

EMBARGOED TO 1AM, THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2014

Childhood immunisation rates up, but some areas still low

The number of children not fully immunised lowered by nearly 2,000 compared to the previous year (75,002 in 2012–13 compared to 76,769 in 2011–12), according to the National Health Performance Authority's second report on childhood immunisation rates.

While this is good news, the new report highlights areas in Australia where rates are low. Childhood immunisation significantly decreases the possibility for infection and spread of diseases in the community, such as whooping cough and measles.

The new report looks at childhood immunisation rates across three geographic levels – 61 Medicare Local catchment areas, 333 Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Areas Level 3 (SA3) and 1,500 postcode areas across Australia.

The biggest improvements in immunisation rates were seen across five-year-old children, the age when they should have completed their childhood immunisations. The national rate for five-year-old children increased from 90.0% in 2011–12 to 91.5% in 2012–13.

The report reveals:

- The percentage of five-year-old children fully immunised across Medicare Local catchments ranged from 86.2% in Eastern Sydney to 95.4% in Great South Coast (Vic).
- Significantly improved rates were reported for five-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – the national rate of five-year-old children fully immunised improved from 87.3% in 2011–12 to 92.1% in 2012–13. The percentage of five-year-old children fully immunised across Medicare Local catchments in 2012–13 ranged from 80.6% in Central Adelaide & Hills up to 97.0% in Gippsland (Vic).
- At postcode level area the lowest rates of fully immunised five-year-old children were reported in areas including Byron Bay (NSW), Manly (NSW), Casuarina (NT), Beaumont (SA), South Yarra (Vic) and Noosa Heads (Qld) – ranging from as low as 66.7% up to 83.1% of five-year-old children fully immunised.

Of the 75,002 children aged one, two and five years not fully immunised in 2012–13, almost 15,000 are registered as 'conscientious objectors'. Across five-year-old children the percentage of children registered under conscientious objector provisions ranged from close to 0.0% in Far West NSW up to 7.1% in Sunshine Coast (Qld).

New data on the percentages of girls aged 15 years fully immunised against human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus known to cause cervical cancer, has been made available by Medicare Local catchment for the first time in the report. The rate of HPV immunisation ranged from 59% in Country North SA and Eastern Sydney up to 92% in Great South Coast (Vic) Medicare Local catchments.

National Health Performance Authority CEO Dr Diane Watson said that while childhood immunisation rates have improved, today's report provides health professionals with information to help them target efforts to areas that need it most.

"Through local-level reporting we can clearly identify areas in Australia with low rates of childhood immunisation. This information can be camouflaged by national, state and territory level reporting," Dr Watson said.

The Performance Authority's MyHealthyCommunities website allows users to search childhood immunisation rates for children aged one, two and five years across 333 local areas and 1,500 postcodes at www.myhealthycommunities.gov.au. Download the Performance Authority's second immunisation report [Healthy Communities: Immunisation rates for children in 2012–13](#).

Note to media

Graphics from the report are in the following attachment:

1. The highest and lowest percentages of **five-year-old children** fully immunised by **postcode** (page 35)
2. The percentages of **all children** fully immunised (aged one, two and five), numbers not fully immunised and numbers of conscientious objection recorded by **Medicare Local catchment** (page 9).

Search [immunisation results by postcode](#).

View maps of Medicare Local catchments (including suburbs in each catchment) at the Australian Bureau of Statistics [website](#) (via the QuickStatsSearch).

