

## Aboriginal Childhood Immunisation Coverage South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Annual Report 2022

### 1. Introduction

This annual report provides an overview of the latest childhood immunisation coverage for Aboriginal children living within the boundaries of South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD), based on immunisation encounters for Aboriginal children reported by providers to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

It summarises the percentage of children reported as ‘fully immunised’ for age in the three age cohorts routinely used to monitor childhood vaccinations across the Australian population: 12 to less than 15 months of age; 24 to less than 27 months of age; and 60 to less than 63 months of age. Information is provided for South Eastern Sydney residents by age group and local government area (LGA)<sup>1</sup>. Vaccinations are provided according to the Aboriginal National Immunisation Program (NIP) schedule.

The data in this report comes from the AIR, a national register administered by Australian Department of Human Services that records vaccinations given to people of all ages in Australia. For children who identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to be included in this report, the Indigenous status must be self-reported when enrolling with Medicare, or the vaccination provider must be made aware of their Aboriginal status and then update a child’s Indigenous status on AIR. In 2022, there was a range of 194-223 Aboriginal children in the age cohorts measured. This is likely to be only a portion of the Aboriginal children of those ages living in SESLHD, highlighting the importance of all health providers asking the question and correctly identifying Aboriginal clients.

It is important to note that coverage data reported by the AIR may also underestimate immunisation rates.<sup>2</sup> This is because it relies on reports from immunisation providers, and this data may not be recorded or transmitted correctly, or on time, for various reasons. The report includes records of vaccination reported to the AIR as of 31 December 2022.

In addition, annual cohorts at LGA level vary in size from approximately 10-65 children. When assessing coverage of geographic areas with low numbers of children, small changes in the number of children being counted may lead to fluctuations in calculated coverage rates from one year to the next. This impact is more marked when considering coverage rates by local government area. These factors should be considered when interpreting the information in this report, especially in relation to short term trends.

#### Summary:

Amongst Aboriginal children in SESLHD in 2022, vaccination coverage:

- Decreased to 91.9% fully vaccinated at 12 months
- Decreased to 91.9% at 2 years
- Decreased to 95.4% at 5 years

Decreases in childhood immunisation coverage rates have been noted recently across a number of cohorts in states and territories nationally, thought to be associated with disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

<sup>1</sup> We continue reporting based on pre-amalgamation LGA boundaries (prior to 2016) as these smaller areas allow for easier identification of any long-term low vaccination coverage.

<sup>2</sup> Law C, McGuire R, Ferson MJ, et al on behalf of the NSW Public Health Network AIR Study Group. Children overdue for immunisation: a question of coverage or reporting? An audit of the Australian Immunisation Register. Aust NZ J Public Health 2019; Online; doi:10.1111/1753-6405.12891

## 2. Aboriginal immunisation coverage at one year (12 to less than 15 months of age)

In 2022, on average 91.9% of Aboriginal children in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage among children of this age group is lower than last year (93.5%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are lower than the NSW coverage level in this age group (93.1%).

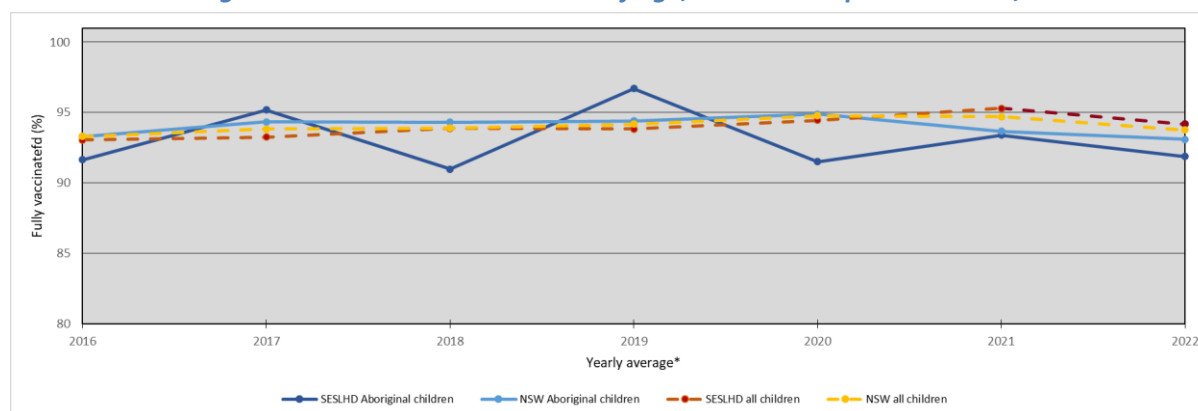
The lowest coverage was reported in Kogarah LGA, with 75.0% of children who identify as being Aboriginal recorded as having received all recommended vaccines. However only 8 children identified as Aboriginal were reported in Kogarah in 2022. The highest coverage was reported in Hurstville with 100% of children who identify as being Aboriginal having received all recommended vaccinations.

