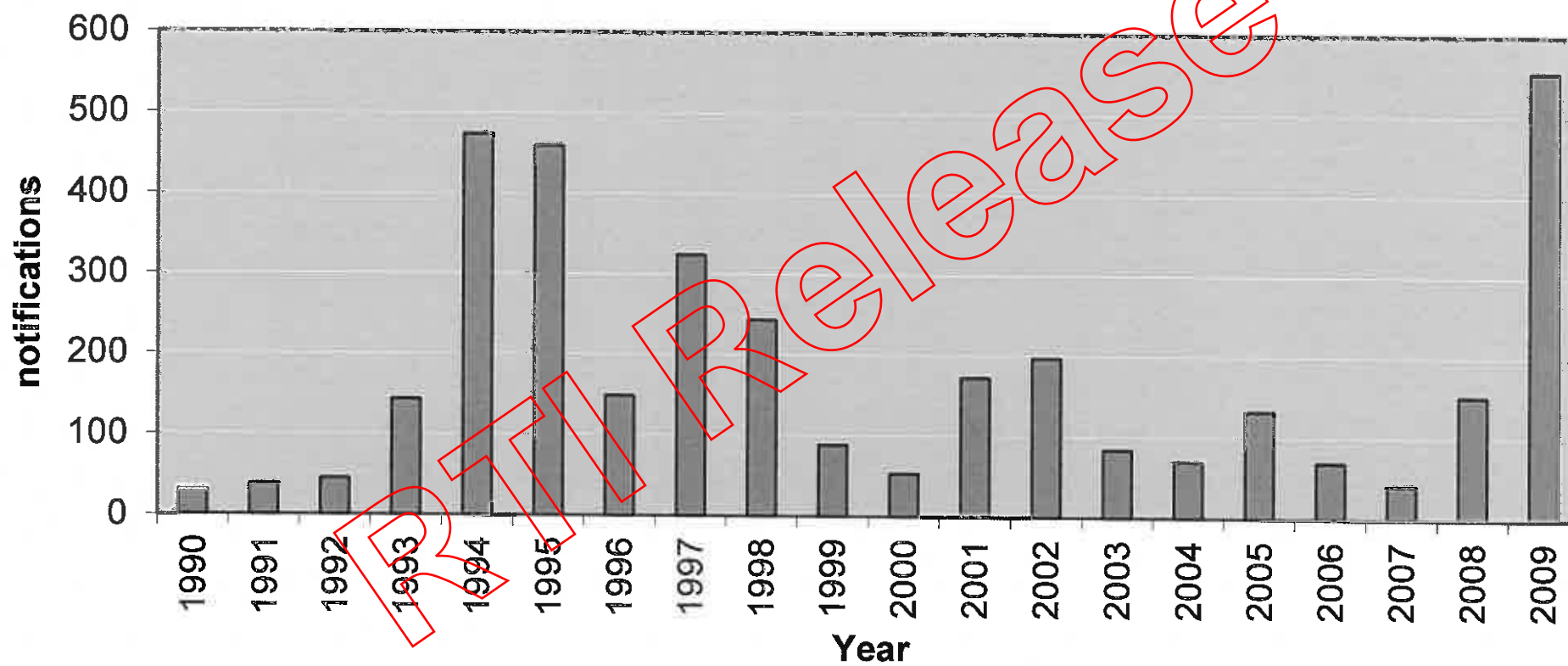
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/3246798875F0B65BCA2575830075F9F5/\$File/Pertussis%20SoNG_Fact%20sheet.pdf
National Prescribing Services	
Boosterix – Consumer Medicines leaflet	http://www.nps.org.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/14190/gwcbostv10104.pdf
Pertussis immunisation boosters important for all – Media Release	http://www.nps.org.au/news_and_media_home/media_releases/repository/pertussis_immunisation_boosters_important_for_all
Whooping cough boosters to protect all – Media Release	http://www.nps.org.au/news_and_media_home/media_releases/repository/whooping_cough_boosters_to_protect_all

RTI Release





Pertussis notifications in Queensland



Whooping cough (pertussis)

Description

Whooping cough is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by a bacterium. It can affect people of any age. For adolescents and adults the infection may only cause a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

How it spreads

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing. Direct contact with infected secretions from the mouth, such as by sharing food or kissing, or the nose can also pass on the infection. A person is highly infectious for the first two weeks of their cough. After three weeks of coughing, the person is regarded as non-infectious, even though coughing may last up to three months.

After exposure to the bacteria, it usually takes nine to ten days to become ill.

Symptoms

Whooping cough may start like a cold, with a runny nose and sneezing, and then the characteristic cough develops. These coughing bouts can be very severe and frightening, and may end with a crowing noise (the whoop). This occurs as air is drawn back into the chest, and can be followed by vomiting or gagging. In young infants, as well as older children and adults, the typical symptoms may not be present.

Complications

Whooping cough is most serious in babies who are under 6 months of age as they are not fully protected by vaccination and most hospitalisations and deaths occur in that age group. Most babies with whooping cough will have caught it from a family member.

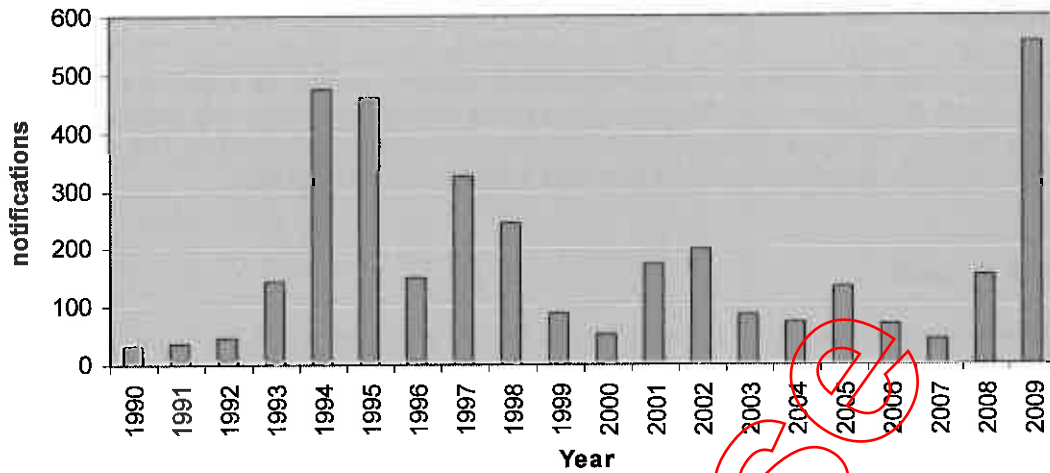
Babies may hold their breath and sometimes turn blue from lack of oxygen. Complications of whooping cough in babies include pneumonia, fits and brain damage from prolonged lack of oxygen.

Incidence

In Australia from 1995-2005, children younger than 6 months of age had the highest annual notification rate. The notification rates for adults have steadily risen and the majority of cases are now in the adult population.

In recent years, there have been periodic epidemics which have occurred at intervals of 3-4 years (1994-95, 1997-98, 2001, 2005-06, 2008-09).

Pertussis notifications in Queensland



Treatment

Antibiotics reduce the time a person is infectious to others, and can reduce the symptoms if given early. Antibiotics need to be given within 21 days of the start of general symptoms or within 14 days of the start of the cough.

Prevention

Whooping cough can be prevented by vaccination. Fully immunised communities offer the best protection against whooping cough.

The vaccine is recommended and provided free for:

- all babies at 2, 4 and 6 months of age
- a booster at 4 years of age.

As it requires the full three doses to be fully effective, the best protection for babies younger than 6 months of age against whooping cough is for the parents and any other adults who care for the baby to get a booster vaccination. The protection provided by childhood vaccination gradually reduces over time, leaving adolescents and adults potentially at risk of catching the disease.

A single booster dose is recommended and provided free for:

- adolescents at 15 years of age, or year 10 students if vaccinated in a school based vaccination program.

A single booster dose is recommended, but not funded for:

- both partners planning pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant (however, see 'recent epidemic' information below)
- adults working with young children especially health-care and child-care workers;
- any adult requesting a booster, provided they have received three previous doses of vaccine.

The vaccine

The pertussis vaccine is administered by injection and is available as a combination vaccine either as:

- diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, hepatitis B, inactivated poliomyelitis vaccine, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) (DTPa-hepB-IPV-Hib) for children less than 8 years of age
- lower dose diphtheria, tetanus acellular pertussis (dTpa) for people over 8 years of age, who have previously had a primary course of diphtheria-tetanus vaccine
- diphtheria, tetanus (dT) for adults.

The acronym DTPa, using capital letters, signifies child formulations of diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis-containing vaccines. The acronym dTpa is used for adolescent/adult formulations which contain substantially lesser amounts of diphtheria toxoid and pertussis antigens.

The vaccine for children can be given at the same time as other immunisations recommended at this age.

Control

A person with whooping cough should stay away from work, school and child-care until they have had a full course of antibiotics, or until 21 days after the beginning of the coughing or until the end of coughing, whichever comes first.

Household contacts, who have received less than three doses of whooping cough vaccine, should be excluded from child-care centres until they have taken a full course of antibiotics or for 14 days after the last exposure to infection.

Doctors or public health authorities may recommend antibiotics for some close contacts of people infected with whooping cough.

Recent epidemic

In response to a recent epidemic, some states (NSW, ACT, Vic and Qld) have introduced a short term vaccination program for parents of newborns.

In Queensland, birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009 are eligible to receive a free booster dose of whooping cough vaccine. The vaccine is administered as the adolescent/adult formulation diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine (dTpa). The adult dTpa vaccine is safe to have while breastfeeding. The free program is time-limited.

Whooping cough vaccination is also recommended, but not free, for anyone who cares for children (such as grandparents and childcare providers). For those not eligible for free vaccine, the vaccine will have to be purchased from the pharmacy with a prescription from a doctor.

Pertussis vaccination in the child care sector

1. Pertussis is a seasonal disease, with epidemics occurring every three to four years. Adolescents and adults whose immunity has waned present the greatest potential reservoir of infection. Currently in Australia, over 60% of pertussis notifications occur in persons over 10 years of age, with adolescent and adult household contacts thought to be the main source of transmission to infants. Pertussis is difficult to control as the vaccine is not as effective as others and immunity from vaccination wanes over time.
2. Pertussis vaccination (in a combination vaccine) is funded under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) in the routine childhood immunisation schedule at two, four and six months of age, with a booster dose at four years. A second booster dose is funded under the NIP as part of the School Based Vaccination Program and offered in Queensland to adolescents in Year 10.
3. Pertussis vaccine is also recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (but not funded) for the following groups:
 - Individuals planning pregnancy;
 - Parents and grandparents of newborn infants;
 - Adults working with young children; and
 - Any individual expressing an interest in receiving a booster dose of pertussis vaccine.
4. In October 2008 Queensland Health established an internal Pertussis Working Group comprising senior immunisation, disease control and epidemiological officers. This group has kept a close watch on pertussis rates within Queensland, and developed a range of initiatives to try and increase pertussis awareness.
5. In July 2009, the Queensland Government approved a funded pertussis vaccine program for parents of babies born on or after 1 May 2009.
6. The Pertussis Working Group is currently planning a new phase of initiatives to increase awareness. These will involve longer term strategies to target people with frequent contact with young children. A key existing gap is encouraging the child care sector to appreciate the importance of receiving the pertussis booster dose. Challenges that have been identified in trying to bolster the child care sector's uptake of staff vaccinations include:
 - Responsibility for paying for vaccines (employer or employee)
 - Low level of staff awareness that pertussis immunity is not lifelong
 - Rapid turnover of child care staff
7. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Health recently sent the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women a letter requesting a meeting between Queensland Health, Department of Communities, and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (part of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, who play an audit role in monitoring child care compliance with a range of indicators).. This meeting will provide an opportunity to identify all challenges related to enhancing pertussis vaccination rates in the child care sector, and work out how they can be addressed.

