



# 2023



Boorloo (Perth) Public Health Unit

## Perth notifiable diseases snapshot

Boorloo (Perth) Public Health Unit has responsibility for the public health management of notifiable infectious diseases to protect the community and prevent disease outbreaks.



**102,570**

infectious disease notifications  
in Perth in 2023  
(including COVID-19)



**On the rise:**

Congenital syphilis,  
gonorrhoea &  
travel-related diseases



**Hep C progress:**

Strong results from an active  
follow-up project



**Key factors:**

Demographic changes  
↑ priority groups  
↓ immunisation rates

### Sexually transmitted infections: 14,226

- Chlamydia – 10,195
- Gonorrhoea – 3,451
- Infectious syphilis – 421

### Vector-borne diseases: 396

- Dengue virus – 161
- Ross River virus – 150
- Malaria – 42

### Enteric diseases: 5,576

- Campylobacter – 3,789
- Salmonella – 1,062

### Notifications by disease category

(excluding COVID-19)

### Vaccine-preventable diseases: 21,571

- Influenza – 15,875
- Meningococcal disease – 4
- Measles – 6
- Pertussis – 56

### Other diseases: 8,711

- RSV – 8,320
- IGAS – 166

### Blood-borne viruses: 1,136

- Hepatitis B – 440  
(16 newly acquired)
- Hepatitis C – 694  
(97 newly acquired)

## Key issues

### Syphilis and other STIs remain important public health problems

- Infectious syphilis notifications remained high, including among pregnant women, people experiencing homelessness, and women of reproductive age.
- Four congenital syphilis cases were diagnosed in 2023; totalling 11 cases since 2018.
- Chlamydia and gonorrhoea reached record high levels in 2023.

### Steps towards Hepatitis C elimination

- From January to June 2023, Boorloo PHU piloted proactive public health follow-up of hepatitis C virus notifications for the first time. The intervention was successful in increasing the RNA testing rates from 82% to 92%, and treatment rates from 79% to 85%.
- The findings suggest that follow-up of hepatitis C notifications can significantly contribute to maintaining momentum towards elimination.

### Factors influencing the increase in notifiable diseases

- From 2011 to 2021, Perth experienced a population surge of 359,000 people with significant population increases among priority groups.
- Immunisation coverage continues to face challenges post pandemic, with 92.3% of 12 month olds in Perth fully immunised.
- Travel has returned to pre-pandemic levels and, in keeping with this, travel-related infections have increased sharply.

