

Protecting the Longevity Boom: Adult Immunisation in **Australia**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Add RSV to the vaccinations that funded aged care offers for free.

The Aged Care Act 2024, in force since November 2025, lets the Minister add the RSV vaccine by rule¹ and the avoided hospitalisations as a result carry 80 to 85 percent of that decision's return on investment.²

2 Extend the yearly 75-plus health check to every funded vaccine.

The health check's required content already covers influenza, tetanus and pneumococcal, and the Department can widen the regulations that set it to the vaccines now funded at 75.³

3 Expand adult-specific coverage in the report already issued.

Every funded dose is recorded by law for shingles, and the newly formed Australian CDC can support the system to collect and report uptake for influenza, COVID, and RSV.⁴

IMPACT OF THESE CHANGES

19x1

Adult Vax Return
on Investmentⁱ

30-60%

Reduced Risk of
Heart Attackⁱⁱ

3-6

Lost Work Days
Prevented by
Adult Vaxⁱⁱⁱ

WHY IT MATTERS

Vaccinating older adults reduces hospital admissions, keeps older adults and their caregivers healthy and independent, and helps manage non-communicable diseases that are common later in life.

CURRENT POLICY LANDSCAPE

Australia has shown recent momentum in expanding access for older adults, offering free RSV vaccines for adults 75+ from 15 May, 2026⁵ Funded aged care already gives free influenza and COVID-19 vaccination which could be expanded to include RSV and shingles,⁶ and the yearly 75-plus health check already asks about certain immunisations.⁷ The Implementation Plan of the National Immunisation Strategy is reviewed each year to evaluate and implement these changes recommendations.⁸

KEY FINDINGS

1

Risk rises steeply before 75.

RSV risk for people with NCDs starts at 50; funded aged care could help close the gap by offering free vaccines.⁹

2

The main opportunity is coverage.

Influenza vaccination among Australians 65 and over fell to 61.7 percent in 2024, and shingles coverage sits at only 45.9 percent.¹⁰

3

Older-adult data exists, and can grow.

Australia's 2025 national coverage report carries adult figures for shingles and can be expanded to Influenza, COVID, and RSV.¹¹

DISEASE & VACCINE SNAPSHOT*

DISEASE	CASES (RECENT)	OLDER ADULT UPTAKE	NATIONAL RECOMMENDATION/ FUNDING
RSV	177,949 (2025)	Not reported	-Recommended from 60 at medical risk -Funded 75+, First Nations 60+
COVID-19	186,267 (2025)	Not reported	-Recommended 75+ bi-annually, 65 to 74 annually -Funded for recommended groups
Influenza	502,943	Not reported	-Recommended for everyone 6 months+ -Funded 65+
Shingles	10,257	733,120	-Recommended from 50+ -Funded 65+, First Nations 50+

ABOUT AP-CHAAI

The Asia-Pacific Consortium for Healthy Aging and Adult Immunization (AP-CHAAI) is a network of healthy aging and economics experts working with global partners to close the data and policy gaps that keep preventive care from delivering its full value. ap-chaai.org



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*Data in the disease burden and vaccine snapshot table is AP-CHAAI's estimate based on publicly available and verifiable government sources. Data relies on sentinel surveillance and the true burden is likely higher. For more information and sources, visit our data dashboard at ap-chaai.org.