

24/7/18

## **Re: Meningococcal ACWY Vaccination Program**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Earlier this year you should have received an information pack and consent card for the Meningococcal Vaccination Program. This vaccination is being currently offered in all Illawarra and Shoalhaven High Schools for students in Years 10 and 11, and covers 4 types of meningococcal disease (strains A, C, W and Y).

The program is being offered due to an increase in a particular type of meningococcal disease (meningococcal W) that is more severe and kills more people than the other types seen recently in Australia. The only vaccine available to provide protection against this deadly strain, also contains protection against 3 other types - A, C and Y. Your child has most likely received the meningococcal C vaccine recommended at 12 months of age, however that vaccine does not provide protection against meningococcal W.

This year we have found that a significant number of students did not return the consent form, and therefore were not vaccinated when we visit the school.

We understand some choose not to have the vaccine, or elect to have it at their local GP. However, some may have simply forgotten to bring the consent back.

We encourage you as parents and guardians to return a consent form to the school ASAP if you wish your child to have the Meningococcal vaccine for free this year at school. We cannot guarantee that your child will have another opportunity to receive this vaccine for free.

If you have any questions about the vaccine itself we would be happy to answer your queries.  
([www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/meningococcal-w-faq.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/meningococcal-w-faq.aspx))

Regards

Illawarra Shoalhaven Public Health Unit  
Immunisation Team  
4221 6700