In order to ensure the greatest possible take-up of the vaccine, Queensland Health wrote to all immunisation providers in the week commencing 13 July 2009 to ensure they were aware of the new program commencing on 1 August 2009.

Queensland Health also advised General Practice Queensland, and provided an email to the organisation allowing them to electronically distribute a flyer to all General Practice Divisions.

Other groups, including the Australian Medical Association-Queensland and Local Government Association of Queensland, were advised, or confirmed their awareness, of the program.

Additionally, all maternity and birthing units in Queensland hospitals were advised by letter of the program, and information for new parents provided to those units for distribution to parents prior to discharge from hospital.

Information about the program was developed for internet distribution, and uploaded onto the Queensland Health website prior to 1 August 2009 to accord with the program's commencement.

A direct mail out letter via the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) was sent to parents of children born on or after 1 May 2009. This mail out commenced in early August, with 9300 letters sent. A second letter was mailed out on 3 September 2009, with 5000 letters sent. Subsequent mailouts were undertaken each 6-8 weeks until May 2010. At that time the mailouts were put on hold as funding for continuation of the program had not been confirmed. A revised letter has been developed and QH is currently negotiating with the ACIR to recommence regular mailouts.

Distribution of the vaccine commenced on 20 July 2009 to enable a 1 August 2009 commencement date.

There has been steady interest in the adult pertussis vaccination program from parents and vaccine service providers. As at 17 September 2010, 102,946 doses of adult formulation pertussis vaccine had been distributed to vaccine service providers across Queensland. (See information below.)

As the program has now been extended past the original indicative end date of June 2010, the QH Pertussis Working Group will shortly be re-convening to plan additional communication strategies aimed at improving awareness and uptake of the free parent pertussis vaccine.

Public Health Units within the Division of Chief Health Officer have been working with maternity units to encourage vaccination of parents prior to postnatal discharge.

Distribution of pertussis vaccine by Queensland region, as at 17 September 2010

Please note the most accurate figures are the vaccine delivery figures, which record the actual doses distributed to service providers. The number of vaccinations reported is not available. The number of records reported only reflects the information that has been returned to Queensland Health on doses provided. This is not reflective of the true number of parents who have been vaccinated.

Region	Total Vaccines Delivered
Brisbane North	
Brisbane South	
Central Region	
Central West	

Darling Downs	
Gold Coast	
Mackay	
Northern Region	
Peninsular Region	
Sunshine Coast	
South West	
Wide Bay	
West Moreton	
TOTAL QLD	102,946

RTI Release

Whooping Cough Alert: FREE Vaccine for Parents

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to alert you to a current outbreak of whooping cough (also called pertussis) in Queensland. In recent months, there have been an increasing number of young babies contracting whooping cough.

Whooping cough in babies can cause severe health problems, such as episodes of violent coughing, vomiting, pneumonia and seizures, which can lead to permanent disability or death. Whooping cough is spread easily by coughing and the most common source of infection in babies is from a parent or sibling.

The best ways to protect your baby from whooping cough are:

1. **Ensure your baby is vaccinated on time.** Your baby will have the best protection from whooping cough after they have received all three doses of vaccine at 2, 4 and 6 months of age.
2. **Keep your baby away from anyone with a cough.**
3. **Ensure that other children in your household are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccines.** Vaccination is recommended for babies at 2, 4 and 6 months of age; a booster dose for children at 4 years of age; and a booster dose for Year 10 students as part of the School Based Vaccination Program.
4. **Ensure that you, and anyone who cares for your child (such as grandparents and childcare providers), have received a booster vaccine for whooping cough.** To obtain a booster dose, anyone who cares for young children, should ask their immunisation provider for a prescription to purchase the vaccine from a pharmacy.
5. **For a limited time, parents of infants born on or after 1 May 2009 can receive a free booster dose of whooping cough vaccine.** The vaccine is available from your doctor now.

Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment. Early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading. For more information about whooping cough and recommended vaccinations, you can ask your doctor, contact 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or see overleaf.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jeannette Young
Chief Health Officer
17 / 2009

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DOH-DL 16/17-024

REF Document No. 103

Whooping Cough Alert: FREE Vaccine for Parents

CHECKLIST – Protect your baby from whooping cough

- Vaccinate your baby on time
 - 1st dose (2 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
 - 2nd dose (4 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
 - 3rd dose (6 months of age)
Next vaccination due: _____
- All children in your household are up-to-date with their whooping cough vaccinations (including the childhood booster vaccine for children at 4 years of age).
 - To check your children's vaccination status, have a look at their Personal Health Record, contact your doctor or phone the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 (for children less than 7 years of age).
- See your doctor or immunisation provider to get vaccinated.
 - **For a limited time, parents of infants born on or after 1 May 2009 can receive a free adult booster dose of whooping cough vaccine. See your doctor now.**
- Encourage other adults in your household and those who care for your baby (such as grandparents and childcare providers) to get vaccinated.
 - Vaccine can be purchased from a pharmacy with a prescription provided by a doctor. The vaccine should administered by an immunisation provider immediately after buying. Vaccines need to be kept at a specific temperature for them to work (e.g they shouldn't be left in a car or stored in your home fridge).

For more information on whooping cough and vaccination, contact your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84), or your local Population Health Unit. A copy of a whooping cough brochure for new parents is also available at http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/whooping_cough_broch.pdf.

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria (germ). It can affect babies, children and adults.

For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms may include:

- Runny nose and sneezing early in the illness
- An irritable, dry cough that gets worse
- Coughing spasms that can end with a loud gasp (a "whooping sound")
- Vomiting after a coughing spasm
- Older children and adults may just have a cough that doesn't go away

To help prevent the spread of infection, see your GP as soon as possible if you, your baby or anyone in your household has symptoms of whooping cough.

Population Health Units			
Brisbane Southside 3000 9148	Darling Downs 4631 9888	Mackay 4968 6611	Rockhampton 4920 6989
Brisbane Northside 3624 1111	Gold Coast 5509 7222	Mount Isa 4744 4846	Sunshine Coast 5409 6600
Cairns 4050 3600	Hervey Bay 4120 6000	Redcliffe 3142 1800	Townsville 4753 9000



**Queensland
Government**
Queensland Health

Queensland Health Immunisation Program Communicable Diseases Branch

Telephone: (07) 3328 9888

Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720

Advice to General Practice Queensland

Free Funded dTpa Vaccine for New Parents

Queensland Health is funding a free pertussis vaccination program for new parents to commence 1 August 2009.

The program will provide free pertussis vaccination in a combined vaccine (adolescent/adult formulation diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis - dTpa) for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of **children born on or after 1st May 2009**.

How will GPs be able to access dTpa?

- In the second half of July Queensland Health will commence the first delivery of dTpa to all vaccine providers – there is no need to place an order for this first delivery
- 2 weeks after the initial delivery is received providers will be to reorder dTpa (with a full stock of all vaccines held) if more vaccine is required
- Monthly orders will then resume


The program will be time limited.

Vaccine Service Providers should encourage new parents to get their free vaccination as soon as possible. To assist in promoting the free vaccine, all VSPs will receive tear-off information sheets for display.

For further information or advice, contact your local Population Health Unit.

Population Health Units			
Brisbane Northside	3624 1111	Mackay	4968 6611
Brisbane Southside	3000 9148	Redcliffe	3142 1800
Cairns	4050 3600	Mt Isa	4744 4846
Darling Downs	4631 9888	Central Qld	4920 6989
Gold Coast	5509 7222	Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Wide Bay	4120 6000	Townsville	4753 9000

ORIGINAL AUTHORISED AND SIGNED


A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
/ 7 / 2009

Enquiries to: Queensland Health Immunisation Program
Telephone: (07) 3328 9888
Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720
File Ref: n/a

Director of Nursing
Maternity Unit

Dear Director

RE: Free pertussis vaccine for new parents

Queensland Health will fund a free pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination program, commencing 1 August 2009 for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of children born on or after 1st May 2009.

As you would be aware, there has been an epidemic of pertussis in Queensland this year. Babies are most at risk of serious health complications from whooping cough because they are not fully protected by vaccination.

We are seeking your assistance to promote the free pertussis vaccination by providing new parents with the enclosed tear-off information sheet. The tear-off sheet can be easily inserted into the pertussis brochures for new parents that were sent to maternity units earlier this year.

This program will be time limited. Parents are therefore encouraged to get their free vaccination as soon as possible.

Thank you once again for your assistance in promoting this important public health message. Should you require further copies of the tear-off sheets, the brochure or the promotional poster, please contact [redacted] A/Senior Program Advisor, Queensland Health Immunisation Program on telephone (07) 3328 9888.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]
A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
/ 7 / 2009

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6 July 2009

Cleared by:

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Manager, Immunisation Program
Communicable Diseases Branch

[Redacted]

July 2009

Document Name:

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pertussis vaccine - Info for maternity units.doc

RTI Release

Pertussis Awareness Campaign

Strategies	Detail	Costs
Promotional poster for all maternity units and childcare centres	Creative design of poster	
	Printing of posters and cover letter, distribution	
Brochure for new parents for all maternity units	Design of brochure	
	Printing of whooping cough	
	Reprint of whooping cough brochures (70,000 copies - May 2009)	
	Reprint of whooping cough brochures (10,000 copies - January 2009)	
	Distribution	
Total costs		

RTI Release

Enquiries to: QHIP
Telephone: 3328 9888
Facsimile: 3328 9720
File Ref: File number

Dear Doctor/Vaccine Service Provider

Queensland Health is pleased to announce the introduction of a free pertussis vaccination program commencing 1st August 2009. This program will provide free pertussis vaccination in a combined vaccine (diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis - dTpa) for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of **children born on or after 1st May 2009**.

How will you be able to access dTpa?

- In the second half of July we will commence the first delivery of dTpa to all vaccine providers – you will not need to place an order for this first delivery
- 2 weeks after you receive your initial delivery you will be able to reorder dTpa (with a full stock of all vaccines held) if you require further vaccine
- Monthly orders will then resume

You may wish to advise all eligible parents who attend your practice/clinic that Queensland Health is providing free pertussis vaccination. You **do not** have to record or send dTpa vaccinations for parents of children born on or after 1st May 2009 to Queensland Health.

Australia is currently experiencing a whooping cough epidemic. This program aims to reduce the incidence amongst the Queensland population to protect babies too young to be fully protected by vaccination. This program will be time limited depending on the decrease in pertussis cases.

Yours sincerely


A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch

/7/2009

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Document Name: Document8

RTI Release

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DOH-DL 16/17-024

RTI Document No. 110

Population Health Document Submission Form

This form is to be completed and emailed prior to the electronic publishing of any Population Health document

Complete if document requires urgent attention

Reason for urgency: Disease outbreak response

Intranet (QHEPS)

Internet (a link will also be provided on the Intranet - QHEPS)

Document details

Preferred filename:

(if not provided we will give the resource an appropriate filename)

Whooping Cough Vaccinations for New Parents (poster)

Title:

(use words that describe your resource and the information it contains)

Whooping Cough Vaccinations for New Parents (poster)

Document Links

(Insert URL or choose the location/s of what page/s are to link to your document)

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/healthiyou/communicable/default.asp#6>
Under the heading "Immunisation"

Document replacement

(Only if replacing an existing document)

If the document replaces another, the title should be exactly the same as a previous version.

