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GSK Grants

Congratulations to the winners of the 2009 GlaxoSmithKline Adult Immunisation Grants who were announced on Saturday morning the 7th November at the Australian General Practice Network Forum in Sydney.

This grants program is in its third year and aims to improve awareness of, access to and implementation of adult immunisation in Australia and ultimately improve adult health. This year there were four winners each receiving \$20,000 from GSK to roll out their programs. The winners of the four categories were

- **General Practice Category: Central Clinic, SA** for their proposal aimed at reducing the number of Pertussis cases within the adult population
- **Division of General Practice Category: WA GP Network and GP Down South WA** for their proposed division based trial vaccination program for general practices that aims to increase uptake of vaccines for staff at risk of occupationally acquired vaccine preventable disease. The program will provide a template for other divisions and workplace settings.
- **Council/Local Authority, Hospital or Community Organisation Category: Doutta Galla Community Health Service Melbourne GP Network** for their program aimed at increasing the uptake of Hepatitis B vaccination within the migrant community by providing offsite immunisation at the Adult English Language School, Flagstaff
- **Indigenous Health Category: Yorke Peninsula Division of General Practice** for their proposal to identify barriers limiting the uptake of adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations in indigenous communities with a grass roots approach.

Last year's winners also gave presentations on the Friday morning Forum program. Last year's winner of the urban section was Hailey Shaw from the ACT Division of General Practice (ACTDGP) for the proposed "Planning for pregnancy" immunisation program aimed to raise awareness of the importance of immunisation at all stages of pregnancy and prior to conception. The winner of the GSK Rural Grant was the New South Wales SES for 'Volunteer flu vaccination program' aimed at increasing the number of flu immunisations in volunteers and staff across NSW.

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Information contained within this newsletter is intended to inform you on immunisation issues with a national perspective. As such, it is possible that some references will require adjustment to be made specifically accurate for service providers in each individual State or Territory jurisdiction. For further clarification, contact your SBO Immunisation Coordinator or jurisdiction Health Department. AGPN acknowledges the financial support of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.



Photo credits to AGPN/Waikay Lau Photography

Winners from left to right:

Yorke Peninsula GPN, Steven Glover; Central Clinic, Kathy Hindmarsh; Doutta Galla, Janina De Silva, and GP Down South, Denise Puddick.



Hailey Shaw, ACT Division of General Practice presenting on her 2008 winning program on Pertussis and pregnancy

Changes for non Accredited GPII practices

Non accredited GPII practices would have recently received a letter from the Department of Health and Ageing and Medicare Australia. This letter outlines the changes to the General Practice Immunisation Incentive scheme relevant to these practices following announcements made in the 2009-2010 budget. This budget item aims to improve quality and safety in vaccine management

From August 2010, practices will need to have appropriate processes in place that maintain the potency of vaccines. The specific requirements that practices will need to meet are outlined in The Australian Immunisation Handbook, Chapter 1.3.2 of the 9th edition. Practices should use the information in the Handbook as a self-assessment tool to determine whether they meet the vaccine management guidelines. General practices will also be required to have current public liability insurance and all GPs working from the practice will be required to have professional indemnity cover.

Practices currently participating in the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) will be automatically considered to meet the entry requirements relating to vaccine management, public liability insurance and professional indemnity cover.

A further letter will be sent by Medicare Australia in February 2010 with an application form to be returned to Medicare Australia confirming that they meet the new GPII requirements. A third mail out will occur at the end of March 2010. This mail out will be to practices that have not responded to the February 2010 mail out.

Practices that have not returned the GPII interim application form by 30 April 2010 will not be eligible to receive an outcomes payment in August 2010.

H1N1 Influenza 09 update

The national vaccination program officially started on 30 September with announcements from the Federal Minister for Health Nicola Roxon. Subsequently there has been a CSL media briefing and an ongoing media campaign involving television, radio and print media advertisements.

Supplies of Panvax® are being distributed to GPs along with VacPacs containing needles for drawing up and administration of the vaccine, syringes and hard copies of information documents. This is a Commonwealth funded vaccine available through general practice in the main and some community or state health immunisation clinics. It will not be available on the private market.

H1N1 website for Health Professionals

The Commonwealth has a website with up to date information for health professionals at

http://www.healthemergency.gov.au/internet/healthemergency/publishing.nsf/Content/healthpr_of

Item numbers to claim from Medicare are (See the *Medicare statement for Pandemic Vaccination Services* at the bottom of the *Guidance and information for Health Professionals* page on the website

http://www.healthemergency.gov.au/internet/healthemergency/publishing.nsf/Content/healthpr_of

A good summary of the information on this flu can be found at this site;

http://www.ncirs.usyd.edu.au/h1n1_influenza_sheet.htm

Daily information on the H1N1 09 situation can be found at;

http://www.healthemergency.gov.au/internet/healthemergency/publishing.nsf/Content/health-swine_influenza-index.htm

Pertussis still an issue

Although the media focus has moved to other areas, the numbers of Pertussis cases is still rising. The risk for new born children and young children is still there and jurisdiction health departments have responded with free vaccine for parents and, in some areas, grandparents and carers.

