

Dated 10 September 2020

The RCH has now operated an immunisation clinic for over 20 years. The majority of their work has revolved around the vaccination of children within (staying) their hospital. This clinic also has offered vaccines to siblings and local community children where parents have concerns with vaccination including vaccine hesitancy.

This clinic also works closely with the Victorian Vaccine Safety Centre (SAEFVIC) vaccinating, on the advice of SAEFVIC, children who have had previous reactions following vaccination and those children who have allergies.

The recent move by the RCH to introduce a drive through process was simply to provide an alternative to their existing service which has now been limited to children staying within the hospital due to the COVID restrictions imposed on visitors to the hospital.

The announcement by the RCH re: their drive through service coincided with the release of an Australian wide survey of parents about their children's vaccination status being up to date and the impact of COVID.

The media was driven out of the RCH and not from the department.

We are very supportive of the very successful model of service we have in Victoria and that has been seen through our vaccination rates being some of the highest in Australia. The Australian Immunisation Register released data at the end of June which showed that Victoria had the highest national vaccination coverage rate for children turning 5 years of age between January and March 2020. Our rate was over 96%.

We are currently watching our ongoing vaccination rates, taking into consideration the Victorian COVID-19 scenario and will naturally be working closely with all of our immunisation stakeholders if there are concerns.

Dr Brett Sutton, Chief Health Officer will continue to impress upon the community to see their health provider, including general practitioners, for all their routine health checks during this very trying time.

Kind regards

Stephen

Stephen Pellissier

Manager, Immunisation

Communicable Disease Section