



Vaccine Update 447 - Awareness of vaccine safety surveillance systems high, but still room for improvement

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WA providers should be aware of and are encouraged to use WA's vaccine safety surveillance system, known as the Western Australian Vaccine Safety Surveillance (WAVSS) system ([SAFEVAC Reporting](#)). While the exact figures for awareness of WAVSS in WA has yet to be assessed, a new Public Health Research and Practice research article has shown that most healthcare providers are aware that Australia has mechanisms in place to monitor the safety of vaccines after they are approved for use, ([CSIRO PUBLISHING | Public Health Research and Practice](#)).

Researchers from the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) has surveyed more than 500 healthcare providers in late 2021 to gauge their awareness of and practices relating to vaccine safety surveillance in Australia.

The findings show awareness of the [Therapeutic Goods Administration's passive vaccine safety surveillance system](#) was high, at 96%. Among those who were aware of the national passive system, 98% said they trusted it; 87% knew the TGA publishes vaccine safety information; and 68% had used passive vaccine safety data during a consultation with a vaccine-hesitant patient.

In comparison, awareness of [AusVaxSafety's active vaccine safety surveillance system](#) was lower, at 61%. Among respondents who were aware of the active system, 98% said they trusted it; 52% had viewed vaccine safety data on the AusVaxSafety website; and 50% had used AusVaxSafety data during a consultation with a vaccine-hesitant patient.

Notably, among healthcare providers who were aware of either the passive or active systems, 98% said the existence of vaccine safety surveillance systems increased their confidence in vaccine safety.

These results highlight the importance of expanding efforts and strategies to increase immunisation providers' awareness and use of vaccine safety systems and the data they produce, and in particular the AusVaxSafety system.

Vaccine safety surveillance information and data specific to WA can be accessed on the [WA Department of Health website](#).

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