



Vaccine Update # 487 - WA Health diphtheria outbreak response: schedule updates, ATAGI bulletin, RSV Immunisation guidance tool

WA Health diphtheria outbreak response: schedule updates

There have now been 60 confirmed cases of diphtheria reported in regional WA since the outbreak began in late December 2025, with the majority occurring in Aboriginal people. In response to the outbreak, the [WA Immunisation Schedule](#) and [WA Aboriginal Immunisation Schedule](#) have been updated to include expanded eligibility for diphtheria-containing vaccines.

Aboriginal people living in the Kimberley, Pilbara or Goldfields, and patient-facing healthcare workers in these regions, are encouraged to receive a state-funded diphtheria-containing booster vaccination if it has been more than 5 years since their last dose.

Additionally, immunisation providers are encouraged to ensure all children and adolescents are up to date with their scheduled diphtheria-containing vaccines under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), including the School Based Immunisation Program, through proactive review and vaccination at healthcare encounters and active recall where feasible.

Additional dTpa vaccines have been procured to support the outbreak response in the three regions and orders can be placed via Onelink. **Ordering is currently limited to immunisation providers in the Kimberley, Pilbara or Goldfields regions, but will be monitored and expanded as required.** Providers can use existing NIP-funded vaccines already available while awaiting delivery of outbreak-specific stock, and report this use via an [online form](#) to support replenishment from state-funded supply. Please do not order NIP vaccines for this purpose.

The [Education Requirements for Immunisation Provision table](#) found on the WA Health [Immunisation education](#) page has been updated to include the education requirements for administering diphtheria-containing vaccines.

Also see the resources below for further information:

- [Outbreak of diphtheria in regional WA](#)
- [Diphtheria factsheet](#)
- [Diphtheria – AHCWA](#)

ATAGI bulletin: key issues relevant to immunisation providers

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has released its latest bulletin for immunisation providers.

Noting that the 2026 influenza season has commenced, ATAGI encouraged timely vaccination – particularly among priority populations – and reiterated which paediatric groups should receive [2 doses of influenza vaccine](#).

The bulletin also highlights ongoing pertussis (whooping cough) risk and persistently low vaccine coverage among adults.

With multiple respiratory vaccines being delivered across programs, ATAGI emphasised the importance of maintaining vigilance to prevent vaccine administration errors, including correct product selection, site and technique, to ensure vaccines are delivered safely and effectively during the busy season.

RSV Immunisation guidance tool

The [Kids Research Institute](#) has now updated the RSV Immunisation guidance tool for 2026. This is a helpful tool to assist providers and parents to assess eligibility and make the best decision for protecting children against RSV this winter season. See the tool [here](#).

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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