

4 June 2015

HIT THE ROAD, VAX

Mobile vaccination vans and free transport to immunisation hubs were urgently needed to help stop young Queenslanders dying from preventable diseases.

Eleven regions have failed to meet the 95 per cent immunisation targetⁱ, with the Sunshine Coast recording only 88 per cent of five-year-olds up-to-date on their inoculations.

Earlier this year, 19 schoolchildren at Kilcoy were infected with whooping cough.

AMA Queensland President Dr Shaun Rudd said easy access was the key to saving lives.

“It’s great that the Federal Government is investing \$26million on boosting vaccination rates but all the campaigns in the world are worthless if parents can’t get their kids to a clinic,” Dr Rudd said.

“The State Government should provide free local transport or mobile clinics to reach the hundreds of kids still at risk of contracting or spreading preventable diseases such as whooping cough, measles, mumps and rubella.

“The benefit of having full immunity is priceless.”

Dr Rudd warned against Band-Aid measures such as allowing pharmacists to administer injections.

“Pharmacists lack the training and expertise to handle adverse reactions to vaccines, which could lead to potentially disastrous results,” he said.

Dr Rudd said getting GPs into the community would allow them to counter the myths and misinformation about vaccinations.

“The number of so-called conscientious objectors across the state is still in the thousands,” he said.

“Each one of those objectors poses a great risk to the community and we believe doctors armed with facts are the best way to change minds.”

The call for increased mobility of care is part of AMA Queensland’s five-year *Health Vision*, which sets out ways to tackle the state’s critical health care problems such as obesity, alcohol abuse and preventable diseases.

AMA Queensland’s five year *Health Vision* calls for:

- Mobile immunisation clinics staffed by doctors which would send immunisation information to the patient’s regular GP.
- A patient transport plan to help people needing vaccinations travel to and from their appointments.
- A commitment to consider ways in which Queensland Health can assist GP practices to identify and contact patients who need to update their immunisation.

CHILDREN FULLY IMMUNISED IN QUEENSLAND

Catchment	1 year old	2 years old	5 years old
Sunshine Coast	89.6%	89.6%	89%
Far North	90.0%	93.3%	92%
Gold Coast	90.7%	91.7%	89.2%
Wide Bay	91.6%	93.1%	93.1%
West Moreton-Oxley	91.8%	92.7%	91.7%
Central-NW	92.0%	94.7%	93.1%
South Brisbane	92.4%	92.0%	91.2%
Darling Downs-SW	92.4%	93.3%	92.9%
Townsville-Mackay	92.8%	94.5%	93.2%
Central Qld	92.8%	93.0%	92.0%
Metro North Brisbane	92.9%	93.0%	92%

Source: National Health Performance Authority *Health Communities: Immunisation rates for children in 2012-2013*

For more information about immunisation visit:

<http://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation/index.html>

Download *Health Vision* here: http://amaq.com.au/page/Advocacy/AMA_Queenslands_Health_Vision/

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ⁱ <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publications/system-governance/strategic-direction/immunisation-strategy-2014-17.pdf>