### AIR based coverage for Aboriginal children aged 12 to less than 15 months, by LGA, SESLHD

Local Government Area (LGA)	Yearly Coverage (%)							2022 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Botany Bay <sup>2</sup>	95.2	100	88.2	90.9	100	85.7	<b>92.3</b>	13
Hurstville <sup>3</sup>	90.9	100	84.6	93.8	91.7	100	<b>100</b>	10
Kogarah <sup>3</sup>	100	100	92.3	100	100	100	<b>75.0</b>	8
Randwick	89.7	92.7	96.3	95.6	86.2	89.4	<b>91.3</b>	46
Rockdale <sup>2</sup>	90.0	83.3	87.0	100	93.8	95.0	<b>90.0</b>	20
Sutherland Shire	89.1	95.3	88.0	98.1	97.4	94.4	<b>95.2</b>	63
Sydney <sup>1</sup>	79.7	97.5	95.0	100	91.7	95.7	<b>91.7</b>	24
Waverley	100	88.9	100	100	71.4	100	<b>94.1</b>	17
Woollahra	50.0	100	0	0	100	100	<b>95.2</b>	21
<b>SESLHD*</b>	<b>91.7</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>91.0</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>91.5</b>	<b>93.4</b>	<b>91.9</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>NSW*</b>	<b>93.3</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>94.4</b>	<b>94.9</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>7951</b>

<sup>1</sup>Sydney LGA is split between South Eastern Sydney LHD and Sydney LHD 33% and 67% respectively; <sup>2</sup>Botany Bay and Rockdale councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Bayside Council; <sup>3</sup>Hurstville and Kogarah councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Georges River Council. \*The total may not exactly equal the average of the LGA coverage due to rounding.

### AIR based coverage at 12 to less than 15 months of age, SESLHD compared to NSW, 2016 – 2022



\*Yearly coverage calculated as  $100 \times (\text{number of fully vaccinated children} \div \text{number of children registered on the AIR})$ .

Coverage rates for children who identify as Aboriginal and reside in South Eastern Sydney were lower than the coverage rates for all children in South Eastern Sydney (94.1%) and the NSW total population (93.8%). The disparity in 'fully vaccinated' coverage between Aboriginal and all children increased from 1.9% in 2021 to 2.3% in 2022.

### 3. Aboriginal immunisation coverage at two years (24 to less than 27 months of age)

In 2022, on average 89.7% of the District residents in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage among children of this age group is lower than last year (92.3%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are lower than the NSW coverage level in this age group (91.2%).

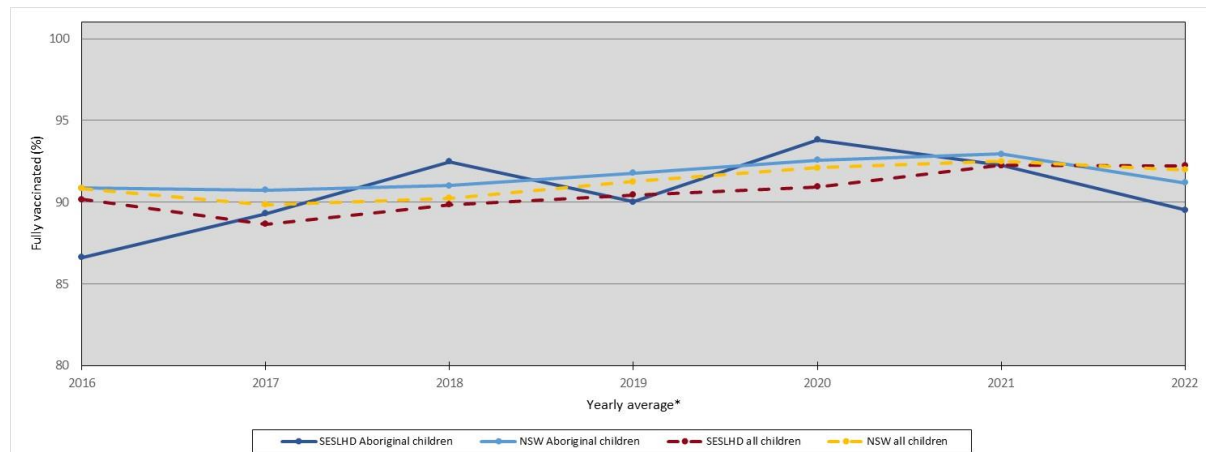
The lowest coverage was reported in Waverley LGA, with 80.0% of children who identify as being Aboriginal recorded as having received all recommended vaccines. However only 12 children identified as Aboriginal were reported in Waverley in 2022. The highest coverage was reported in Kogarah LGA with 100% of children who identify as being Aboriginal having received all recommended vaccinations.