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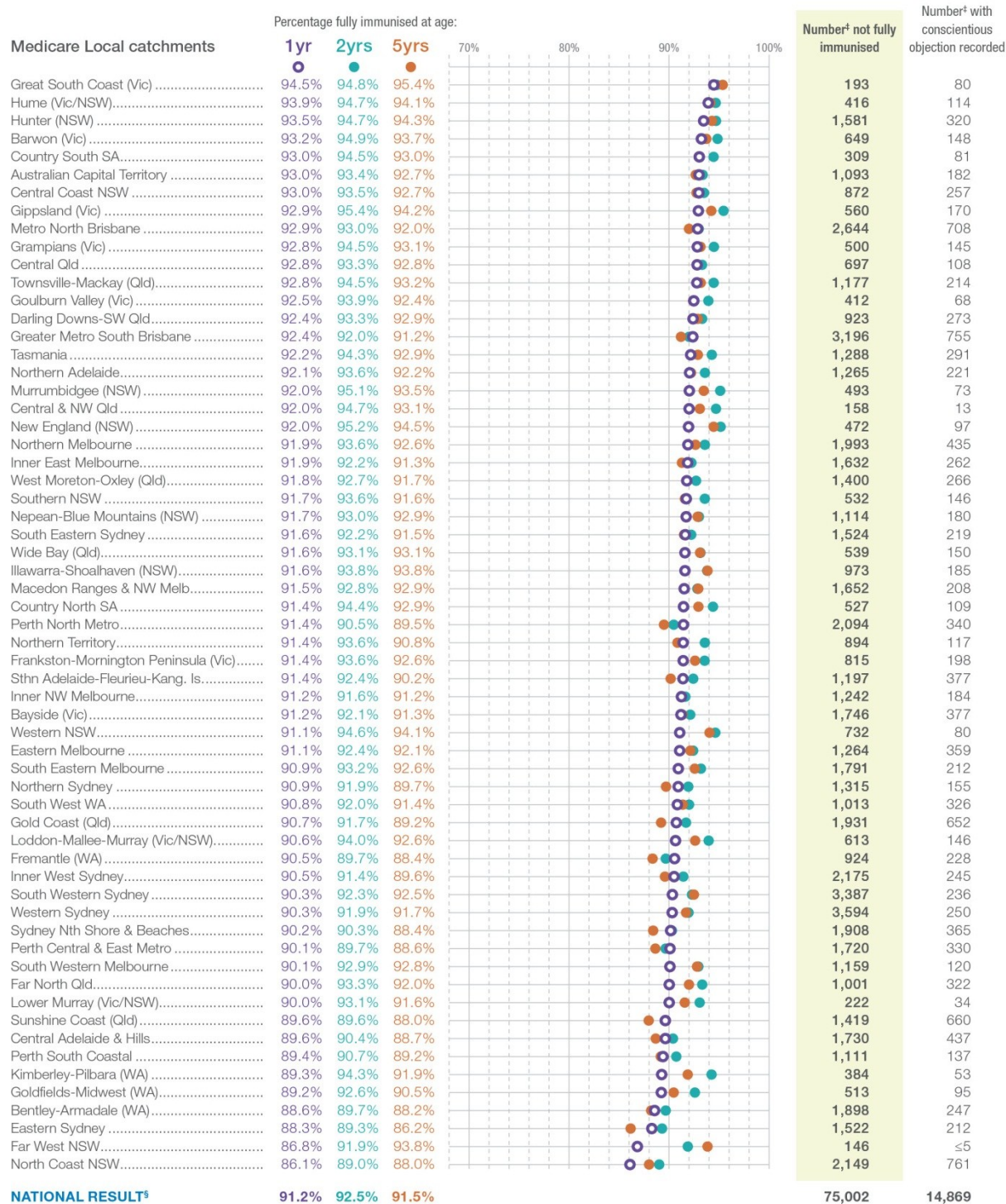
Table 4: Postcodes with the highest and lowest percentages of all children aged 5 years fully immunised, 2012–13

