

Aboriginal Childhood Immunisation Coverage

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Annual Report 2023

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, with data specifically reported for Randwick and Sutherland local government areas (LGAs), which have the largest Aboriginal populations. Vaccinations are provided by health professionals 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 2023, there was a range of 188-236 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 rates¹. 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 2023.

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 LGA. Due to small population sizes, vaccination coverage for other LGAs with fewer than 25 residents was not reported. 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 2023, vaccination coverage:

- Increased to 93.6% fully vaccinated at 12 months
- Increased to 91.5% at 2 years
- Increased to 95.7% at 5 years

1. 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. Fully immunised coverage at one year (12 to less than 15 months of age)

In 2023, on average 93.6% of Aboriginal children in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage among children of this age group is higher than last year (91.9%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are higher than the NSW coverage level in this age group (92.6%).

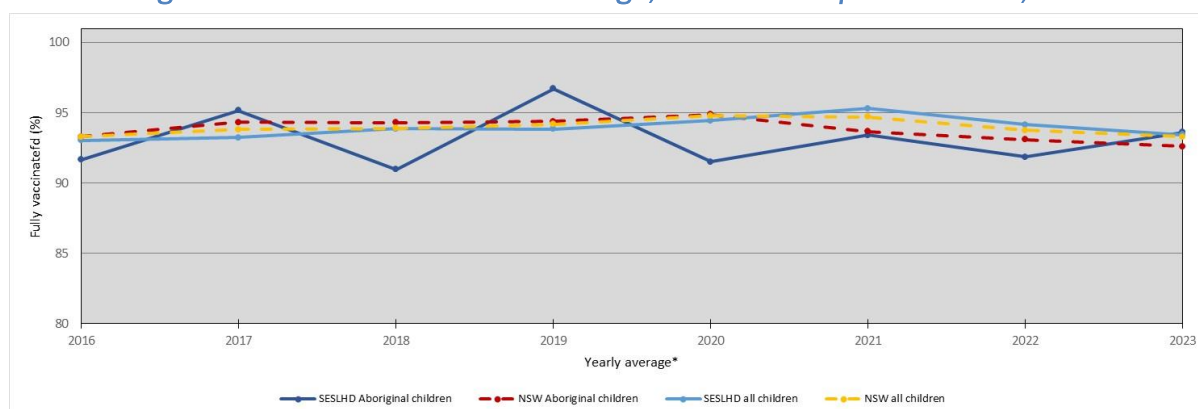
Aboriginal children living in Randwick LGA reported a coverage of 93.8%, while Aboriginal children living in Sutherland Shire completed 94.4% of all routine vaccinations. Due to small population sizes, vaccination coverage for other LGAs is not reported here.

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

Local Government Area (LGA)	Yearly Coverage (%) [^]								2023 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Randwick	89.7	92.7	96.3	95.6	86.2	89.4	91.3	93.8	56
Sutherland Shire	89.1	95.3	88.0	98.1	97.4	94.4	95.2	94.4	76
SESLHD*	91.7	95.2	91.0	96.7	91.5	93.4	91.9	93.6	236
NSW*	93.3	94.3	94.3	94.4	94.9	93.7	93.1	92.6	7,831

[^]Calculated as (number of 'fully vaccinated' children ÷ number of children registered on the Australian Immunisation Register) * 100. 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 - 2023



*Yearly coverage calculated as 100.0 x (number of fully vaccinated children ÷ number of children registered on the AIR).

Coverage rates for children who identify as Aboriginal and reside in South Eastern Sydney were slightly higher than the coverage rates for all children in South Eastern Sydney (93.4%) and the NSW total population (93.3%). The disparity in 'fully vaccinated' coverage between Aboriginal and all children decreased from -2.3% in 2022 to +0.2% in 2023.

3. Fully immunised coverage at two years (24 to less than 27 months of age)

In 2023, on average 91.5% of Aboriginal children in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage among children of this age group is higher than last year (89.7%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are higher than the NSW coverage level in this age group (90.9%).