#### AIR based coverage for Aboriginal children aged 24 to less than 27 months, by LGA, SESLHD

Local Government Area (LGA)	Yearly Coverage (%)							2022 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Botany Bay <sup>2</sup>	100	86.7	100	84.2	95.5	95.0	<b>94.7</b>	18
Hurstville <sup>3</sup>	75.0	100	85.7	100	89.5	90.9	<b>86.7</b>	13
Kogarah <sup>3</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	90.0	<b>100</b>	10
Randwick	83.8	79.5	90.0	81.6	93.2	92.7	<b>90.2</b>	37
Rockdale <sup>2</sup>	76.9	85.7	91.7	90.9	87.5	100	<b>90.5</b>	19
Sutherland Shire	92.5	90.0	90.4	91.1	96.3	93.0	<b>89.3</b>	50
Sydney <sup>1</sup>	88.5	91.9	86.0	87.5	94.4	95.8	<b>87.0</b>	20
Waverley	60.0	100	100	100	100	83.3	<b>80.0</b>	12
Woollahra	100	100	0	0	50.0	100	<b>91.3</b>	21
<b>SESLHD*</b>	<b>86.6</b>	<b>89.3</b>	<b>92.5</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>93.8</b>	<b>92.3</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>NSW*</b>	<b>90.9</b>	<b>90.8</b>	<b>91.0</b>	<b>91.8</b>	<b>92.6</b>	<b>93.0</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>7369</b>

<sup>1</sup>Sydney LGA is split between South Eastern Sydney LHD and Sydney LHD 33% and 67% respectively; <sup>2</sup>Botany Bay and Rockdale councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Bayside Council; <sup>3</sup>Hurstville and Kogarah councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Georges River Council. \*Calculated as 100 x (number of fully vaccinated children ÷ number of children registered on the AIR). The total may not exactly equal the average of the LGA coverage due to rounding.

#### AIR based coverage at 24 to less than 27 months of age, SESLHD compared to NSW, 2016 – 2022



Coverage rates for children who identify as Aboriginal and reside in South Eastern Sydney were lower than the coverage rates for all children in South Eastern Sydney (92.2%) and the NSW total population (92.0%)

#### 4. Aboriginal immunisation coverage at four years (60 to less than 63 months of age)

In 2022, on average 95.4% of the district residents in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage among children of this age group is lower than last year (97.6%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are lower than the NSW coverage level in this age group (96.9%).

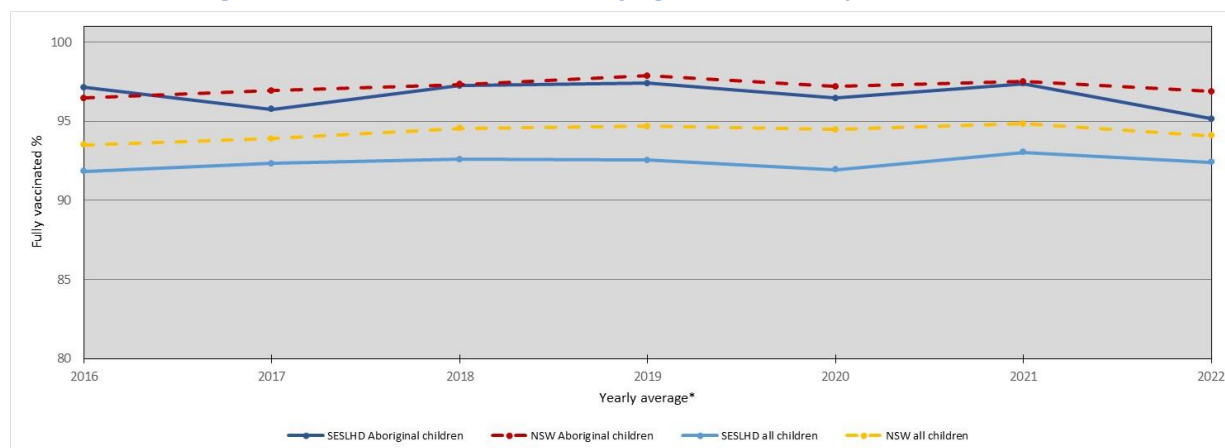
The lowest coverage was reported in Waverley LGA, with 85.7% of children who identify as being Aboriginal recorded as having received all recommended vaccines. However only 15 children identified as Aboriginal were reported in Waverley in 2022. The highest coverage was reported in Hurstville, Kogarah and Woollahra LGA's all reporting 100% of children who identify as being Aboriginal having received all recommended vaccinations.

