Wishing you and your family a happy and safe holiday period and all the best for 2017 from the team at NCIRS.

The second half of 2016 has been busy and productive for NCIRS. Please find following a summary of some of our major achievements. Thank you to all who have contributed to the NCIRS Australian Immunisation Professionals Network (AIP) in 2016. The AIP now has over 960 members and is growing rapidly. New members can subscribe here. We will be taking a break from The Weekly Jab over the holidays however will be providing your weekly dose of immunisation news from mid-January.

AusVaxSafety Expansion

The Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Honourable Sussan Ley, announced a major expansion of the AusVaxSafety system in Canberra on the 2nd of November, alongside the launch of the new National Shingles Vaccination Program. AusVaxSafety, a collaborative initiative led by NCIRS and funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, actively monitors the safety of vaccines using SMS-feedback from recently vaccinated children and adults. From November 2016, AusVaxSafety expanded to support the National Shingles Vaccination Program as well as monitor influenza vaccine safety in all age groups. From 2017, AusVaxSafety will routinely report on all vaccines given to people of any age. Read more...
Congratulations to NCIRS Deputy Director A/Prof Kristine Macartney on her Research Action award from the Sax Institute

Associate Professor Macartney was one of three winners of a Sax Institute Research Action Award for 2016. The Sax Institute established the Research Action Awards in 2015 to recognise researchers whose work has made a real-world difference to people’s health and wellbeing. The three award winners were chosen by a panel of national and international experts. Read more...

Report on Vaccine Preventable Child Deaths

A report from NCIRS on ‘Child deaths from vaccine preventable infectious diseases, NSW 2005–2014’, commissioned by the NSW Child Death Review Team (CDRT), was tabled in the NSW Parliament on 22 November.

While child deaths due to vaccine preventable diseases are now rare in Australia, the report found 23 deaths between 2005 and 2014 that were considered preventable or potentially preventable by vaccinations that were available at the time of the child’s death. Another 30 deaths were not considered preventable at the time although 15 would now be covered by vaccines. View the report at the NSW Ombudsman website here...

NSW Immunisation Specialist Service Participated in the Children’s Hospital at Westmead Party Day on 1st December

Our wonderful NSW Immunisation Specialist Service team dressed up and decorated for the Children’s Hospital at Westmead Party Day. The clinic located in the Children’s Hospital looked amazing as an “enchanted garden”.

The NSW Immunisation Specialist Service provides:
1. A drop-in immunisation clinic at The Children’s Hospital at Westmead
2. A referral Immunisation Specialist Clinic
3. A 1800 telephone service providing clinical advice and support to immunisation providers and patients with complex or unusual medical backgrounds or who have previously had an adverse event following immunisation

For more information about the NSW Immunisation Specialist Service visit our website.

Zoster Vaccine Fact Sheet and New FAQs Now Available

The NCIRS zoster vaccine fact sheet was updated in October. A new FAQ fact sheet is also now available which provides responses to common questions about zoster disease and zoster vaccine. Access the fact sheets here...
2016 Annual Update of The Australian Immunisation Handbook

NCIRS developed a slide set summarising the changes made in the 2016 annual update of The Australian Immunisation Handbook available on the Immunise Australia website (available online only).

The 2016 update was approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in August 2016. It supersedes the previous version updated online in 2015. The original 10th edition of The Australian Immunisation Handbook published by the Australian Government Department of Health in March 2013 is now out of date. Access the slide set here…

Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) 61st meeting 13 and 14 October 2016 ATAGI Bulletin

Once again NCIRS staff attended and supported the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) 61st meeting held on 13 and 14 October.

A bulletin that provides a summary of the key points considered by ATAGI at the October meeting is available on the Immunise Australia website here.

Paediatric Active Enhanced Disease Surveillance Partnership Project

NCIRS was awarded an NHMRC-funded Partnership Project (ID 111430, Chief Investigator A/Prof Kristine Macartney) entitled ‘Reducing vaccine preventable diseases in children: using national active hospital-based surveillance to evaluate and improve immunisation program performance’.

This project is aimed at:

- improving immunisation programs to prevent childhood illness and death due to influenza and pertussis; and
- promoting effectiveness and equity in our immunisation programs for influenza and pertussis.

For a full update on PAEDS activities view the latest newsletter here.

NCIRS in the Media

Call for nationwide Indigenous Hepatitis B vaccinations – A/Prof. Kristine Macartney

Child death rates: fewer NSW kids are dying, but 23 deaths preventable by vaccination - A/Prof. Kristine Macartney

No Jab No Play: Graveyards tell countless stories of how now-preventable diseases stalked children – Prof. Robert Booy

No Jab No Play: The children of a farming family wiped out by diphtheria – Prof. Robert Booy

Riley's Meningococcal battle – The Project – Prof. Robert Booy

Australian modelling leads global fight against pertussis – Prof. Peter McIntyre


5. Tashani M, Rashid H, Mul holland K, Booy R. Carrier priming to improve pneumococcal disease control and reduce the international program’s cost in children [commentary]. Pneumonia 2016;8:16. [Full text]


10. Hendry A. Australian childhood immunisation coverage, 1 January to 31 December cohort, assessed as at 31 March 2016 [quarterly report]. Communicable Diseases Intelligence 2016;40:E444-5. [Full text]


18. Tashani M, Alfelali M, Barasheed O, Alqahtani AS, Heron L, Wong M, Rashid H, Booy R. **Effect of Tdap when administered before, with or after the 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (coadministered with the quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine) in adults: a randomised controlled trial.** Vaccine 2016;34:5929-37. [Abstract]