(Insert document number or filename of previous version)

Description

(A short description about the document, no longer than 512 characters. This will appear in search results.)

Health promotion poster. To protect young babies, new parents should have a whooping cough vaccination prior to or as soon as possible after baby is born. Whooping cough in young babies can cause severe health complications. The most common source of infection in babies under 6 months of age is a parent or sibling. Babies are most at risk of contracting whooping cough as they are not fully protected by vaccination.

Keywords

(Words that describe the resource. Use words that people would type into a search field to find your resource. Include scientific terms, layman's terms, acronyms. English and American spelling, common misspelling. Separate each keyword by a comma and a space. Maximum characters (including spaces) is 255)

Pertussis, pertussis vaccination campaign, whooping cough, vaccinations, immunisation, DTP, diphtheria tetanus pertussis vaccine, new parents, baby, baby vaccinations, protect your baby

Review

(Insert the person's name and position title responsible for future reviews)

Full name:

Position title: A/ Senior Program Advisor, CDB

(Online resources are to be reviewed annually. If your resource needs reviewing more regularly, please tick an alternative)

Monthly

Quarterly

Half yearly

Contact Person

This document has been proofread. It does not breach copyright and privacy laws and is properly referenced. Media Consent Form/s have been signed and are being held by this Unit / Area (if required)

Name

Position Title A/ Senior Program Advisor

Unit / Area Communicable Diseases Branch

Phone

Public Affairs Officer (only required if publishing on an Internet site)

The document content has been professionally checked and complies with the Queensland Health Publishing Guidelines

Name

Position Title

Population Health Unit / Area Senior Officer (ie: Director, Senior Director level or above)

The document reflects best practice, meets the requirements for clinical content (if applicable) and is suitable for electronic publishing

Name

Position Title Senior Director, CDB

DOH-DL 16/17-024

Document No. 111

Enquiries to: Queensland Health Immunisation
Program
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Facsimile: (07) 3328 9720
File Ref: n/a

Director of Nursing
Maternity Unit

Dear Director

Earlier this year, I wrote to you about the increased incidence of pertussis (whooping cough) in young babies. Notification data show that Queensland had 44 cases of pertussis in infants aged less than six months in 2008. This compares with a total of 13 cases in 2007 and 16 cases in 2006. There have been 32 cases already reported in the first quarter of this year.

You will be aware that Communicable Diseases Branch has produced a pertussis brochure that explains to parents the importance of infant and adult pertussis vaccination. This brochure has been sent to maternity units with a request that it be given to all new parents before discharge.

We are again seeking your assistance to promote pertussis vaccinations by displaying the enclosed promotional poster in your maternity unit.

To protect young babies against infection, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends:

1. All new parents are vaccinated with combined adult diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine (dTpa) as soon as possible after the baby is born, if they have not previously received this vaccine.
2. Infants receive their vaccinations on time at 2, 4 and 6 months of age. Infants require three vaccinations containing pertussis vaccine to be considered fully protected.
3. All healthcare workers are vaccinated with combined adult dTpa. The vaccine is available free of charge to Queensland Health healthcare workers through your facility's immunisation coordinator.

Thank you once again for your assistance in promoting this important public health message. Should you require further copies of the promotional poster, please contact A/Senior Program Advisor, Queensland Health Immunisation Program on telephone (07) 3328 9888.

Yours sincerely

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
/ 4 / 2009

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17 April 2009

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Manager, Immunisation Program
Communicable Diseases Branch

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April 2009

Document Name:

\\10.81.72.90\data6\PHS\CDU\CORRO\QHIP\Letter\2009\04\ [Redacted] Pertussis poster for
maternity units.doc

RTI Release

Infant Pertussis Prevention Project

Project statement

The purpose of the project is to reduce the risk for increased incidence in pertussis in infants less than 6 months old.

Relevant outcome/ partnership area/s

Strategic Directions for communicable Disease Prevention and Control

Registration no. 1

Document revision history

Version	Date	Prepared by	Comments
1	29 /10 /08		Initial draft

RTI RELEASES

Part A: Business Case

Project scope

Purpose

As a result of this project, we expect that:

- **Pertussis notifications in children less than 6 months of age will not rise in Queensland**

Key performance indicator/s

- > 95% of infants will receive pertussis vaccine at correct age as per the NHMRC Childhood Immunisation Handbook
- % uptake of dTpa by new parents attending Council or hospitals promoting this vaccine and offering it at discounted/cost price
- Uptake of pertussis vaccine by QH staff in contact with infants less than 6 months of age
- Uptake of pertussis vaccine by child care workers that care for infants less than 6 months of age

Benefits

Achievement of the project purpose should contribute to the following benefits:

- Reduce the risk of infants less than 6 months of age becoming infected with pertussis.

Rationale

The case fatality rate in unvaccinated infants < 6 months of age is estimated to be 0.8%. In Australia between 1993 and 2005 there were 18 deaths from pertussis, all but 2 in infants < 12 months of age.¹

During 2008 three Australian states (Western Australia, Northern Territory and NSW) experienced an increased incidence of pertussis in infants < 6 months of age. Although Queensland has not experienced a similar increase in this age group to date, the overall incidence of pertussis during 2008 is higher than 2006 and 2007 but less than that seen in 2005. As pertussis outbreaks are cyclical it is possible that the increasing pertussis incidence generally seen in Queensland this year may be the beginning of an outbreak cycle.

Additionally, although the uptake of the third dose of pertussis for children under 12 months of age is currently 91%, only 75% of these children receive the third dose by 6 months of age.

Objectives

By the end of the project we will have:

1. Designed and implemented a public communication strategy to promote timely dTpa vaccination of infants.

¹ *The Australian Immunisation Handbook 9th edition (2008)*. Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, NHMRC

2. Designed and implemented a targeted communication strategy to promote dTpa vaccine uptake by new parents, grand-parents, high risk area health care staff and child care staff.
3. A range of vaccine service providers across Queensland that promote and provide opportunistic dTpa vaccination to new parents.
4. A QH vaccination program offering all QH staff working in high risk areas free dTpa vaccination.
5. Enhanced chemoprophylaxis options for a case and high risk contacts of a case with pertussis.

Key performance indicators

- Incidence of pertussis in infants less than 6 months of age
- Number of pertussis cases in infants less than 6 months of age linked to pertussis in a parents/grand parents, health care staff or child care staff.
- Number and geographical reach of free pertussis vaccination uptake by high risk health care staff working for QH.
- Inclusion of chemoprophylaxis options on PBS for management of pertussis

Strategies

- State-wide media release using staff from the RCH and a parent of an infant who has/had pertussis.
- Development of a targeted pertussis brochure encouraging both timely infant vaccination and parent vaccination, to be include in packages given to new mothers in maternity hospitals
- Send out a media alert to all GPs through GPQ to encourage them to promote adult pertussis vaccination to all new mothers, as well as timely vaccination on infants.
- Attitudinal survey of GPs re encouraging uptake of pertussis vaccination in new parents
- Ask Divisions of GPs to upload pertussis brochure (when developed) onto their website.
- Upload pertussis brochure (when developed) onto QH website
- Seek to access the Nathaniel video and have it available on the QH website.
- Target obstetricians and paediatricians through their Faculty, via a letter from the Faculty PHPQ.
- Using the BCC protocol for offering cost price pertussis vaccine to new parents as a model, target all local governments (that provide vaccination services) and encourage adoption of this protocol.
- Target child care sector to promote adult pertussis vaccination to parents, grandparents and childcare staff though the development of a poster that can be displayed at the centre and a covering letter to the Director of each facility.
- Randomised telephone survey of child care centres regarding response to promotion of pertussis promotional material.
- Target infection control practitioners (public and private) to use as champions to follow-up with staff in maternity units, paediatric units and EDs re encouraging adult pertussis vaccination to parents and staff.
- Offer free dTpa to QH staff in high risk areas.
- Request CDNA discuss lobbying for azithromycin and clarithromycin to be included in the PBS for use in pertussis prophylaxis (as per CDNA SoNG) to increase compliance with chemoprophylaxis. (compliance is low with erythromycin due to GI side effects)

Key performance indicators

- Media campaign completed
- Pertussis brochure developed and made available to GPs and new parents via post-natal packages
- Analysis of GP attitude towards promoting dTpa vaccination for new parents.
- Pertussis poster for child care centres developed
- Analysis of childcare use of pertussis promotional material.
- Letters encouraging uptake of pertussis vaccine by new parents sent to GPs and the Faculties of Obstetricians and Paediatricians
- Free adult pertussis vaccine made available to high risk health care workers in public hospitals
- Cost-price adult pertussis vaccine made available to new parents at local government run or organised vaccination clinics.
- Inclusion of chemoprophylaxis options for pertussis on agenda of CDNA for discussion.

Assumptions

Risk of pertussis in infants < 6 months old remains a priority for PHQ.

Constraints

Limited funding and no additional staff hours are available to support the implementation of this plan.

No funding capacity to offer free vaccine to new parents

Exclusions

Related activity/projects

Queensland Health Immunisation Program
Population Health Outbreak response requirements for cases of pertussis < 5 years of age.

Project partners/clients/stakeholders

Partners/clients

- CDB (QHIP, CHRISP, CDPC, Surveillance)
- PHUs

Other stakeholders

- Districts
- Private hospitals
- Local Government
- GPs, obstetricians and paediatricians
- Child-care sector

Project timeframe

It is expected that this project will be completed by 31 march 2009

Costs

Project costs

Item	Costs ²
1. FTE equivalents Project Manager .1 Public Affairs .1 QHIP .1 PHU staff .1 Total = .4 FTE(average HP5 level) x 5 months	
2. Project budget:	
a) Temporary project staff - Nil	
b) Associated non labour and corporate overheads	
c) Printing of brochure	
d) Printing of poster	
e) Mail out of brochures and posters	
Project budget-total	

Resource contribution from stakeholders

Time resource

Cost implications post-project

There may be heightened demand for free or dTpa vaccine for new parents, health care workers and child care workers

Overall project risk

Low

² If project is multi-year, add additional columns and provide costs for each financial year.

