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| Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine schedule change  |
| Factsheet for Victorian councils OFFICIAL |

# HPV vaccine schedule change

The [Australian Department of Health and Aged Care](https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-mark-butler-mp/media/change-to-single-dose-hpv-vaccine?language=en) <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-mark-butler-mp/media/change-to-single-dose-hpv-vaccine?language=en> has announced that from 6 February 2023, Australia will change its schedule for the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine Gardasil®9 on the National Immunisation Program (NIP) from two doses of vaccine to **a single dose** for most people.

The NIP eligibility age for catch-up/missed vaccination will also increase from 19 to **25 years of age**.

These changes simplify the HPV vaccine schedule and will make it easier and faster to vaccinate young people for HPV.

Most people who have had a single dose of vaccine are now considered **fully vaccinated** for and protected from HPV, and do not need to receive a second dose.

## What has changed?

The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine Gardasil®9 dosing schedule has changed from two doses of vaccine to **a single dose** for most people.

The age of **eligibility for free catch-up** vaccination under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) has **increased** from 19 to **25 years of age**.

## Why has it changed?

The change is based on advice from the [Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)](https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-technical-advisory-group-on-immunisation-atagi?language=en) < https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-technical-advisory-group-on-immunisation-atagi?language=en> who have considered the large volume of international clinical evidence that supports a single dose providing comparable protection as two doses.

## Has the schedule changed for immunocompromised people?

No. The schedule **has not changed** for people who are **immunocompromised. They should still receive the recommended three doses of the HPV vaccine.** For more information about vaccination for people who are immunocompromised please see the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised)
<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised >.

## What is considered as fully vaccinated for HPV?

All **immunocompetent people aged up to 25 years** will be considered **fully vaccinated** for HPV after a **single dose** of HPV vaccine Gardasil®9.

**Immunocompromised** people still need **three doses** of HPV vaccine to be considered **fully vaccinated** for HPV. Please refer to the updated dosing schedule guide in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised> for more information about vaccination for people who are immunocompromised.

Please refer to the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv> for advice regarding HPV vaccination for people aged **26 years and older**.

## If someone had their first HPV vaccine dose prior to the schedule change, do they need to have another dose to be considered fully vaccinated?

All **immunocompetent** people aged up to 25 years who have had their **first dose** before the schedule change are **now** considered **fully vaccinated** for HPV, and **do not need a second dose**. Their Immunisation History Statement (IHS) on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) should reflect this change by the end of February 2023.

**Immunocompromised people** still need **three doses** of HPV vaccine to be considered fully vaccinated, and providers should refer to the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv#people-who-are-immunocompromised> for more information about vaccination for people who are immunocompromised.

Please refer to the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv> for advice regarding HPV vaccination for people aged **26 years and older.**

## What do the changes mean for council immunisation services?

These changes mean it will be easier and faster to vaccinate young people for HPV, protecting them from a potentially cancer-causing virus.

## Has the Australian Immunisation Handbook been updated?

Yes. The HPV chapter of the Australian Immunisation Handbook has been updated and can be accessed [here](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv>.

## Has the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) been updated?

The [AIR due/overdue](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/national-due-and-overdue-rules-for-immunisation?context=23401) <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/national-due-and-overdue-rules-for-immunisation?context=23401> rules for HPV will be updated, and Services Australia have informed the department that immunisation coverage reports are expected to be updated by the end of February 2023.

Councils should continue to check AIR prior to immunisation and report all vaccines administered to the AIR.

## Should councils report HPV vaccines administered to the AIR while waiting for the rules to change?

Yes. All vaccines administered by council immunisation services must be reported to the AIR, as per section 10A of the *Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015* which can be viewed [here](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Home) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Home>.

## We have already gained consent from parents/carers for the HPV vaccine to be administered in 2023, what do we need to do?

Where consent has been gained in advance for HPV vaccination, councils **must** ensure that parents/carers have been sent information about the schedule change **before** their child’s immunisation session.

An email and SMS template is available to distribute to parents/carers that informs them of the change and was attached to an email sent on 6 February 2023. The email template can be found [here](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils>

If you require another copy of the SMS, please email the Immunisation Unit <immunisation@health.vic.gov.au>.

