

National Survey of Australian Public Attitudes to Vaccination

Genepool Productions worked in conjunction with the National Centre for Immunisation & Research Surveillance (NCIRS) in Westmead and Australia Online Research, to develop the first ever national evaluation survey of public attitudes to vaccination. The survey was completed in April 2012. A nationally representative general population sample was obtained of Australians aged 18+, with a total sample of n=1,324 respondents which included 452 parents.

Survey findings

Sources of Information and Information Needs

The Internet is the biggest source of information among the small group who oppose vaccination, while the GP is the main source among supporters.

- 88% of people who support vaccination get information from their GP, compared to 40% of those who oppose vaccination get their information from GP
- 17% of people who support vaccination get their information from the Internet, compared to 50% of those who oppose vaccination get their information from the Internet
- Younger people are significantly more likely to use the Internet as a source of information. They also rely more heavily on family and friends for information. Both of these factors suggest a strong influence of opinions in the community.
- Generally confidence and satisfaction with information provided is high – but lowest among those who oppose vaccinations.
- Key information needs are around side effects, risks and safety testing.

Parent Concerns and Actions

- 92% of Australian parents allow their children to be fully vaccinated on time.
- 47% of parents have no concerns about vaccine safety.
- 53% of parents have at least some concerns around vaccinating their children.
- 45% allow their children to be vaccinated anyway.
- 8% delay or avoid vaccines. (Of this 8%, 2% fully refuse vaccines for their children).

Reported experience of vaccine reactions

- Reported experience of vaccine reaction is mostly consistent across age groups.
- About 18% of respondents in the age group of 25-34 report they or someone they know have had a serious reaction to a vaccine.
- Across the whole sample, 11% reported a vaccine reaction.