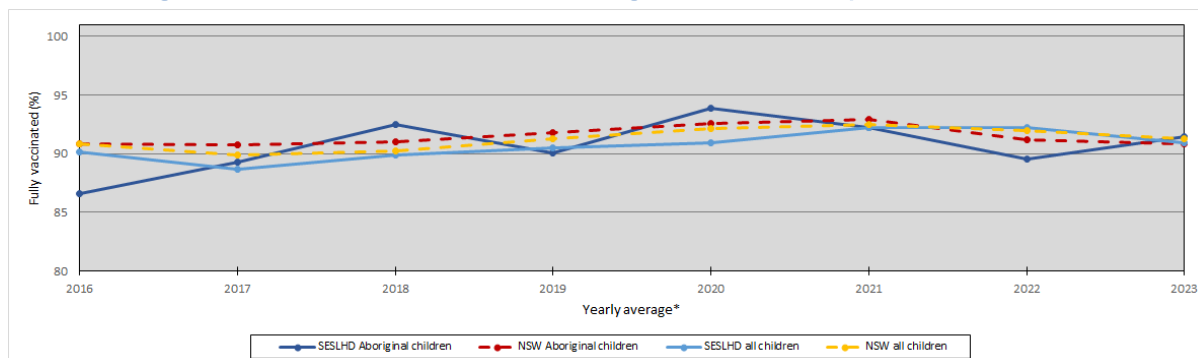
Aboriginal children living in Sutherland Shire achieved a coverage of 96.1%, while 86.0% of those in Randwick LGA completed all routine vaccinations.

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

Local Government Area (LGA)*	Yearly Coverage (%) [^]								2023 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Randwick	83.8	79.5	90.0	81.6	93.2	92.7	90.2	86.0%	50
Sutherland Shire	92.5	90.0	90.4	91.1	96.3	93.0	89.3	96.1%	77
SESLHD*	86.6	89.3	92.5	90.0	93.8	92.3	89.7	91.5	212
NSW*	90.9	90.8	91.0	91.8	92.6	93.0	91.2	90.9	7,972

*Due to small population sizes, vaccination coverage for other LGAs was not reported. [^]Calculated as (number of 'fully vaccinated' children ÷ number of children registered on the Australian Immunisation Register) * 100. 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 – 2023



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 (90.9%) and the NSW total population (91.3%)

4. Fully immunised coverage at five years (60 to less than 63 months of age)

In 2023, on average 95.9% of Aboriginal children in this age cohort were considered fully vaccinated. The coverage amongst children of this age group is higher than last year (95.4%). Coverage rates in South Eastern Sydney are lower than the NSW coverage level in this age group (96.4%).

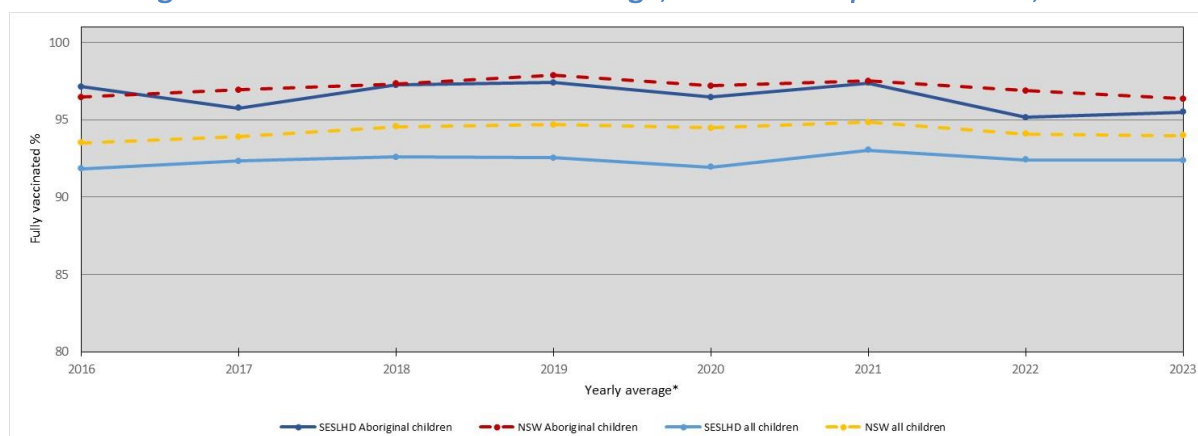
All (100%) Aboriginal children living in Randwick and Sutherland Shire LGAs were considered completely vaccinated for their age.

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

Local Government Area (LGA)	Yearly Coverage (%)								2023 Population
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Randwick	96.4	100.0	93.8	100.0	91.5	97.8	97.4	100.0	45
Sutherland Shire	100.0	94.4	100.0	97.6	97.2	100.0	96.5	100.0	53
SESLHD*	97.2	95.8	97.3	97.4	96.5	97.4	95.4	95.9	188
NSW*	96.5	97.0	97.3	97.9	97.2	97.5	96.9	96.4	6,811

*Due to small population sizes, vaccination coverage for other LGAs was not reported. ^Calculated as (number of 'fully vaccinated' children ÷ number of children registered on the Australian Immunisation Register) * 100. 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 – 2023



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 (94.0%).