

Further changes to presentation of NNDSS data

In the last issue an additional set of summary tables presenting data by date of onset for each calendar month was introduced for the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System. In this issue, a further refinement is introduced. From this issue on Table 1 will present 'date of notification' data, which is a composite of three components: (i) the true onset date from a clinician, if available, (ii) the date the laboratory test was ordered, or (iii) the date reported to the public health unit. Data for February 2000, by date of notification, are presented in Table 1 of this issue and are discussed in the highlights section. Table 2 presents data by report date for weeks 5 to 8, ending 27 February 2000, for information only. In Table 2 the report date is the date the public health unit received the report.

Table 1 now includes the following summary columns: total current month 2000 data; the totals for previous month 2000 and corresponding month 1999; a 5 year mean which is calculated using previous, corresponding and following month data for the previous 5 years (MMWR Weekly Feb 25, 2000:49(07):139-146); year to date figures; the mean for the year to date figures for the previous 5 years; and the ratio of the current month to the mean of the last 5 years.

Communicable Diseases Surveillance

Highlights

Communicable Diseases Surveillance consists of data from various sources. The National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS) is conducted under the auspices of the Communicable Diseases Network Australia New Zealand. The *CDI* Virology and Serology Laboratory Reporting Scheme (LabVISE) is a sentinel surveillance scheme. The Australian Sentinel Practice Research Network (ASPREN) is a general practitioner-based sentinel surveillance scheme. In this report, data from the NNDSS are referred to as 'notifications' or 'cases', whereas those from ASPREN are referred to as 'consultations' or 'encounters' while data from the LabVISE scheme are referred to as 'laboratory reports'.

Vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs)

A total of 297 notifications were received with a notification date in February. Notification numbers for the different VPDs overall remained stable and as noted in previous reports, most were the result of continuing pertussis activity in most

States and Territories. There were no cases of diphtheria or *Haemophilus influenzae* type b. The number of mumps and rubella cases were stable. Most rubella cases occurred in males aged 20-24 years (Figure 1).

Pertussis cases in this period (255) had decreased when compared with January cases (380) and the five year mean (468), but was similar to February 1999 (260). The decrease in the number of cases was in New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania. Cases of pertussis occurred in all age groups with peaks in those aged 10-14 years and those aged 40-44 years (Figure 2). There was a male to female ratio of 0.8:1. Immunisation status information was mostly provided for those aged 0-4 years. The majority of cases aged 0-4 years were described as partly immunised (Figure 2). For cases in the 10-14 year age group and 40-44 year age group immunisation status was mostly not provided. Of note amongst those aged 10-14 years, a small proportion of cases occurred in those fully immunised and a slightly greater proportion in those partly immunised.

Figure 1. Notifications of rubella, February 2000, by age group and sex

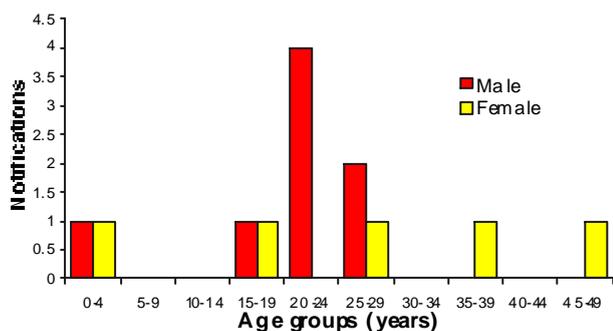


Figure 2. Notifications of pertussis, February 2000, by age group and immunisation status

