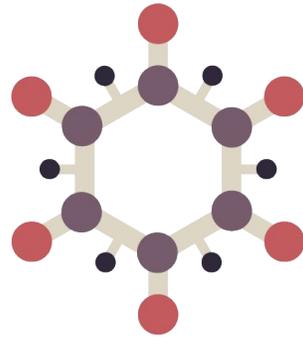


# Enhancing adult vaccination coverage rates in Australia

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Immunisation Coalition Adult Immunisation Forum  
28<sup>th</sup> June 2021



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# Vaccines – one of the greatest achievements of public health

- Prevention is an essential component of an effective health system
  - ✓ Australia invests 1.34% of the health budget into public and preventive health (vs. 2-4% in most other OECD countries)
- The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of vaccines to Australia and the world
  - ✓ Community, life-science industry and government have a crucial role in safeguarding a return to normal life
- Immunisation and the National Immunisation Program (NIP) are a cornerstone of the National Preventive Health Strategy
  - ✓ The NIP provides vaccines, free of charge, across the whole of life, to Australians at risk of vaccine-preventable diseases

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/health-expenditure>

Australian Government Department of Health: Consultation paper: Development of the National Preventive Health Strategy,

[https://consultations.health.gov.au/national-preventive-health-taskforce/consultation-paper-for-the-national-preventive-hea/consult\\_view/](https://consultations.health.gov.au/national-preventive-health-taskforce/consultation-paper-for-the-national-preventive-hea/consult_view/)



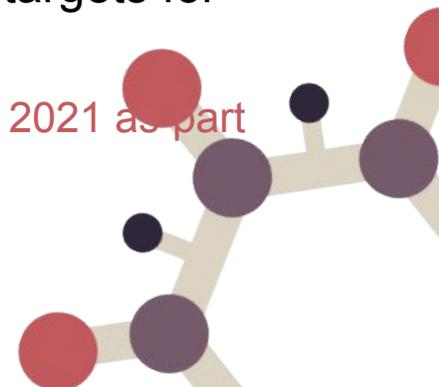
# Understanding adult vaccination rates

- Adult vaccination is relatively new to the NIP, and coverage rates are low compared with rates of childhood vaccination

Lack of reliable and current data to monitor adult vaccination coverage is a key issue

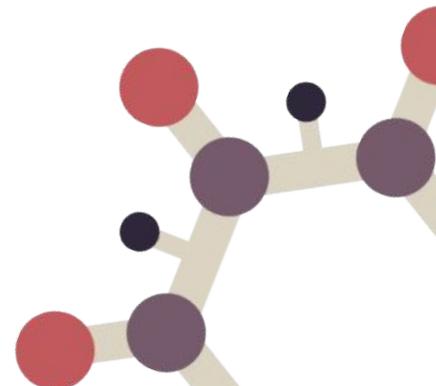
- ✓ Reporting is mandatory for children, but it is voluntary for adults
- ✓ Approximately 95% of children are fully vaccinated, while only around 50% of older adults are fully vaccinated (latest data from the 2009 Adult Vaccination Survey, fully vaccinated includes influenza and pneumococcal)
- ✓ Childhood vaccination coverage: sustained investments in public health educational programs, financial incentives for healthcare professionals and parents, KPIs and targets for childhood vaccination rates □ similar attention for adult vaccination is required!
- ✓ **Mandatory reporting to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) will be required from July 2021 as part of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout**

Menzies, R. I., Leask, J., Royle, J., & MacIntyre, C. R. (2017). Vaccine myopia: adult vaccination also needs attention. *The Medical journal of Australia*, 206(6), 238–239. <https://doi.org/10.5694/mja16.00811>; National Centre for Vaccination Research and Surveillance Australia (NCIRS): Exploratory analysis of the first 2 years of adult vaccination data recorded on AIR; [https://www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2019-12/Analysis%20of%20adult%20vaccination%20data%20on%20AIR\\_Nov%202019.pdf](https://www.ncirs.org.au/sites/default/files/2019-12/Analysis%20of%20adult%20vaccination%20data%20on%20AIR_Nov%202019.pdf); Hunt, G. (2021). Australia continues to set record vaccination rates. Media release. <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-greg-hunt-mp/media/australia-continues-to-set-record-vaccination-rates> (25 January 2021); [https://consultations.health.gov.au/ohp-immunisation-branch/mandatory\\_reporting\\_to\\_air/supporting\\_documents/Amendment%20of%20the%20Australian%20Immunisation%20Register%20to%20include%20mandatory\\_reporting\\_to\\_air](https://consultations.health.gov.au/ohp-immunisation-branch/mandatory_reporting_to_air/supporting_documents/Amendment%20of%20the%20Australian%20Immunisation%20Register%20to%20include%20mandatory_reporting_to_air)