Part B: Project Management

Human resource management

Governance

a) Structure

b) Roles and responsibilities

Project role	Name/s	Responsibilities
Project manager	<input type="text"/>	Write project plan Ensure core strategies are completed within agreed time frames Report on outcomes
Project sponsor	<input type="text"/>	Review and provide high level direction on project strategies, outcomes and recommendations
Project partners	<input type="text"/>	Undertake allocated activities within agreed timelines and report on outcomes.

c) Key decision points (ie. higher authority)

Key project decision points	Higher authority for approval/sign-off
Approval of project plan	<input type="text"/>
Release of project funds	<input type="text"/>
Pre-implementation review (if relevant)	
Status reports	<input type="text"/>
Exception reports	
Significant variations to project plan	<input type="text"/>
Approval to progress to finalisation phase (final status report)	<input type="text"/>
Project completion report	<input type="text"/>

d) Human resource development

RTI Release

Project Schedule

Strategy/Activity	Accountable Officer/s	Duration	Months												
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun				
Project strategy implementation / finalisation activities															
Organise state-wide media release															
Develop pertussis brochure															
Print brochures															
Draft letters to maternity hospitals															
Seek support ICPs to champion promotion adult vaccination to new mothers															
Request GPQ upload pertussis brochure on web-site															
Upload pertussis brochure on QH website															
Draft letter to GPs to encourage promotion of opportunistic pertussis vaccinations to new parents.															
Forward letter to GPQ for dissemination to GPs															
Seek permission of DoHA to upload "Nathanial video" on QH web-site															
Coordinate DTPa to QH staff in high risk clinical areas															

RTI RELEASE

Strategy/Activity	Accountable Officer/s	Duration	Months													
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun					
Seek support of [redacted] to have the PHPQ write to Obst and Paed faculty to promote adult pertussis vaccination of new parents	[redacted]															
Approach BCC for permission to share information on their strategy for vaccinating new parents with other LGAs	[redacted]															
Liase with PHNOs (CDC and Immun) in PHUs to approach LGAs to advocate their adoption of opportunistic vaccination of new parents at cost price.	[redacted]															
Draft memo to [redacted] to request CDNA discuss the inclusion of alternative chemoprophylaxis drugs on PBS for managing pertussis cases	[redacted]															
GP attitudinal survey for promoting adult pertussis vaccination for new parents	[redacted]															
Childcare telephone survey re use of pertussis promotional material	[redacted]															
Collate source of infection for pertussis cases < 5 years old	[redacted]															
Project management activities																

RTI Release

Risk management

Risk	Risk Management Activities	
	Preventive	Contingent
Project team unable to meet timelines	Regular reminders and review of capacity	Identify other staff able to take over if a team member is unavailable to complete tasks.

Quality management

Quality standards /guidelines

Brochures and posters meets QH document development guidelines

Project evaluation

Achievement of objectives

Strategy implementation

Project management

Post implementation review

Communication management

Communication

What	How	With/To Whom	When/how often
Project progress	TCs email	Project team Project team members	Minimum monthly As required

Information management

Document Type/Name	Electronic Location	Hard copy location
Project plan	CDB - CDPC drive	File -

Project minutes	CDB - CDPC drive	File -
Brochure	CDB - CDPC drive	File -
Letters	CDB - CDU correspondence	File -
Poster	CDB - CDPC drive	File -

Recommendations and decisions

Recommendations (project manager)	
Next Step <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Cease <i>Comments:</i>	Prepared by Name: <input type="text"/> Unit/Network: Manager CDPC Date: 29 October 2008
Cleared by (if relevant)	
Name: Position:	Signed: Date:
<i>Comments:</i>	
Approval/decision (higher authority)	
Next Step <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to implementation phase <input type="checkbox"/> Revise project plan and present again <input type="checkbox"/> Cease <i>Comments:</i>	Project manager³ Project sponsor²
Resources approved? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Amount \$ <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Parameters of project manager authority Time: Cost: Quality: Other:
Name: Position:	Signed: Date:

³ This is most often and ideally the same person who has been performing this role to date but may not be.



28 November 2008

Protect newborns from whooping cough

Queensland Health is warning parents and family members to keep their whooping cough vaccinations up-to-date, to avoid placing newborn babies at risk of the serious infection.

Queensland Health's Senior Director of Communicable Diseases Dr Christine Selvey said whooping cough can be life threatening for babies under 12 months of age.

"Whooping cough can affect babies, children and adults," Dr Selvey said.

"While the infection may cause a persistent cough in adolescents and adults, whooping cough in young children can obstruct breathing, resulting in a lack of oxygen and even death.

"Babies under six months are the most vulnerable as they would not yet have had three whooping cough vaccinations."

Dr Selvey said there had been an increase in the number of cases of whooping cough in Queensland, particularly in babies under six months of age.

Latest figures show Queensland Health has been notified of 36 cases of whooping cough in babies aged under six months this year. During the same period in 2007 there were 14 cases and 17 in 2006.

So far in 2008, Queensland Health has been notified of 1700 whooping cough cases in people of all ages. This compares with 1423 notifications for the same period in 2007, and 2046 for the same time period in 2006.

Dr Selvey said some other Australian states had experienced a greater increase in notifications in babies aged under six months.

"The infection is often spread to babies from parents and family members who are not immunised," Dr Selvey said.

"Unfortunately, immunity from vaccination wanes with time, so adults require a booster, even if they were vaccinated as children."

"We particularly encourage new parents, couples planning a pregnancy, and adults and young people who are in close contact with babies to get vaccinated if they have not done so in the past ten years."

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria.

"People should also be aware of the symptoms that might start like a cold, with a runny nose and sneezing, before a cough develops, and seek treatment early to reduce the spread of infection to others," Dr Selvey said.

Vaccination is the best protection against whooping cough. Doctors recommend vaccinating babies at two, four and six months, with a booster at four years of age. These vaccinations are provided free of charge at community child health clinics.

Doctors also recommend a booster dose for adolescents, which is provided free for students in year 10 through the school-based vaccination program.

These vaccines are provided free as part of the National Immunisation Program.

New parents, couples planning a pregnancy, and adults and young people who are in close contact with babies should see their GP for a single booster dose.

Ends.

Media contact:

RTI Release

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Introduction

Whooping cough (or pertussis) is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria. It can affect babies, children and adults. For adolescents and adults the infection may only be a persistent cough, however for young children whooping cough can be life threatening. The cough can obstruct a baby's breathing and they may lack oxygen and become blue.

Symptoms

Whooping cough may start like a cold, with a runny nose and sneezing, and then the characteristic cough develops. These coughing bouts can be very severe and frightening, and may end with a crowing noise (the whoop). This occurs as air is drawn back into the chest, and can be followed by vomiting or gagging. In young infants, as well as older children and adults, the typical symptoms may not be present.

After exposure to the bacteria, it usually takes nine to ten days to become ill.

Transmission

The bacteria are spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing. Direct contact with infected secretions from the mouth or nose can also pass on the infection.

A person is highly infectious for the first two weeks of their cough. After three weeks of coughing, the person is regarded as non-infectious, even though coughing may last up to three months.

Treatment

Treatment is a full course of antibiotics which reduces the time a person is infectious to others. Antibiotics need to be given within 21 days of the start of general symptoms or within 14 days of the start of the cough. Antibiotics reduce symptoms if given when infection is developing, after contact with a person with pertussis and in the early coughing stage.

Not all people who have close contact with an infected person with whooping cough need treatment. However, because infants are at a higher risk of severe complications if they develop whooping cough, a full course of antibiotics is recommended for the following people in the same house as a person with whooping cough (if the infected person has been coughing less than 21 days). This includes:

- any baby less than 12 months of age regardless of their vaccination status
- any child between 12-24 months of age who has received less than three doses of a whooping cough vaccine
- any woman in the last month of pregnancy
- any child or adult who attends or works in a childcare centre.

If a child with whooping cough attends childcare and belongs to the infant group (less than 12 months of age), the other infants in that group should be given antibiotics if the infected child has been coughing less than 14 days.

Control

A person with whooping cough should stay away from work, school and child-care until they have had full course of antibiotics, or until 21 days after the beginning of the coughing or until the end of coughing, whichever comes first.

Household contacts, who have received less than three doses of whooping cough vaccine, should be excluded from child-care centres until they have taken a full course of antibiotics or for 14 days after the last exposure to infection.

Prevention

Whooping cough can be prevented by vaccination. The whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine is combined together with diphtheria, tetanus and inactivated poliomyelitis vaccine (DTPa-IPV).

DTPa-IPV vaccine is recommended and provided free for:

- all babies at 2, 4 and 6 months of age; and
- a booster at 4 years of age.

The protection provided by childhood vaccination gradually reduces over time, leaving adolescents and adults potentially at risk of catching the disease. An adult-adolescent whooping cough vaccine, combined with diphtheria and tetanus vaccine (dTpa), is now available.

A single booster dose of dTpa is recommended and provided free for:

- adolescents at 15 years of age, or year 10 students if vaccinated in a school based vaccination program.

A single booster dose of dTpa is recommended, but not funded for:

- adolescents at 15 to 17 years replacing the dose of ADT (dT);
- for both partners planning pregnancy, or for both parents as soon as possible after delivery of an infant;
- adults working with young children especially health-care and child-care workers;
- any adult requesting a booster dose of dTpa, provided they have received three previous doses of DTP; and
- dTpa may be used instead of ADT vaccine at 50 years of age.

Help and Assistance

For further information please contact your local doctor, community health centre, nearest population health unit or contact the 13HEALTH information line (13 432584).

Other Resources

Queensland Health website: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au>

Immunise Australia website: <http://immunise.health.gov.au>

References

Heymann, D., ed. 2004. *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*, 18th edition. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

National Health and Medical Research Council, 2003. *The Australian Immunisation Handbook* (8th Ed.) Canberra: National Capital Printing.

Document Details

Unit Name

Communicable Disease Unit

Unit Phone

Keywords

Whooping cough, pertussis, symptoms, treatment, control, prevention, vaccination.

Description

An information sheet on whooping cough (pertussis) for the general public.

RTI Release



**Queensland
Government**
Queensland Health

Queensland Health Immunisation Program Communicable Diseases Branch

Telephone: (07) 3234 1500
Facsimile: (07) 3234 1452

Advice to General Practitioners

Increase in pertussis in Queensland

Queensland Health is advising parents and family members to keep their pertussis vaccinations up-to-date, to avoid placing newborn babies at risk of the serious infection.

This is in response to an increase in the number of cases of pertussis in Queensland, particularly in babies under six months of age.

Latest figures show Queensland Health has been notified of 36 cases of pertussis in babies aged under six months this year. During the same period in 2007 there were 14 cases and 17 in 2006.

Many of these children will have acquired pertussis from a primary care giver such as their parent or grandparent.

So far in 2008, Queensland Health has been notified of 1700 pertussis cases in people of all ages. This compares with 1423 notifications for the same period in 2007, and 2046 for the same time period in 2006.

Immunity from pertussis disease or childhood pertussis vaccination is not life-long. GPs are asked to encourage new parents, couples planning a pregnancy, and all adults who are in close contact with babies to get vaccinated if they have not done so in the past ten years.

Adult diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (dTpa) vaccine is safe and effective when given in the post-natal period and while breastfeeding. Common side effects are redness or soreness at the injection site, less frequent effects are headache, fever or tiredness.

This vaccine is not free.

GPs are also reminded to check the vaccination status of children who present at their practice. Pertussis vaccination is recommended at two, four and six months. Pertussis antigen is included in the Infanrix-hexa combination vaccine. A booster dose is recommended at four years of age and is included in Infanrix-IPV vaccine due at that time. A booster dose is also offered to adolescents in year 10 through the school-based vaccination program.

These vaccines are provided free as part of the National Immunisation Program.

ORIGINAL AUTHORISED AND SIGNED

Dr Christine Selvey
Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
01 / 12 / 2008

Enquiries to: QHIP
Telephone: 3328 9888
Facsimile: 3328 9720
File Ref: **File number**

Dear Doctor/Vaccine Service Provider

Queensland Health is pleased to announce the introduction of a free pertussis vaccination program commencing 1st August 2009 for birth parents, adoptive parents and foster parents of **children born on or after 1st May 2009**.

The vaccine is administered as the adolescent/adult formulation diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis vaccine (dTpa).

How will you be able to access dTpa?

