

The GPs role in School Based Vaccination Program by

Lynne Waters (Southern Regional Services School Based Vaccination Program Coordinator)

Adolescent vaccinations are an important part of the National Immunisation Program Schedule. Although the majority of adolescent vaccines are administered as part of the School Based Vaccination Program (SBVP), GPs and other health professionals have an important role to play in ensuring good vaccine coverage across Australia. This includes:

- administering doses missed at school
- offering vaccination to adolescents not attending school who would normally be in either Year 8 or Year 10
- submitting vaccination details to VIVAS in a timely manner
- educating parents about the benefits and risks of the cervical cancer vaccine, when parents are deciding whether to have their daughter vaccinated.

Students who miss any dose of vaccine at school are eligible to receive their missing doses up to the end of the following calendar year through their GP. Please take every opportunity to offer eligible students these funded vaccines if missed in the SBVP.

- **Hepatitis B Vaccine:** Two doses of hepatitis B vaccine (adult formulation) are being offered to every Year 8 student who has not previously been vaccinated for hepatitis B or had the disease. This is not a booster dose. Dose 1 and Dose 2 must be given at two separate visits, with an interval of four to six months between doses. Routine booster doses are not required after administration of the adolescent two-dose course.
- **Varicella Vaccine:** One dose of varicella-zoster vaccine is being offered to every Year 8 student who has not previously had chickenpox infection or a varicella vaccination. Fourteen year old students who receive their first vaccine as part of the school program are eligible to receive their second dose free from their doctor or community vaccine service provider before the end of the following year.
- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine:** Three doses of HPV vaccine are being offered to every female Year 8 student. The recommended interval for the three doses is 0, 2 and 6 months. Efforts should be made to receive all three doses within a year. However as with other vaccine/s, incomplete courses can be completed at a later time without repeating previous doses.
- **Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis Vaccine:** One booster dose of adult/adolescent formulation diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (dTpa) is being offered to every Year 10 student.

All vaccine/s administered outside the school program must be recorded in the usual way and forward to VIVAS. Service providers who administer SBVP vaccines to students need to provide the vaccination data to VIVAS (the Queensland Health vaccination register) either via the ACIR or directly to VIVAS.

Submitting data

The SBVP vaccination data can be sent electronically via ACIR but this may require changing the settings of the software being used by the VSP to permit the sending of 'whole of life' data not just data on those aged less than 7 years. Assistance with this can be provided by the ACIR liaison officer (ph 07 3004 5251). An alternative and probably easier option is to advise VIVAS direct. This can be done by either:

1. completing the Vaccination Record Form and posting it to VIVAS

or

2. printing off an immunisation history for the student using the VSP's software and sending this to VIVAS by post or fax (3328 9720).

SBVP uptake in Logan City

HPV vaccination coverage for female Year 8 students

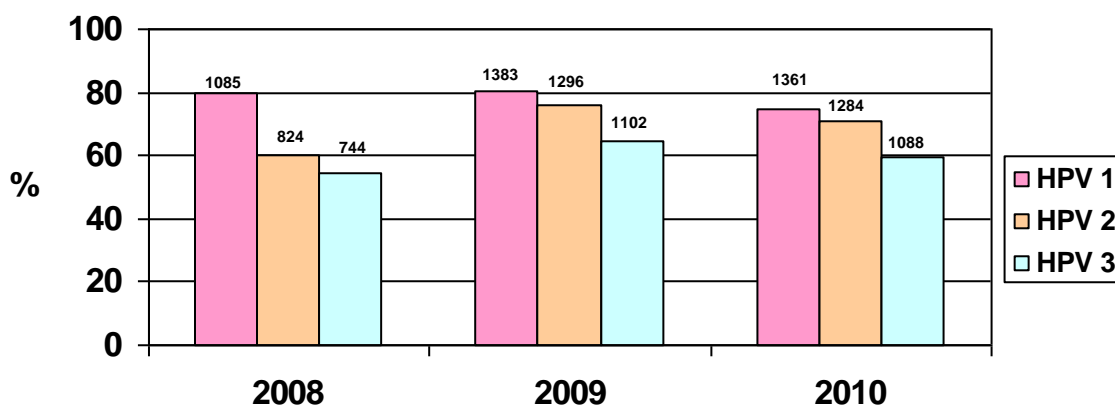
In 2010, 1819 female Year 8 students were eligible for funded HPV vaccine which resulted in 1361 (75%) commencing the HPV vaccination course. However, the three-dose course was only completed by 1088 students in the SBVP (see Figure 1). This is unfortunate as 20% of students did not complete the three-dose course which is 98% effective if all three doses are given prior to infection.

HPV for males

A recent submission to the Commonwealth to fund Gardasil® for boys to the National Immunisation Schedule has been unsuccessful. In 2010, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approved the extension of Gardasil® to include males 9 to 26 years of age and females aged 9 to 45 years of age. Eligible males can obtain the HPV vaccine by private prescription.

Figure 1

HPV uptake in female Yr 8 students in Logan City

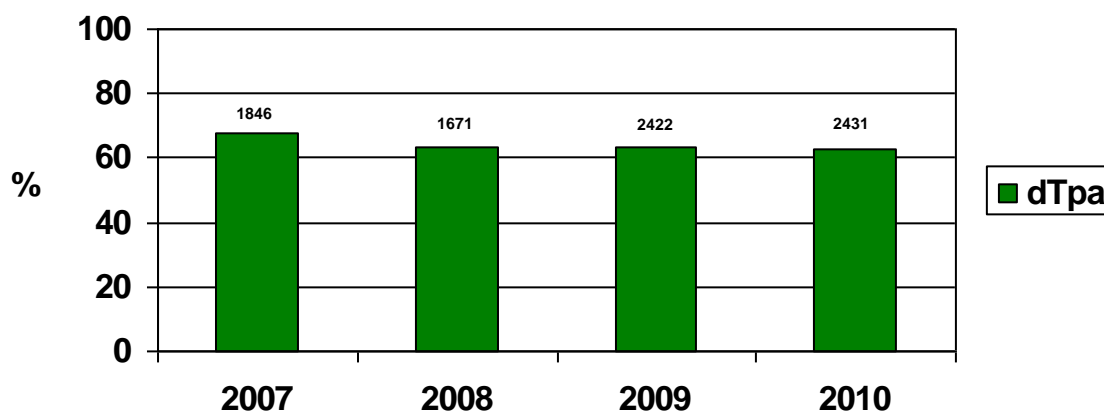


dTpa vaccination coverage

In 2010, 3891 Year 10 students were eligible for one funded dTpa vaccine. However, only 2431 (62%) of students received this booster dose which is well below herd immunity requirements. This has been the trend over the past 4 years (see Figure 2), which is a major concern in light of the recent deaths from diphtheria and pertussis.

Figure 2

dTpa uptake in Year 10 students in Logan City



If unsure of a student vaccination status please contact the SBVP 5668 3700 or the HPV register 1800 HPV REG (1800 478 734).