#### AIR based coverage for Aboriginal children aged 60 to less than 63 months, by LGA, SESLHD

Local Government Area (LGA)	Yearly Coverage (%)							2022 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Botany Bay <sup>2</sup>	100	92.9	100	91.7	100	100	95.0	19
Hurstville <sup>3</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	15
Kogarah <sup>3</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	75.0	100	10
Randwick	96.4	100	93.8	100	91.5	97.8	97.4	41
Rockdale <sup>2</sup>	100	100	100	100	100	100	91.7	21
Sutherland Shire	100	94.4	100	97.6	97.2	100	96.5	56
Sydney <sup>1</sup>	96.5	92.4	100	97.4	100	100	89.5	23
Waverley	0	100	100	66.7	100	85.7	85.7	15
Woollahra	100	100	0	0	100	100	100	23
<b>SESLHD*</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>95.8</b>	<b>97.3</b>	<b>97.4</b>	<b>96.5</b>	<b>97.4</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>NSW*</b>	<b>96.5</b>	<b>97.0</b>	<b>97.3</b>	<b>97.9</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>97.5</b>	<b>96.9</b>	<b>6753</b>

<sup>1</sup>Sydney LGA is split between South Eastern Sydney LHD and Sydney LHD 33% and 67% respectively; <sup>2</sup>Botany Bay and Rockdale councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Bayside Council; <sup>3</sup>Hurstville and Kogarah councils merged in 2016 and are now known as Georges River Council \*Calculated as 100 x (number of fully vaccinated children ÷ number of children registered on the AIR). The total may not exactly equal the average of the LGA coverage due to rounding.

#### AIR based coverage at 60 to less than 63 months of age, SESLHD compared to NSW, 2016 – 2022



Coverage rates for children who identify as Aboriginal and reside in South Eastern Sydney were higher than the coverage rates for all children in South Eastern Sydney (92.4%) and higher than the coverage rates for the NSW total population (94.1%).

### Data source and considerations

- In this report the term 'Aboriginal' respectfully refers to children identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- The data show the proportion of children fully immunised at one, two and five years of age according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule.
- Aboriginal status on AIR is recorded as 'Indigenous', 'non-Indigenous' or 'unknown' on the basis of self-identification to Medicare. The Indigenous status recorded in the AIR database is distinct from other Government databases and can be updated independently by vaccination providers
- Data are sourced from the AIR and presented as rolling annualised quarterly coverage data, which combines the March, June, September and December assessment quarters.
- Data used for the coverage assessment are for children who had birthdays between 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022 and processed at 31 December 2022.
- A 3-month lag period is observed in the coverage assessment to allow for late notifications of immunisation to the AIR.
- Numerator: Number of children in the relevant age cohort in the reference period who are recorded as 'fully vaccinated' on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) in the reference period.
- Denominator: Number of children in the relevant age cohort in the reference period who are registered on the AIR.
- Calculation of assessment year rate:  $100 \times (\text{numerator} \div \text{denominator})$ , for each geographic area.
- Coverage rates based on less than 10 individuals should be interpreted with caution.

### For more information:

Trends for individual NSW LHDs: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/coverage-by-lhd.aspx>

National coverage by Primary Health Network: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/indicators/healthy-community-indicators>

Information about free childhood vaccinations for Aboriginal children:  
[https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/10/national-immunisation-program-schedule-for-all-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people\\_0.pdf](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/10/national-immunisation-program-schedule-for-all-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people_0.pdf)