- In the second half of July we will commence the first delivery of dTpa to all vaccine providers – you will not need to place an order for this first delivery.
- 2 weeks after you receive your initial delivery you will be able to reorder dTpa (with a full stock of all vaccines held) if you require further vaccine.
- Monthly orders will then resume.

You may wish to advise all eligible parents who attend your practice/clinic that Queensland Health is providing free pertussis vaccination. You **do not** have to record or send dTpa vaccination records for these vaccinations.

Australia is currently experiencing a pertussis epidemic. This program aims to protect babies too young to be fully protected by pertussis vaccination. The program will be time limited.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

A/Senior Director
Communicable Diseases Branch
/7/2009

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Prepared by: [redacted]
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6 July 2009

Cleared by: [redacted]
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[redacted]
July 2009

Document Name: QHIP\Communication\Information for VSPs\Letters\2009\Pertussis program 0709

RTI Release

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DOH-DL 16/17-024

RTI Document No. 132

Pertussis

what the hell is going on?

Stephen Lambert

- 1 Communicable Diseases Branch, Queensland Health
- 2 Queensland Children's Medical Research Institute, The University of Queensland & Queensland Children's Health Services

RTI Release



Queensland Childrens
Medical Research Institute 



Baby Button and Mum

The Herald Sun (Melbourne)

Deadly whooping cough warning

March 14th 2012

“3-week old infant caught pertussis from 2-year old fully vaccinated sister...”

Messages: suspect pertussis in

1. neonates
2. older children with prolonged cough, even if fully vaccinated

RTI Release

Truths about pertussis

Highly infectious

- pre-vaccine era: up to 90% of household contacts of child cases infected

RTI Release

Truths about pertussis

Immunity

- infection does not provide a guarantee of long-term protection
 - vaccine: 4-12 years
 - infection: 4-20 years
- } both can wane as soon as 4 years

RTI REQUEST

Truths about pertussis

Whoop

- may be missing in people with immunity due to infection or vaccination, particularly adults

RTI Release

Pertussis symptoms

Typical symptoms in children ^{1,3}	Atypical symptoms frequently in adolescents/adults ²
Paroxysmal cough	Sneezing
Post-tussive vomiting	Coryza
Inspiratory whoop	Low grade fever
Prolonged cough duration (Mean duration 36–48 days) ³	Non-specific cough

- neonatal apnoea +/- cough/whoop
- if older child/adult may resemble URTI, bronchitis, sinusitis, asthma
- consider if prolonged coughing: *B. pertussis*³

1. Cherry *et al. Pediatr Infect Dis J* 2005; 24(5 Suppl): S25–34

2. Brooks, Clover. *J Am Board Fam Med* 2006; 19: 603–11

3. Wirsing von König *et al. Lancet Infect Dis* 2002; 2:744–50

Truths about pertussis

Adults

- 7% cough illnesses per year
- up to 25% in cough illnesses >5d
- significant morbidity: prolonged cough, sleep disturbance, # ribs

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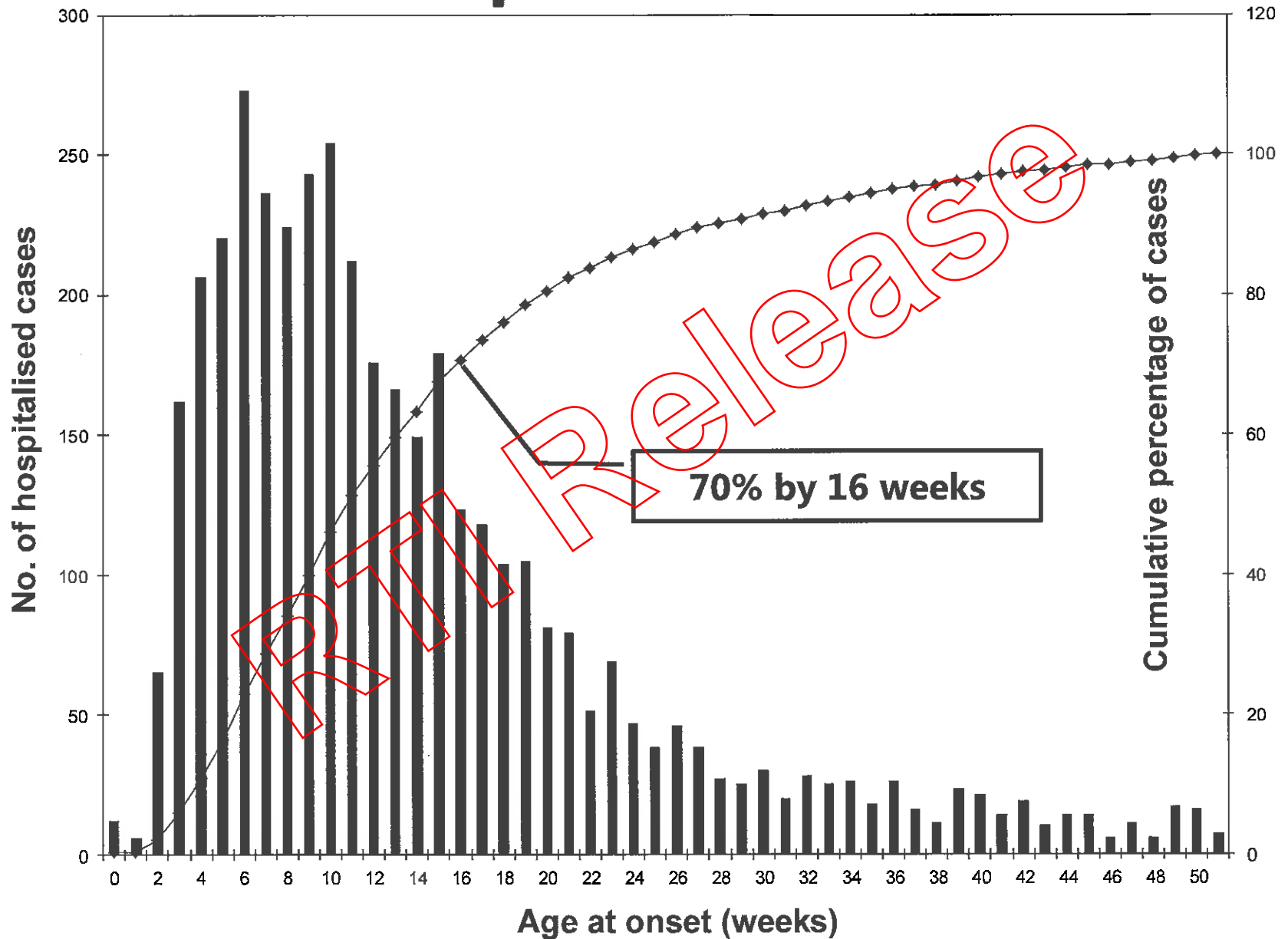
Truths about pertussis

Death

- rare in 10 to 70 year olds
- case fatality ~0.8% in unvaccinated infants

RTI Request

Truths about pertussis



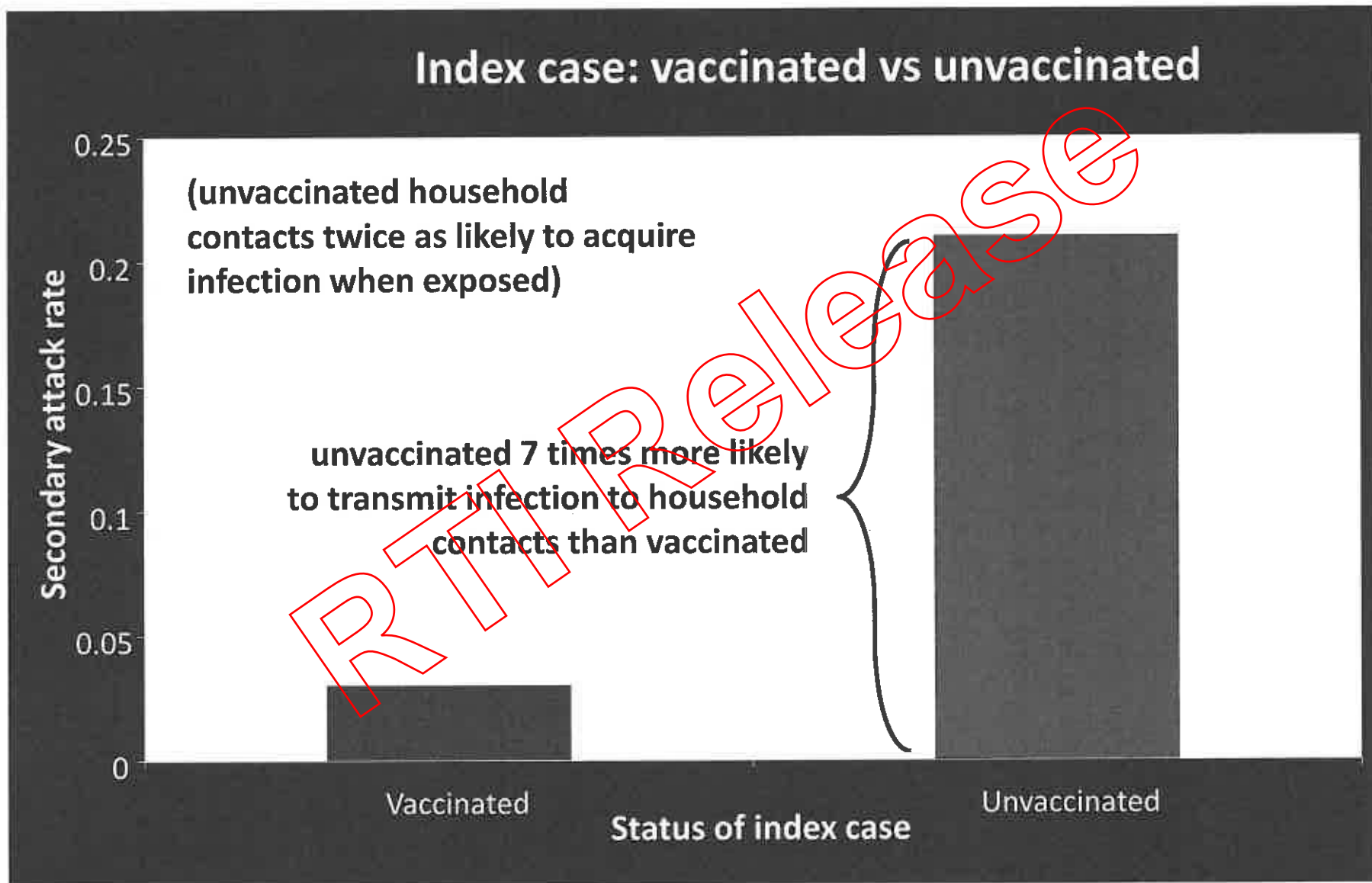
Truths about pertussis

Vaccination

- rapidly waning immunity, esp in primary school aged and older
- why bother? what's the point?

RTI Release

Truths about pertussis



Halloran ME, Préziosi MP, Chu H. Estimating vaccine efficacy from secondary attack rates

Journal of the American Statistical Association. 2003;98:38–46.