## Can we still order the Year 7 consent booklet and purple HPV tear-off pad?

Yes. Hard copies of both can be ordered [here](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form>. The consent booklet has been updated to reflect the schedule change and the HPV purple tear-off pad is in the process of being updated. To note, people vaccinated by council services can access their record of vaccination via their Immunisation History Statement on the Australian Immunisation Register.

[How to get an immunisation history statement - Australian Immunisation Register - Services Australia](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-to-get-immunisation-history-statement?context=22436). <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-to-get-immunisation-history-statement?context=22436>.

## We have “second dose” school visits booked for the second half of the year, what should we do with these sessions?

While most people no longer need second dose of HPV vaccine, the department encourages councils to keep sessions booked in for the second half of the year to provide catch-up doses for students who have missed vaccination, and second/third doses to immunocompromised people who may still need them (and if they are due).

AIR data indicates that HPV vaccination rates have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Additional school visits provide the opportunity for overdue students in all year levels to be vaccinated for HPV.

## Are changes required in ImPS, CIRV and other software programs used to coordinate our immunisation programs?

Councils using ImPS and CIRV can continue to use it as normal, and the schedule change will not affect their operations. Councils should continue to use any other current systems as normal to administer and implement their school-based immunisation programs.

Councils using software programs other than ImPS or CIRV will need to liaise with their software vendor to discuss if there are impacts and how they can be addressed.

## What does this mean for council HPV vaccine funding?

Councils will continue to be paid $10.37 per dose (plus indexing) of HPV vaccine administered in 2023. The indexing rate will be published [here](https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/dh-dffh-current-approved-unit-prices) < https://fac.dffh.vic.gov.au/dh-dffh-current-approved-unit-prices> in July/August. The Municipal Association of Victoria may be able to support councils to raise funding and other queries as needed.

The department encourages all councils to take advantage of the simpler dosing schedule and the catch-up grant funding provided by the Department of Health in 2022 to increase HPV vaccine coverage in your area.

Councils may consider continuing their two-visit school schedule to increase catch-up opportunities in all school-aged students. Councils may also consider negotiating additional school visits to capture students who were absent or did not have consent returned on the day of vaccination.

Councils may also consider providing catch-up vaccinations for people up to 25 years of age, and other strategies to create additional and/or one-off HPV vaccination opportunities, given second doses are no longer required for most people.

## What does this mean for the HPV catch-up grants that the Department of Health provided in 2022?

There is no change to this grant. The department encourages all councils to use this funding to increase HPV vaccine uptake in your local council area.

This may include providing additional vaccination sessions, expanding vaccination service hours, offering catch-up vaccination to people up to 25 years of age or other strategies specific to your area that create additional or one-off opportunities to provide HPV vaccination.

Councils are also encouraged to focus on HPV vaccination of priority cohorts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents, adolescents from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, adolescents with a disability, and adolescents in out of home care or experiencing homelessness.

## Is there any change to the HPV vaccine ordering process?

No. The vaccine ordering process has not changed and the Gardasil®9 vaccine can be ordered through your [Onelink](https://www.onelinkonline.net/) account as usual. Councils should consider the impact of the change to dosing schedule on their ordering quantities.

The department monitors all vaccine stock orders and may limit orders of vaccines from time to time. You will be notified if any changes are made to your order.

## Where can I find information about the change for parents, carers and people being vaccinated?

Information for the public can be found on the Better Health Channel, accessed [here](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation) <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation>

A social media communications pack to support local councils to educate their communities about the schedule change can be found [here](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils) < https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils>

On 6 February 2023 the department also distributed an information sheet for councils to distribute to parents which can be also found [here](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils>

Who can I speak to in the Department of Health if I have questions about the change?
Please email the Immunisation Unit <immunisation@health.vic.gov.au> if you have any further enquiries about this change.

## Resources and further information

[The Australian Immunisation Handbook](https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv) <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccine-preventable-diseases/human-papillomavirus-hpv>

[The Australian Department of Health and Aged Care factsheet](https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/hpv-vaccine-factsheet-outlining-changes-under-the-national-immunisation-program-in-2023.pdf) <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-02/hpv-vaccine-factsheet-outlining-changes-under-the-national-immunisation-program-in-2023.pdf>

[Australian Department of Health and Aged Care HPV vaccine information](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/vaccines/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation-service) <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/vaccines/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation-service>

[Information for local councils](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/information-for-local-councils>

[Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation) <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/human-papillomavirus-hpv-immunisation>

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