

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Week 13, 23-29 March 2015

In summary, we report:

- [Pertussis](#) – increased notifications; NSW maternal pertussis vaccination programme launch
- [World TB Day](#)– NSW Health marks World TB Day
- [Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW](#)

For further information on infectious diseases and alerts see the [Infectious Diseases](#) webpage.

Follow the [A to Z of Infectious Diseases](#) link for more information on specific diseases.

For links to other surveillance reports, including influenza reports, see the [NSW Health Infectious Diseases Reports](#) webpage.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

There were 166 cases of pertussis reported this week (Table 1), including one case in a 3 month old infant too young to be fully immunised. This was an increase on the previous week (118 cases) and continues the general trend of increased reporting of pertussis across NSW since mid-2014.

Pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is a bacterial infection affecting the respiratory system, caused by the organism *Bordetella pertussis*. The disease affects individuals of all ages, but is more severe (and can be fatal) in small babies, particularly those too young to be vaccinated or those who are unvaccinated. Elderly people are also at increased risk of developing complications if infected with pertussis.

Pertussis is a vaccine preventable disease, and is notifiable in NSW. Maternal vaccination against pertussis during the third trimester (preferably at 28 weeks) is now recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Free pertussis vaccine is available to pregnant woman in NSW. The NHMRC also now recommends the addition of a booster for all children at 18 months of age to compliment the current vaccination schedule (a primary course of three doses at 6 weeks, 4 and 6 months of age, with boosters at 4 years and in the first year of high school).

Vaccination during pregnancy is the most effective way to protect infants who are too young to be vaccinated from pertussis. International studies have shown that third trimester vaccination is over 90% effective at preventing pertussis in infants. International studies involving more than 40 000 participants have also shown that pertussis vaccination during pregnancy is safe for both mother and baby.

For more information see the [NSW Health Whooping Cough \(Pertussis\)](#) website.

For more information on maternal vaccination against whooping cough, see the [NSW Health Pregnant Women – Protect Your Newborn From Whooping Cough](#) website.

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NSW Health marks World TB Day

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day was celebrated on 24 March. This date marks the anniversary of Nobel Laureate Dr Robert Koch's discovery of the bacterium that causes TB in 1882. World TB day is designed to build public awareness that TB is still epidemic in much of the world and remains a significant public health challenge.

The theme of this year's World TB Day was "Reach the 3 Million: Reach, Treat, Cure Everyone". Each year there are 9 million new cases of TB worldwide. Of these, approximately 3 million don't get the care they need, often due to factors such as poverty, stigma, conflict and lack of access to basic health services. Each year there are 1.5 million deaths due to TB worldwide. World TB Day highlights global efforts to find, treat and cure the 3 million people who don't get the care they need and accelerate progress towards the goal of ending TB globally by 2035.

Since the 1980's Australia has maintained one of the lowest rates of TB in the world. Each year, approximately 1,300 new cases of TB are reported in Australia, of which 400-500 are diagnosed in NSW. Despite Australia's success in reducing TB, there is no room for complacency. Global connectivity through air travel and migration means that TB will remain a public health concern in Australia until worldwide control of TB is achieved.

The NSW TB Program provides a comprehensive multidisciplinary service for the prevention and control of TB in NSW, a service that is vital to maintaining Australia's success in reducing the burden of TB. The NSW TB Program consists of a network of specialised TB services (Chest Clinics) located across the state, providing free, confidential, accessible and culturally appropriate services to all – to ensure everyone in NSW gets the TB care they need.

Further information is available from the [NSW TB Program website](#).

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Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW

The following table summarises notifiable conditions activity over the reporting period (Table 1).

Table 1. NSW notifiable conditions from 23 to 29 March 2015, by date received

		Weekly		Year to date			Full Year	
		This week	Last week	2015	2014	2013	2014	2013
Enteric Diseases	Cryptosporidiosis	32	31	360	162	595	429	1132
	Giardiasis	99	94	1088	923	737	2942	2242
	Hepatitis A	3	2	38	30	31	80	62
	Listeriosis	1	0	8	8	16	23	33
	Rotavirus	5	5	104	103	130	714	508
	Salmonellosis	91	124	1611	1626	1271	4305	3483
	Shigellosis	3	4	53	95	40	210	136
Respiratory Diseases	Influenza	89	100	1025	822	446	20888	8403
	Legionellosis	1	1	23	21	26	72	109
	Tuberculosis	3	3	77	116	110	472	444
Sexually Transmissible Infections	Chlamydia	480	512	6018	6633	5894	22900	21090
	Gonorrhoea	98	123	1415	1355	1241	4878	4267
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	Adverse Event Following Immunisation	9	3	47	103	256	255	509
	Meningococcal Disease	1	0	7	4	8	37	48
	Pertussis	166	118	1582	568	730	3051	2379
	Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive)	6	6	63	72	84	512	490
Vector Borne Diseases	Barmah Forest	16	4	67	61	144	163	438
	Dengue	2	2	112	141	71	379	303
	Ross River	118	101	879	126	141	677	512

Notes on Table 1: NSW Notifiable Conditions activity

- Data cells represent the number of case reports received by NSW Public Health Units and recorded on the NSW Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) in the relevant period.
- Data cells in the 'Adverse Event Following Immunisation' category refer to suspected cases only. These reports are referred to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for assessment. Data on adverse events following immunisation is available online from the TGA [Database of Adverse Event Notifications](#).
- Only conditions for which at least one case report was received appear in the table. HIV and other blood-borne virus case reports are not included here but are available from the [Infectious Diseases Data](#) webpage.

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