RTI Document No. 144

DOH-DL 16/17-024

Truths about pertussis

Vaccination: US data

- 140 pertussis deaths 2000-2005
- 131 in infants
- 126 <4m of age
- deaths: 97% unvaccinated, 1% had 1 dose, 2% had 2+ doses
- vaccination prevents deaths in infants

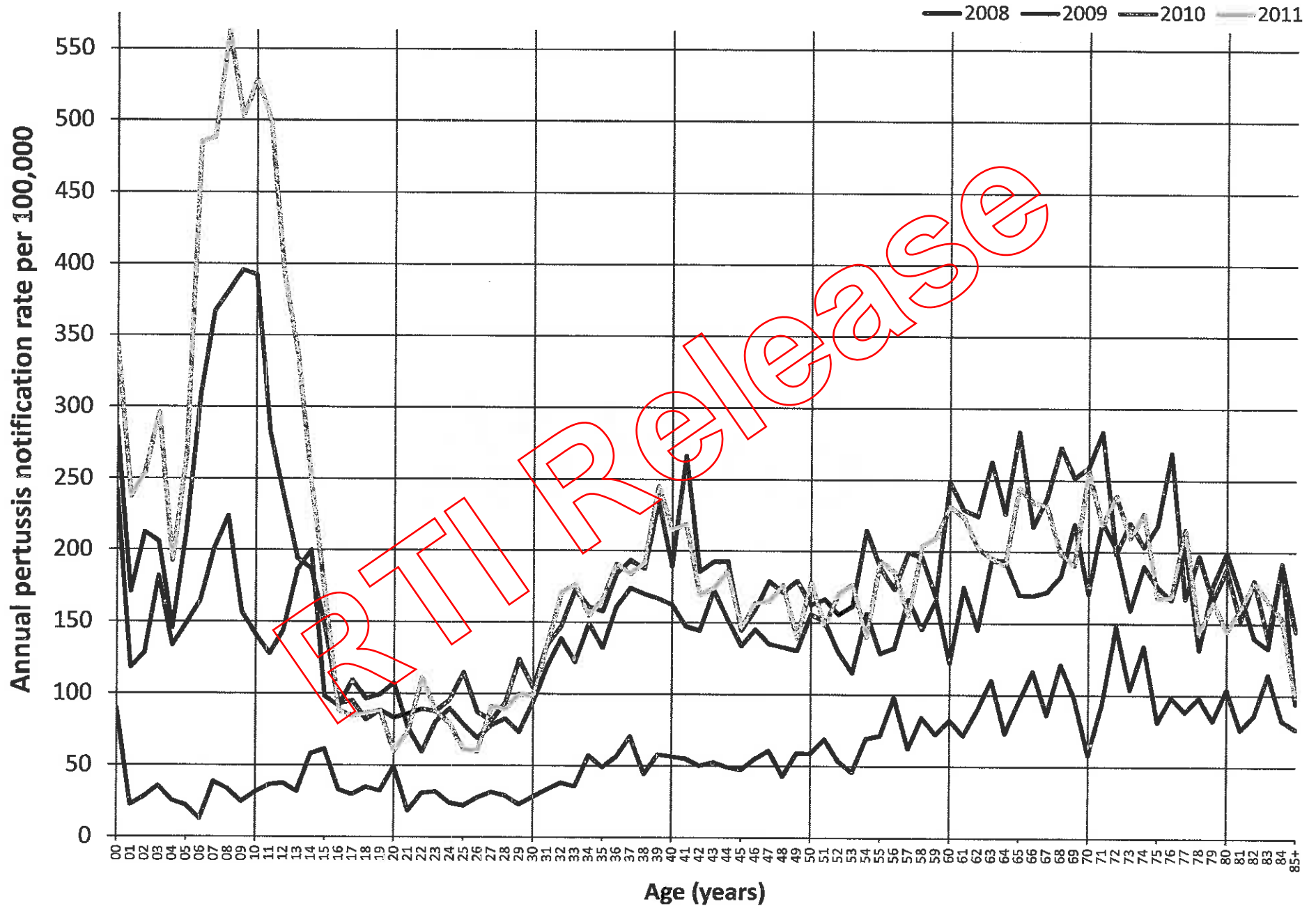
Tiwari T. Reported pertussis-related deaths to the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance system and the CDC in the United States, 2000-2005. #82. Presented at: the 42nd National Immunization Conference; March 17-20, 2008; Atlanta

Pertussis: Australia

- all age-groups up since 2008
- dramatic increases in 5-14 year olds, relative to other age-groups
- 2008-2012: 8 infant deaths (Australia)
- notifications falling in 2012
- what the hell is going on?

P E R T U S S I S

Pertussis notifications QLD



RTI RELEASE

WHY?
RTI Release

Reasons for current “outbreak”?

1. more and better testing
2. vaccine refusal
3. waning immunity
4. newly emerging vaccine-resistant clones

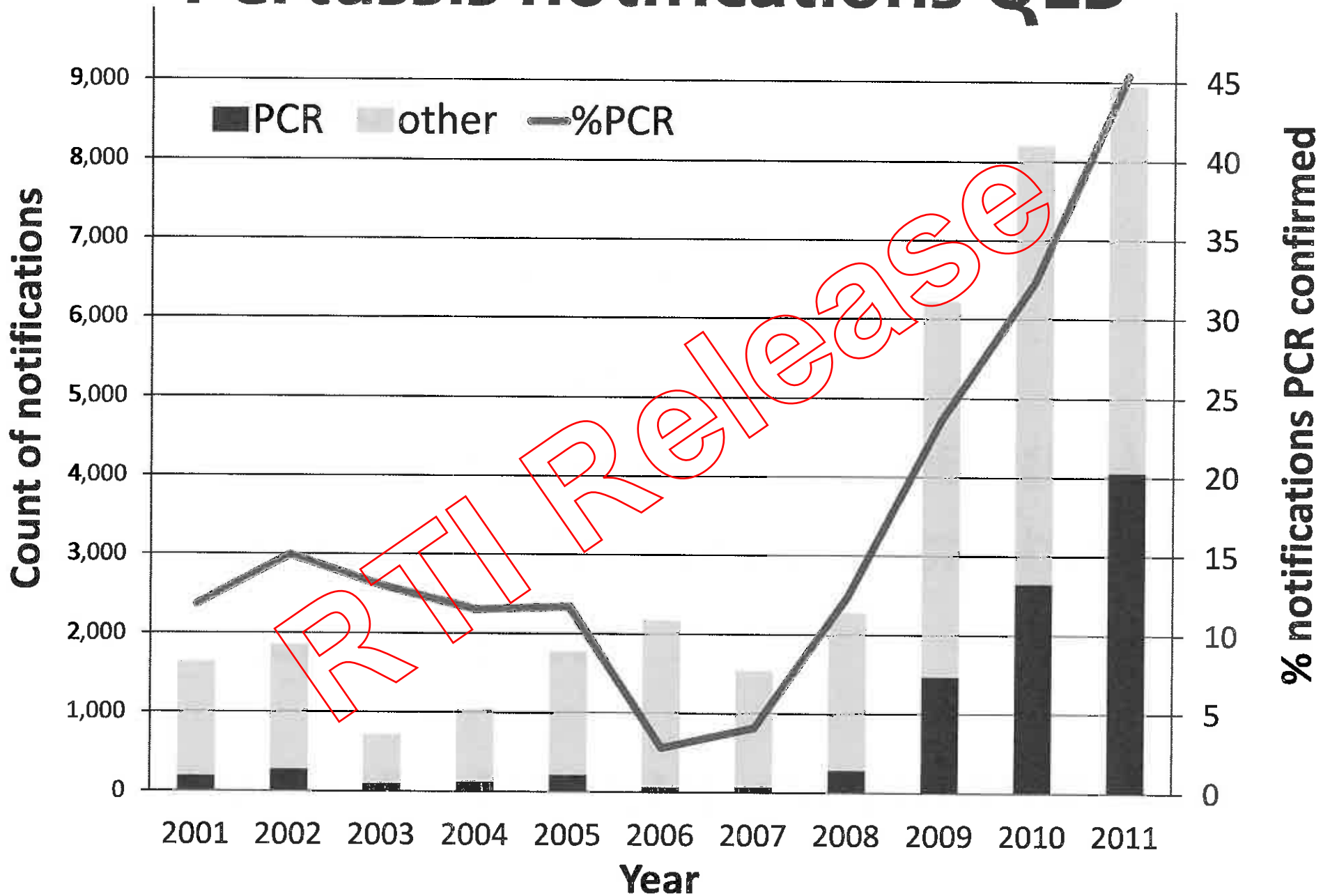
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Reasons for current “outbreak”?

1. more and better testing
 - move to PCR
 - much more likely to be used in 5-14 yr olds than serology
 - increased clinician and patient awareness

RTI Release

Pertussis notifications QLD



RTI Release

Reasons for current “outbreak”?

2. vaccine refusal

- clustering of COs promotes spread
- but only a small part of the story
- 94% of 2-yr olds UTD
- cases everywhere
- most cases have had at least 1 DTPa, many are UTD

BETTER PLEASE

Reasons for current “outbreak”?

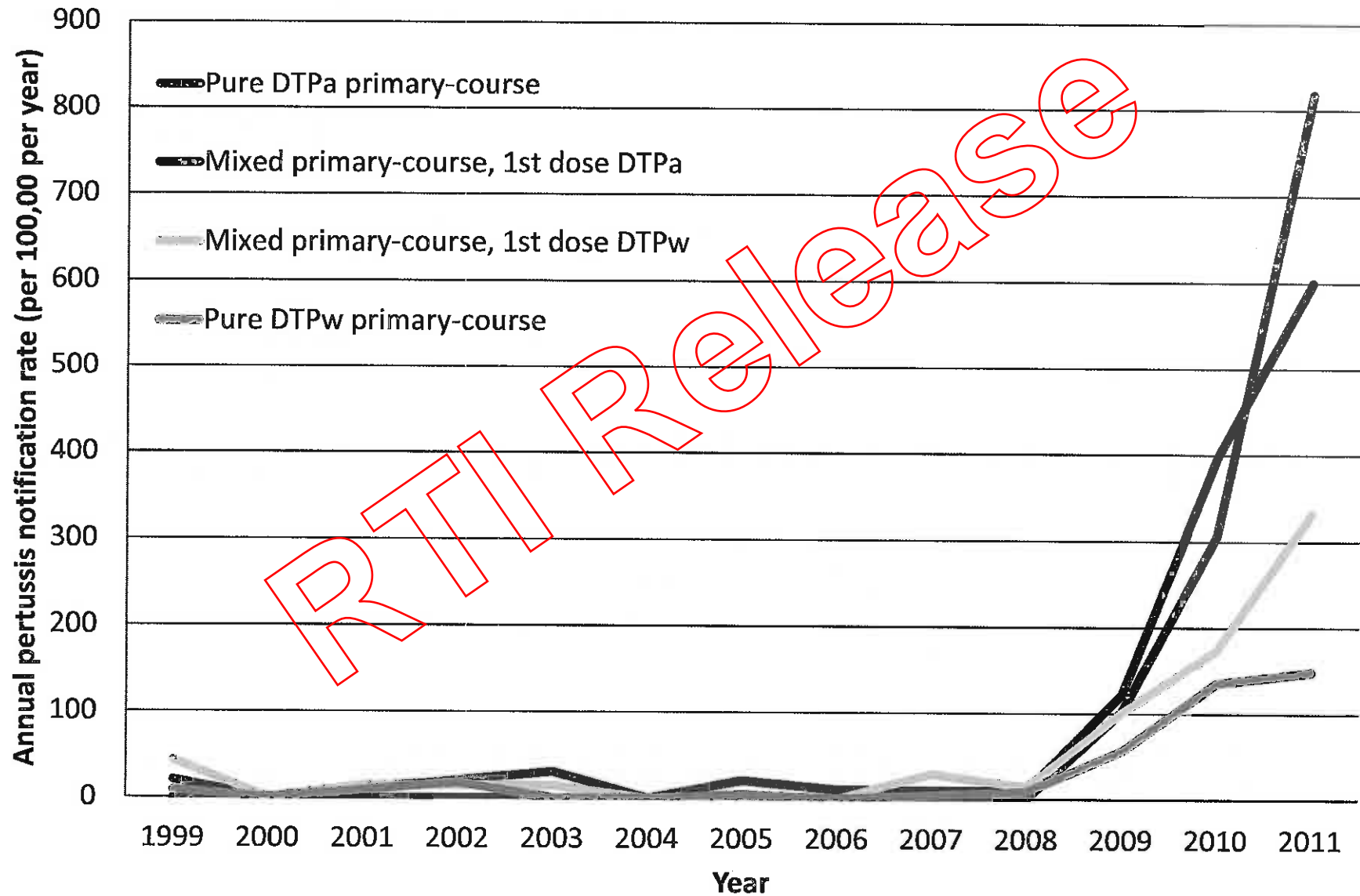
3. poor vaccine/waning immunity
 - infection/vaccine immunity not lifelong, maybe short-lived
 - cases seen in recently boosted age-groups (>4 yr olds)
 - similar situation in US
 - switch from DTPw to DTPa

RTI REQUEST

Pertussis VE against notification, 2009 and 2010, QLD



QLD pertussis notification rates, 1999 - 2011 by primary-course for children born in 1998



RTI Release

Reasons for current “outbreak”?