Check for jurisdictional information on your state/territory immunisation sites.

NSW - [NSW immunisation](#)

Qld - [Qld immunisation](#)

NT - [NT immunisation](#)

Victoria - [Vic immunisation](#)

SA - [SA immunisation](#)

ACT - [ACT immunisation](#)

WA - [WA immunisation](#)

Tasmania - [Tas immunisation](#)

Information on Pertussis can be found in the Australian Immunisation Handbook or on this site which gives information on Pertussis for immunisation providers from the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance.

http://www.ncirs.usyd.edu.au/facts/Pertussis%20fact%20sheet_final_0106092.pdf

HPV catch up program ends soon

Only a few weeks left before the funded Human Papillomavirus vaccination program finishes for general practice.

Those females 18-26 years of age who had their first dose before 30 June will need to be recalled to have their next dose before 31 December. After that the vaccine will be available on the private market.

Both the PEN and the Canning extraction tools can be used to find those women in practice software.

GPs have until the end of March 2010 to submit notifications for doses given within this time in order to receive the \$6 notification payment. After that date all HPV data will still be received by the register but no payment made.

How to submit vaccination notifications to the HPV Register

The Health Professionals page of the web site reformatted, to make it easier post items for the attention of providers, as well as making the navigation a little easier. It can be viewed at <http://www.hpvregister.org.au/health-professionals.aspx>

Many providers have been storing HPV vaccination data as instructed by the Australian General Practice Network, at <http://www.agpn.com.au/programs/immunisation/hot-topics/hpv-register--->

[collecting-information](#) , which provides examples of HPV Register preferred notification formats. Further information and Frequently Asked Questions on lodging notifications to the HPV Register is available at <http://www.hpvregister.org.au/health-professionals/> or phone the HPV Register for assistance on 1800 478 734 (1800 HPV REG).

All new notifications should be faxed to (03) 8360 8699 or send large numbers of forms in the reply paid envelope(s) provided by the HPV Register. Additional supplies of the reply paid envelope can be obtained by contacting 1800 478 734 (1800 HPV REG).

How to claim payment for HPV vaccinations

Payments for valid notifications (\$6 per dose, GST exempt) received by the Register will be made to GPs who have registered and provided their bank account details. To date around 80% of NSW GPs have registered for payment and the total HPV notification payments made to date to NSW general practitioners is over \$1.8 million. GPs who have not already registered can access GP Registration Forms at <http://www.hpvregister.org.au/health-professionals/> or phone the HPV Register for assistance on 1800 478 734 (1800 HPV REG).

99,672 completion statements were mailed to consumers in NSW and VIC on 18 September

State Based Organisation Immunisation Network Meeting

The SBOIC held their regular face to face meeting prior to the AGPN forum, ending their session with presentation of SBO annual awards and a session on preparing the network for change.



(Left to right: Jane Harrison, Prue Crouch, Amanda Allport-Haller, Jane Sanders, Kirsten Ward, Hailey Shaw and Michelle Wills).

STOP PRESS – H1N1 Influenza vaccine approved for children

The TGA has now registered the use of Panvax H1N1 influenza vaccine to include children aged from 6 months of age, and has also approved Panvax H1N1 Junior influenza vaccine specifically for use in children aged from 6 months up to 3 years of age. (The Panvax H1N1 Junior vaccine formulation is the 7.5 ug HA in 0.25ml prefilled syringes.) Please note: the registration will not appear on the ARTG database until Friday 4 December.

Dosage of Panvax H1N1 vaccine for children

Age	Dose	Formulation	Number of doses
6 months - 35 months	0.25ml (7.5µg)	Panvax H1N1 Junior prefilled syring or Panvax H1N1 multifose vial	2 doses at least 4 weeks apart
3 years – 9 years	0.5ml (15µg)	Panvax H1N1 multidose vial	2 doses at least 4 weeks apart
10 years and above	0.5ml (15µg)	Panvax H1N1 multidose vial	1 dose

Given the TGA registration allows for use of MDVs for all vaccinations, the vaccine can be administered to children aged 6 months to nine years from multi-dose vials immediately.

This is consistent with advice from The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) that influenza vaccines containing thiomersal are safe in infants, children, adolescents and adults.

ATAGI's protocols for the use of vaccine in children are available via the Department's health emergency website

<http://www.healthemergency.gov.au/internet/healthemergency/publishing.nsf>

Prefilled syringes are now available for ordering through your usual influenza vaccine ordering processes. Updated patient information sheets will be provided with the prefilled syringes and these sheets will be available shortly from the health emergency website.

AGPN Forum 3 – 6 November 2010, Perth Convention Exhibition Centre

See the website for details:

<http://www.gpnetworkforum.com.au>