Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)
71st meeting
18 October 2019

ATAGI BULLETIN

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) 71st meeting was held by videoconference on 18 October 2019.

Influenza

- ATAGI reviewed epidemiological data from the 2019 influenza season in Australia. The 2019 season started early and was characterized by a long period of elevated transmission, although there was substantial variation in season length among states and territories. The season was dominated by influenza A/H3. The peak rate of laboratory-confirmed influenza and influenza-like illness were moderate compared with recent years. The clinical severity of hospitalised cases was low/moderate.

- ATAGI provided advice to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee on influenza vaccines under the National Immunisation Program for children and people aged over 65 years.

Meningococcal disease

- ATAGI reviewed data on uptake and safety of the meningococcal B vaccination program in South Australia. Uptake was high in all eligible cohorts and rates of adverse events were not different to expected.

- ATAGI reviewed data on uptake of meningococcal ACWY vaccine in Western Australia. Data showed that extending the catch-up program to 2 years instead of 1 year was beneficial to maximise uptake, including in children at higher risk and those with access difficulties.

- ATAGI provided advice to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee on meningococcal B vaccines.

Other issues in immunisation

- ATAGI noted a summary of recent deliberations and recommendations from key national immunisation technical advisory groups (NITAGs) of interest from the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS).

Notes and resources

- ATAGI’s membership, terms of reference and conflict of interest information are available on the Department of Health website.

- The digital Australian Immunisation Handbook is available on the Department’s website.

- The summary of decisions of key immunisation technical advisory groups of interest report will be available on the NCIRS website.
• Information on NITAGs worldwide is available on the NITAG Resource Centre website.
• Next ATAGI meeting: 12 December 2019, face to face in Canberra. The meeting agenda will be published on the Department of Health website shortly before the meeting.