- 4. vaccine-resistant clones?
 - Sydney paper suggesting selection for strains not matched by vaccine
 - no evidence this makes vaccine less effective
 - a space to watch

RTI Request

Reasons for current “outbreak”?

1. more and better testing ✓ ✓
2. vaccine refusal ~
3. waning immunity ✓
4. newly emerging vaccine-resistant clones ~ ✗

RTI Release

Next steps

What should be our vaccine strategies given current outbreak

- primary focus to protect infants
- direct and indirect protection
- reducing overall rates of disease will protect infants

RTI Release

Direct protection: infants

Active

- improve coverage in infants
- improve timeliness
- maintain 6 weeks time point
(~8+% reduction deaths/hosps)

RTI Release

Direct protection: infants

Active

- neonatal Pa vaccination
- NCIRS study
- birth dose group: early response
- no bad adverse events
- likely to be overtaken by...

RTI Release

Direct protection: infants

Passive

- immunisation in pregnancy
- improved transplacental Abs 20+wks
- protects until primary course
- vaccine safe, but liability issues
- interference with infant course?
- boosting?
- USA ACIP 2011 recommendation
- new handbook: dTpa during 3rd trimester, 5 year boosting

Direct protection: others

- 18m booster
- 3.5 to 4 yr booster
- adult boosters, including cocoon

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Indirect protection: infants

- cocoon strategy
- does it work? coverage? timing?
- parents replaced by others?
- NSW, QLD, VIC assessments

RTI REQUEST

Key message

Despite some questions about waning immunity, DTaP vaccine is still the best way we have to reduce cases and reduce transmission of the disease, particularly to vulnerable infants

RTI@2025

The future

- better vaccines?
- live attenuated vaccine
- current vaccines with new adjuvants

RTI Release



MEDIA MONITORS

Transcript

Station: **ABC 612 BRISBANE** Date: **22/06/2009**
 Program: **MORNINGS** Time: **09:45 AM**
 Compere: **MADONNA KING** Summary ID: **W00035122217**

Item: **DISCUSSION ON THE SHORTAGE OF SUPPLIES OF WHOOPING COUGH VACCINES FOR ADULTS IN QUEENSLAND.**

INTERVIEWEES: NEIL HEARNDEN, NATIONAL IMMUNISATION COMMITTEE, ROYAL AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF GPs

Demographics:	Male 16+	Female 16+	All people	ABs	GBs
	11000	13000	24000	6000	13000

MADONNA KING: There's been a push for any adult who's likely to be around a newborn baby to have a whooping cough vaccine, even if you were vaccinated as a child. Unlike other diseases, whooping cough vaccines don't give you a lifelong immunity. But as one listener let me know, you actually can't get the vaccine for whooping cough if you're an adult.

Dr Neil Hearnden is from the National Immunisation Committee at the Royal Australian College of GPs.

Doctor, good morning.

NEIL HEARNDEN: Good morning, Madonna.

MADONNA KING: Is there any whooping cough vaccine for adults in Australia?



MEDIA MONITORS

- NEIL HEARNDEN: I'm sure there is, but we can't get it.
- MADONNA KING: What do you mean?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: Meaning that there is actually sufficient stocks in the public program to vaccinate 15-year-olds and there are - that vaccine is secured under the National Immunisation Program. And there are also fairly significant stocks in the other states - and I specifically mean not Queensland - that have had the forethought to develop a whooping cough program for adults, and in particular New South Wales and Victoria and Northern Territory, but not Queensland.
- MADONNA KING: So what you're saying - and I don't want to put words in your mouth, but if I go along to my GP in the private system, so just a GP that's not attached to a public hospital, and ask for a whooping cough vaccine, something we've been urged to do, there is none of the vaccine available?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: There is none. We've been trying very hard to get this vaccine in front of the public for a long, long time. Unfortunately, there's been no support from government institutions for funding for this vaccine and very little publicity other than what the individual companies that market the vaccine have been able to provide.
- MADONNA KING: Why is there a shortage in Queensland?



MEDIA MONITORS

NEIL HEARNDEN: Well, I think it comes back down to the national policy of not quite being quite sure about whether this vaccine should be funded or not. And so there's been very mixed messages being given to the companies that make this vaccine about how much they should import into the country.

The public now are starting to become frightened about whooping cough. We've had 13,000 cases in 2008 and probably much more significant numbers in 2009. If we just look at New South Wales alone, they've had not quite 10 times the number of whooping cough; there was 5500 cases between January and March this year compared to 700 in the previous year. So if we look at that in New South Wales and then extrapolate that to the country, we're talking about a very big upsurge.

And of course, that means everyone's starting to say, oh, goodness, there's whooping cough around, I'll ask my GP about it. And the GPs have, thankfully, now starting to say, well, yes, I do have the vaccine, and it's being issued at a rapid rate.

We now have, as I said, a free program for people in New South Wales...

MADONNA KING: Yes, but coming back to Queensland because people listening are in Queensland.

NEIL HEARNDEN: Well, I think that Queenslanders need to know and ask why they're missing out.



MEDIA MONITORS

- MADONNA KING: So what adults should be immunised, should receive the vaccine?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: Well, we know that the - people who have just become parents, new parents. People that have just had babies, they're the ones that need the vaccine most, and as their children will not be able to be immunised with our current vaccine program...
- MADONNA KING: Can they go to a public hospital and get vaccinated there?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: Public hospital doesn't have the vaccine, nor do they have the imprimatur to issue it.
- MADONNA KING: Is there enough vaccine for babies and children in the private system?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: There's plenty of vaccine for babies.
- MADONNA KING: And is it a different vaccine for adults?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: Totally different vaccine, and surprisingly, about 30 per cent of the cost of a baby vaccine. But even so, it's still not attracting government funding.
- MADONNA KING: And why is it a different vaccine?
- NEIL HEARNDEN: Why? Well, there are differences between adults and humans, of course - adults and babies, and we



MEDIA MONITORS

do have differences in the ability for the immune system to respond.

MADONNA KING: How long will it be until there is new stock?

NEIL HEARNDEN: Well, we're hoping that there'll be new stock by the end of June. That was what we were last told, but there's still none in our fridges and none of the suppliers can give us a definite date. We think that certainly by the end of July we should see the stocks coming back again. But we still have a problem that there's no funding for the vaccine in Queensland.

MADONNA KING: What about going overseas? Any countries where you need to have a whooping cough vaccine before you go?

NEIL HEARNDEN: Well, we've been encouraging people because once you sit on an aeroplane, you're sitting in amongst a whole pile of people that are coughing. So yes, I think it has been popular as a vaccine that's promoted for people that are travelling.

MADONNA KING: Great to talk to you, Doctor. Thank you.

NEIL HEARNDEN: Thank you.

MADONNA KING: That's Dr Neil Hearnden from the National Immunisation Committee at the Royal Australian College of GPs.



MEDIA MONITORS

I'd be interested to hear from you if you've gone along and sought the vaccine from your local GP. What have they told you?

* * END * *

TRANSCRIPT PRODUCED BY MEDIA MONITORS
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RTI Release

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AGENCY REPORT For private research and not to be disseminated. Every effort made to ensure accuracy for the benefit of our clients but no legal responsibility is taken for errors or omissions. (*) - Indicates unknown spelling or phonetic spelling. Metro TV demographics are supplied by OzTAM, Radio and Non-Metro TV demographics are supplied by Nielsen Media Research.

ABs = Managers, administrators, professions GBs = Grocery buyers.



Embargoed until 1 August 2009

Free whooping cough vaccine now available for new parents

From today, new parents in Queensland are eligible for the free whooping cough vaccine, under the Queensland Government's new initiative to protect newborn babies from the potentially deadly disease.

The Queensland Government announced the \$3 million initiative in mid July which will run for an initial six months from 1 August.

"This will be followed by an assessment of the program's effectiveness and whether the current nationwide outbreak has subsided," Deputy Premier and Minister for Health Paul Lucas said.

"Cases of pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, are four times higher in Australia and Queensland in 2009 compared to the same period last year.

"In the past year alone three babies have died in Australia after contracting the illness and in the year to date, more than 15,000 adults and children have been diagnosed.

"While adults who contract whooping cough may end up with a persistent cough, it can obstruct a baby's breathing and may be life threatening.

"No parent would want to make their baby sick but, in many cases, that's exactly what's happening because too many new parents aren't properly protected.

"That is why the Queensland Government has taken steps to ensure we are able to protect new parents, starting from today," he said.

Mr Lucas said under the National Immunisation Program Schedule, the whooping cough vaccine is given to babies at two, four and six months of age.

"About 94 per cent of two-year-olds are fully vaccinated against whooping cough, but babies too young to be fully vaccinated and protected can catch it from their parents who haven't been immunised or had booster vaccinations as adults.

"Unfortunately, many adults believe their own childhood pertussis vaccinations protect them into adulthood – this is not the case.

"This free vaccine provided by the State Government is a vital public health measure that will help protect newborns until they're fully vaccinated.

"We hope that new parents now make this part of their usual vaccination schedule," he said.

Parents with babies born since 1 May 2009 should see their normal immunisation provider to receive the vaccine - either their General Practitioner, local government, community health centre or Aboriginal health service.

Mr Lucas said Queensland Health was working with the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register to alert new parents to the availability of the free vaccine.

Adult pertussis vaccinations are available to the general community at a cost and anyone wishing to consider such a vaccination should consult with their General Practitioner.

ENDS



18 December 2009

Babies at risk without whooping cough vaccination

Babies are at risk of serious illness if their parents are not vaccinated against whooping cough, Queensland Health has warned, as the number of cases for the year reaches 5000.

"That is why the Queensland Government introduced a new parent program in August this year for parents of babies born from 1 May 2009," Gold Coast public health physician Dr Don Staines said.

"It is being offered free to new parents because babies cannot be fully vaccinated until six months of age when they have their last of three shots – the others recommended at two and four months.