Postcode	Suburbs	Medicare Local catchments ¹	Percentage fully immunised
3730	Bundalong, Yarrawonga (Vic) and eight others	Goulburn Valley (Vic)	99.0%
2517	Woonona, Woonona East and Russell Vale (NSW)	Illawarra-Shoalhaven (NSW)	98.4%
3756	Chintin, Darraweit Guim, Wallan (Vic) and one other	Goulburn Valley (Vic), Macedon Ranges & NW Melb	98.1%
5126	Fairview Park, Surrey Downs and Yatala Vale (SA)	Northern Adelaide	98.1%
0852	Daly River, Mataranka, Victoria River (NT) and 47 others	Northern Territory	98.0%
3250	Colac, Elliminyt (Vic) and two others	Barwon (Vic)	98.0%
2769	The Ponds (NSW)	Western Sydney	97.7%
2390	Back Creek, Narrabri, Turrawan (NSW) and 13 others	New England (NSW)	97.3%
5093	Para Vista and Valley View (SA)	Northern Adelaide	97.1%
2282	Eleebana, Lakelands and Warners Bay (NSW)	Hunter (NSW)	97.1%
3224	Leopold and Moolap (Vic)	Barwon (Vic)	97.1%
3042	Airport West, Keilor Park, Niddrie and Niddrie North (Vic)	Inner NW Melbourne, Macedon Ranges & NW Melb	97.0%
3305	Allestree, Gorae, Portland (Vic) and nine others	Great South Coast (Vic)	97.0%
2281	Blacksmiths, Nords Wharf, Swansea (NSW) and eight others	Hunter (NSW)	96.9%
3400	Horsham (Vic)	Grampians (Vic)	96.9%
2337	Belltrees, Moobi, Scone (NSW) and 22 others	Hunter (NSW)	96.9%
7018	Bellerive, Howrah, Rosny, Warrane (Tas) and four others	Tasmania	96.9%
4037	Eatons Hill (Qld)	Metro North Brisbane	96.8%
3840	Hazelwood, Jeeralang, Morwell (Vic) and five others	Gippsland (Vic)	96.8%
3049	Attwood and Westmeadows (Vic)	Northern Melbourne	96.7%
4567	Castaways Beach, Noosa Heads (Qld) and two others	Sunshine Coast (Qld)	83.1%
2089	Kurraba Point, Neutral Bay and Neutral Bay Junction (NSW)	Sydney Nth Shore & Beaches	83.0%
2071	East Killara and Killara (NSW)	Northern Sydney	83.0%
3141	South Yarra (Vic)	Bayside (Vic)	82.9%
6076	Kalamunda, Lesmurdie, Walliston (WA) and eight others	Perth Central & East Metro	82.8%
2135	Strathfield (NSW)	Inner West Sydney	82.6%
2131	Ashfield (NSW)	Inner West Sydney	82.5%
2017	Waterloo and Zetland (NSW)	Inner West Sydney	82.4%
5076	Athelstone and Castambul (SA)	Central Adelaide & Hills	82.1%
6148	Ferndale, Riverton, Shelley (WA) and one other	Bentley-Armadale (WA)	81.9%
2021	Centennial Park, Moore Park and Paddington (NSW)	Eastern Sydney	81.8%
5066	Beaumont, Burnside, Erindale (SA) and four others	Central Adelaide & Hills	81.7%
0810	Casuarina, Jingili, Wanguri (NT) and 13 others	Northern Territory	81.7%
2150	Harris Park and Parramatta (NSW)	Western Sydney	81.2%
2038	Annandale (NSW)	Inner West Sydney	81.1%
2484	Cedar Creek, Murwillumbah (NSW) and 55 others	North Coast NSW	80.6%
2095	Manly and Manly East (NSW)	Sydney Nth Shore & Beaches	80.4%
2000	Haymarket, Sydney, The Rocks (NSW) and five others	Eastern Sydney	72.1%
2483	Brunswick Heads, Ocean Shores (NSW) and 12 others	North Coast NSW	70.2%
2481	Broken Head, Byron Bay (NSW) and seven others	North Coast NSW	66.7%

1. Any Medicare Local catchment containing at least 5% of the postcode's estimated resident population as at 30 June 2011 is listed.
Note: Results are provided for the 20 postcodes with the highest and lowest percentages of children aged 5 years fully immunised which have more than 100 children registered. For interactive results at postcode level see www.myhealthycommunities.gov.au
Source: National Health Performance Authority analysis of Department of Human Services, Australian Childhood Immunisation Register statistics 2012–13, data supplied 6 February 2014.



Figure 3: Percentages of all children fully immunised*, numbers not fully immunised and numbers with conscientious objection† recorded, by Medicare Local catchment, 2012–13



* A child has received the scheduled vaccinations according to age. See Figure 1, page 2 or this report's Technical Supplement.
 † A child's parent or guardian chooses not to have their child immunised and has lodged a signed conscientious objection form, also signed by a recognised immunisation provider, with the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register that declares immunisation of their child should not take place.
 ‡ Number of all children aged 1, 2 or 5 years combined.
 § Components may not add to totals because of unallocated postcodes.
 Source: National Health Performance Authority analysis of Department of Human Services, Australian Childhood Immunisation Register statistics 2012–13, data supplied 6 February 2014.