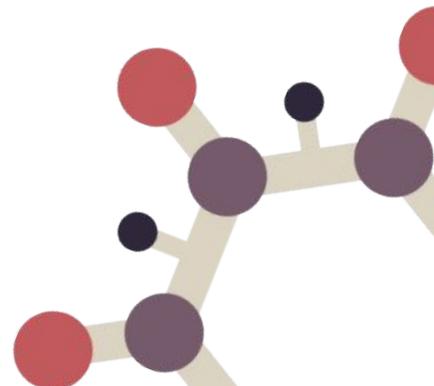
# Factors affecting adult vaccination rates

- Australians, in general, trust and support the use of vaccines.
  - ✓ International survey 2018: 80-89% of Australians strongly agreed vaccines are important, 70-79% - vaccines are effective, 50-59% - vaccines are safe
- Key factors that lead to adults being vaccinated:
  - Recommendation from a healthcare professional
  - Education and awareness of vaccines (and the threat of the diseases they protect against)
  - Access to vaccination
  - Social responsibility and norms



# Methodology

- Review of adult vaccination rates in Australia and internationally
- Review the evidence of why adult vaccination rates are lower than childhood rates in Australia
  - ✓ Identify factors affecting adult vaccination rates
- Identify international best practice and suggest strategies appropriate for Australia

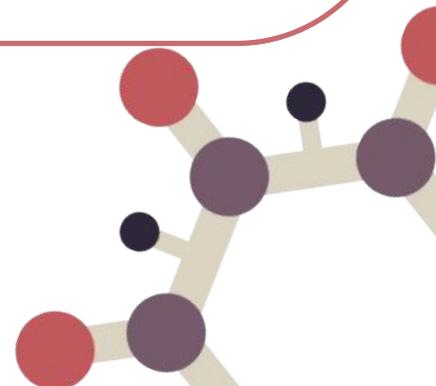


# How can we improve adult vaccination rates?

- These seven evidence-based recommendations aim to build on the successes of the NIP to better protect vulnerable Australians and further reduce the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Strengthen vaccination monitoring and accountability

1. Monitor adult vaccination coverage rates reported to AIR following the introduction of mandatory reporting in July 2021, to inform potential policy options to improve coverage
2. Step-wise introduction of targets for adult vaccination coverage as key performance indicators in the *National Partnership Agreement on Essential Vaccines* and the next *National Immunisation Strategy*, with appropriate support to providers to address barriers in vaccination
3. Introduce benchmarking of adult vaccination coverage rates across Primary Health Networks, with appropriate support to providers to address barriers in vaccination



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Improve access to vaccination

4. Promote the use by healthcare professionals of systems that provide notifications via *MyHealthRecord* and other digital health platforms, and assessment tools, such as *PneumoSmart*, to take advantage of opportunities (during visits) to offer appropriate vaccines to patients, as part of a whole-of-life approach to preventative health
5. Expand access to vaccination to services that regularly treat medically at-risk populations
6. Continue to provide flexible funding to State and Territory Governments and Primary Health Networks to design local programs to optimise access to vaccinations, with an emphasis on adult vaccination



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Enhance public awareness and understanding

7. Design a nationally coordinated public health campaign that emphasises a whole-of-life approach to preventive health, including:
  - a) Educational campaigns focusing on the role of vaccination in preventive health and raising awareness of the availability of vaccines for eligible adults on the NIP, including specific campaigns targeting each group (age-based, medically at-risk and indigenous and remote communities)
  - b) Campaigns should target both the general public and immunisation providers
  - c) Tools for self-assessment of vaccine eligibility and other preventive health initiatives, similar to the Victorian Government's HALO campaign
  - d) Reminder letters (or smartphone app notifications) to provide advice to adults who are due to be vaccinated and access other preventative health services



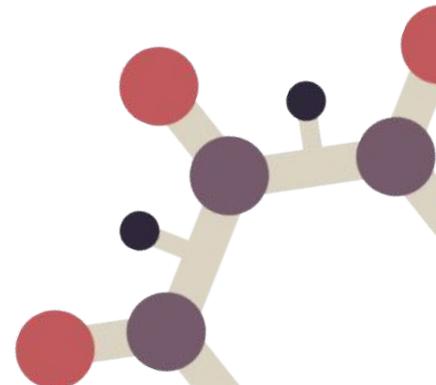
# Enhancing adult vaccination coverage rates in Australia

- White paper examines:
  - challenges and barriers to achieving higher rates of vaccination among Australian adults eligible for the NIP
  - identifies priority areas for action and suggests evidence-based strategies to improve vaccine coverage rates.



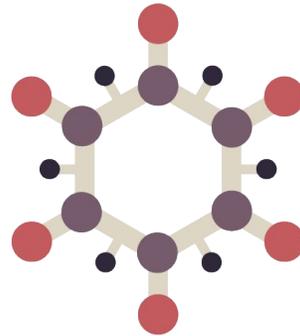
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 **Biointelect**



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