"Nearly 47,000 does of vaccine have been distributed under the program to 10 November, but we suspect there are many more who are eligible.

"The whooping cough epidemic we have seen this year is continuing for longer than expected with 68 cases recorded for the week to 7 December taking the total for the year to 5548," Dr Staines said.

"This is way above the average for the previous five years of 1759.

"From January to October, there were 437 notifications in children age less than five years, including 110 infants less than 6 months.

"On the Gold Coast, there were 46 notifications in the month to 7 December and 89 notifications in the month prior to that."

Babies too young to be fully vaccinated and protected can catch it from their parents who haven't been immunised or have not had booster vaccinations as adults. So it is very important that parents are vaccinated against this terrible disease.

"Three babies have died in Australia in the past year after contracting the illness and this year more than 15,000 adults and children nationally have been diagnosed."

Parents should discuss vaccination with their family doctor or another immunisation provider.

Others who should also consider receiving a whooping cough booster include:

- adults planning a pregnancy
- adults working with or caring for young children, that is, child care workers, health care workers, grandparents
- any adult who wishes to have protection

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is the most common vaccine preventable illness in Australia. More information at www.health.qld.gov.au

Media contact:



Logan parents embrace vaccine

New Queensland parents are eligible for free whooping vaccine under a \$3 million program beginning today (August 1).

An opportunity exists for the media to obtain footage of new Logan parents, Karla Simes and Matthew Cook as they receive their vaccine to protect their four-day-old daughter Maeli.

Dr Michael Nissen will also be in attendance to discuss the vaccination program and the importance of up to date vaccination for all new parents.

Who: Dr Michael Nissen, Director of Infectious Diseases,
Royal Children's Hospital

Karla Simes, Matthew Cook and baby Maeli

Time: 1pm

Venue: Outpatients Clinic
Logan Hospital
Corner Armstrong and Loganlea roads
Meadowbrook

Media Contact:
Public Affairs Officer
Logan Hospital
Ph:
Mobile:

1 August 2009

Free whooping cough vaccine now available for new parents

From today, new parents in Queensland are eligible for free whooping cough vaccine to protect their newborn babies and help stop the spread of the disease.

The \$3 million vaccine program will run for an initial six months.

"Cases of pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, are four times higher than the same period last year," Director of Infectious Diseases at the Royal Children's Hospital Dr Michael Nissen said.

"Unfortunately we have already had three babies die in Australia from the disease and more than 15,000 adults and children have been diagnosed.

"Whooping cough can result in a persistent cough for adults, however it can severely affect a baby's breathing and, in severe cases, may be life threatening.

"With many parents lacking the proper protection against the disease, they run the risk of actually infecting their children," he said.

Under the National Immunisation Program Schedule, pertussis vaccine is given to babies at two, four and six months of age.

"While nationally we have 94% of two-year-olds fully vaccinated, babies too young for that full protection can catch it from people, including their parents, who have not been immunised or had booster vaccinations as adults."

Dr Nissen also said the widespread belief that a childhood vaccination continued into adulthood was not the case.

Parents with new babies born since 1 May 2009 should see their normal immunisation provider to receive the vaccine - either their general practitioner, local government, community health centre or Aboriginal health service.

Queensland Health will undertake a direct mailout through the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, to alert parents of the free vaccine.

Media contact:

Public Affairs Officer
Logan Hospital
Ph:
Mobile:

17 November 2009

Babies at risk without whooping cough vaccination

Babies are at risk of serious illness if their parents are not vaccinated against whooping cough, Queensland Health has warned, as the number of cases for the year reaches 5000.

"That is why the Queensland Government introduced a new parent program in August this year for parents of babies born from 1 May 2009," Ipswich Hospital Director of Paediatrics Dr John Gavranich said.

"It is being offered free to new parents because babies cannot be fully vaccinated until six months of age when they have their last of three shots – the others recommended at two and four months.

"Nearly 47,000 does of vaccine have been distributed under the program to 10 November, but we suspect there are many more who are eligible.

"The whooping cough epidemic we have seen this year is continuing for longer than expected with 65 cases recorded for the week to 8 November taking the total for the year to 5000," Dr Gavranich said.

"This is way above the average for the previous five years of 1759.

"From January to October, there were 437 notifications in children age less than five years, including 110 infants less than 6 months.

"Babies too young to be fully vaccinated and protected can catch it from their parents who haven't been immunised or have not had booster vaccinations as adults. So it is very important that parents are vaccinated against this terrible disease.

"Three babies have died in Australia in the past year after contracting the illness and this year more than 15,000 adults and children nationally have been diagnosed."

District notifications of the disease for the past two months have been: Brisbane North 74 in past month, 124 previous month; Cairns 20, 11; Darling Downs 37, 39; Gold Coast 76, 66; Moreton Bay 46, 54; Rockhampton 6, 21; Sunshine Coast 73, 93; Townville 48, 70; Wide Bay 12, 10.

Parents should discuss vaccination with their family doctor or another immunisation provider.

Others who should also consider receiving a whooping cough booster include:

- adults planning a pregnancy
- adults working with or caring for young children, that is, child care workers, health care workers, grandparents
- any adult who wishes to have protection

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is the most common vaccine preventable illness in Australia. More information at www.health.qld.gov.au

Queensland Health
media statement



ENDS

Media contact:

RTI Release



Enquiry received: Monday December 10

Journalist: Matt Dunstan

Organisation: Channel 9

Contact number/s:

Contact email: MDunstan@nine.com.au

Deadline: ASAP

Subject: Whooping Cough

Issue/questions:

Whooping cough statistics

Response:

Please attribute the following to Dr Jeannette Young, Chief Health Officer:

There has only been one notified death from Pertussis in a Queensland resident since 1 July 2012. This was a child under the age of five.

As of December 2, there have been 6,828 notifications of Pertussis (whooping cough) in Queensland this year.

Of these:

Age group (years)	Notifications
0-4	697
5-9	1051
10-19	1096
20-29	381
30-39	715

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40-49	839
50-59	693
60-69	798
70-79	427
80-89	148
90+	30
Grand Total	6875

Table 1: Pertussis notifications by age group, Queensland, 2012

Historical data on Pertussis is below:

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Notifications	854	1603	3349	5222	4611	3470

Table 2: Pertussis notifications for the period 1 July – 2 December, by year, Queensland, 2007-2012

Background information:

The free whooping cough vaccine program for birth parents, foster parents, adoptive parents and grandparents of babies under six months of age (including other adults in the same household) ceased on 30 June 2012.

The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in whooping cough notifications in Queensland, with the aim of preventing whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

At the time the program commenced, Queensland Health advised stakeholders and the public it was a time limited program and the end date for the program would be guided by epidemiological information.

Since 2009, analysis of notification data in Queensland and elsewhere has shown that the increase in pertussis notifications is substantially affected by increased testing and the increased use of a test that is more sensitive in picking up pertussis infections. A larger number of milder cases of pertussis are being diagnosed and notified.

Data has also shown that the number of notifications of pertussis has started to decline.

Information regarding recommendations for childhood vaccinations is provided to new parents by maternity and birthing units in Queensland hospitals prior to discharge from hospital.

The program has been promoted via a variety of systems including information given to parents immediately following the birth of their baby.

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Queensland Health monitors pertussis data and any response would be based on the best interests of the community.

Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania have already ceased similar programs.

The vaccine will continue to be provided free from your GP or other immunisation provider for:

- all children at 2 months (can be administered at 6 weeks), 4 and 6 months of age
- children aged four years (booster)

A booster dose is also provided free to year 10 students through the School Based Vaccination Program.

Adults can continue to receive the vaccine by visiting their GP or other immunisation provider through paying for a private prescription.

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Media contact:

RTI Release

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Response:

Please attribute the following to a Queensland Health spokesperson:

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The program was introduced in August 2009 in response to an unprecedented and rapid increase in whooping cough notifications in Queensland, with the aim of preventing whooping cough in infants too young to be protected by vaccination.

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Tuesday, December 16

Babies at risk without whooping cough vaccination

Babies are at risk of serious illness if their parents are not vaccinated against whooping cough, Queensland Health has warned, as the number of cases for the year reaches 5000.

"That is why the Queensland Government introduced a new parent program in August this year for parents of babies born from 1 May 2009," Nurse Unit Manager of Child Health at Bundaberg Hospital Michelle Maike said.

"It is being offered free to new parents because babies cannot be fully vaccinated until six months of age when they have their last of three shots – the others recommended at two and four months," Ms Maike said.

"Nearly 47,000 doses of vaccine have been distributed under the program to 10 November, but we suspect there are many more who are eligible.

"The whooping cough epidemic we have seen this year is continuing for longer than expected with 65 cases recorded for the week to 8 November taking the total for the year to 5000," Ms Maike said.

"This is way above the average for the previous five years of 1759.

"From January to October, there were 437 notifications in children age less than five years, including 110 infants less than 6 months.

"Babies too young to be fully vaccinated and protected can catch it from their parents who haven't been immunised or have not had booster vaccinations as adults. So it is very important that parents are vaccinated against this terrible disease.

"Three babies have died in Australia in the past year after contracting the illness and this year more than 15,000 adults and children nationally have been diagnosed."

District notifications of the disease for the past two months have been: Brisbane North 74 in past month, 124 previous month; Cairns 20, 11; Darling Downs 37, 39; Gold Coast 76, 66; Moreton Bay 46, 54; Rockhampton 6, 21; Sunshine Coast 73, 93; Townsville 48, 70; Wide Bay 12, 10.

Parents should discuss vaccination with their family doctor or another immunisation provider.

Others who should also consider receiving a whooping cough booster include:

- adults planning a pregnancy
- adults working with or caring for young children, that is, child care workers, health care workers, grandparents
- any adult who wishes to have protection

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is the most common vaccine preventable illness in Australia. More information at www.health.qld.gov.au

PHOTO CAPTION: Elise Pechler and her son Benjamin with Child Health Nurse Unit Manager Michelle Maike discuss the whooping cough vaccine. Ms Pechler is taking up the offer to be vaccinated.

Media contact: *Public Affairs Manager*

RTI Release



20 November 2009

Babies at risk without whooping cough vaccination

Babies are at risk of serious illness if their parents are not vaccinated against whooping cough, Queensland Health has warned, as the number of cases for the year reaches 5000.

"That is why the Queensland Government introduced a new parent program in August this year for parents of babies born from 1 May, 2009," South West Health Service District Child and Family Health Nurse Ninette Johnstone said.

"It is being offered free to new parents because babies cannot be fully vaccinated until six months of age when they have their last of three shots – the others recommended at two and four months.

"Nearly 47,000 doses of vaccine have been distributed under the program to November 10, but we suspect there are many more who are eligible.

"The whooping cough epidemic we have seen this year is continuing for longer than expected with 65 cases recorded for the week to November 8 taking the total for the year to 5000," Ms Johnstone said.

"This is way above the average for the previous five years of 1759.

"From January to October, there were 437 notifications in children aged less than five years, including 110 infants less than six months.

"Babies too young to be fully vaccinated and protected can catch it from their parents who haven't been immunised or have not had booster vaccinations as adults. So it is very important that parents are vaccinated against this terrible disease.

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Whooping cough, or pertussis, is the most common vaccine preventable illness in Australia. For more information visit www.health.qld.gov.au

- ENDS

Media Contact: Phone South West Health Service District Public Affairs officer [redacted] on [redacted] or email on [redacted]@health.qld.gov.au (Thursdays and Fridays)