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COVID-19 Australia: Epidemiology Report 41

COVID-19 National Incident Room Surveillance Team

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Surveillance summary

COVID-19 Australia: Epidemiology Report 41

Reporting period ending 9 May 2021

COVID-19 National Incident Room Surveillance Team

Summary

Trends – Australia continues to report low numbers of COVID-19 cases. The daily average number of cases for this reporting period was twelve compared to an average of seventeen cases per day in the previous fortnight. There were 163 cases of COVID-19 this fortnight, bringing the cumulative case count to 29,710.

Demographics – Among cases notified in this calendar year, the notification rate has been higher among males than females in all age groups above 30 years old.

Local cases – There were five locally-acquired cases reported in Australia this fortnight, three from Western Australia and two from New South Wales. One of these New South Wales cases was recognised as being acquired in Australia, but the investigation into the source is ongoing; the other locally-acquired cases were of known source. Three further cases were reported as under initial investigation at the end of the reporting period, two from New South Wales and one from Western Australia.

Overseas-acquired cases – There were 155 overseas-acquired cases this reporting period, a decrease compared to the previous reporting period when there were 240 overseas-acquired cases. Of overseas-acquired cases this reporting period, 49% (76/155) were from New South Wales, 19% (30/155) were from Victoria and 17% (27/155) were from Queensland, with the remainder dispersed across all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory.

Vaccinations – As at 10 May 2021, there have been 2,736,107 doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered in Australia.

This reporting period covers the last two weeks (26 April – 9 May 2021). The previous reporting period is the preceding two weeks (12–25 April 2021). As Australia continues to experience low numbers of COVID-19 cases, this report has transitioned to a brief update on case numbers each fortnight and a more detailed analysis every four weeks. Acute respiratory illness, severity, clusters and outbreaks, testing, public health response measures, virology and the international situation are reported in detail on a four-weekly basis and are not included in this report. The latest information on these topics

can be found in Epidemiology Report 40,ⁱ state and territory health websites,ⁱ the World Health Organization's weekly situation reports,ⁱⁱ and the Department of Health's current situation and case numbers webpage.ⁱⁱⁱ

i <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert#local-outbreak-information>.

ii <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>.

iii <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-current-situation-and-case-numbers>.

Table 1: COVID-19 notifications by jurisdiction and source of acquisition, 26 April – 9 May 2021^a

Source	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas.	Vic.	WA	Australia
Overseas	0	76	1	27	14	0	30	7	155
Local	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
<i>source known</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
<i>source unknown</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>interstate, source known</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>interstate, source unknown</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>investigation ongoing</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Under initial investigation	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Missing source of acquisition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	80	1	27	14	0	30	11	163

a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

These reports now focus on the epidemiological situation in Australia since the beginning of this year, 2021. Readers are encouraged to consult prior reports for information on the epidemiology of cases in Australia in 2020.

Keywords: SARS-CoV-2; novel coronavirus; 2019-nCoV; coronavirus disease 2019; COVID-19; acute respiratory disease; epidemiology; Australia

Background and data sources

See the Technical Supplement for information on coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) including modes of transmission, common symptoms and severity.²

Activity

COVID-19 trends

(NNDSS)

In this two-week reporting period, from 26 April to 9 May 2021, there were 163 cases reported. On average, twelve cases were diagnosed each day over this reporting period, representing a decrease compared to the previous reporting period when an average of seventeen cases were diagnosed each day. The largest number of cases

diagnosed this fortnight was from New South Wales (49%; 80/163), followed by Victoria (18%; 30/163) (Table 1).

In the year to date, from 1 January 2021 to the end of this reporting period 9 May 2021, there have been 1,242 COVID-19 cases reported nationally. Cases notified weekly have remained low this year, ranging from approximately 30 to 125 cases per week (Figure 1). This is in contrast to the two distinct peaks in March 2020 and July 2020, with weekly notifications reaching approximately 2,700 and 3,000, respectively (Figure 2).

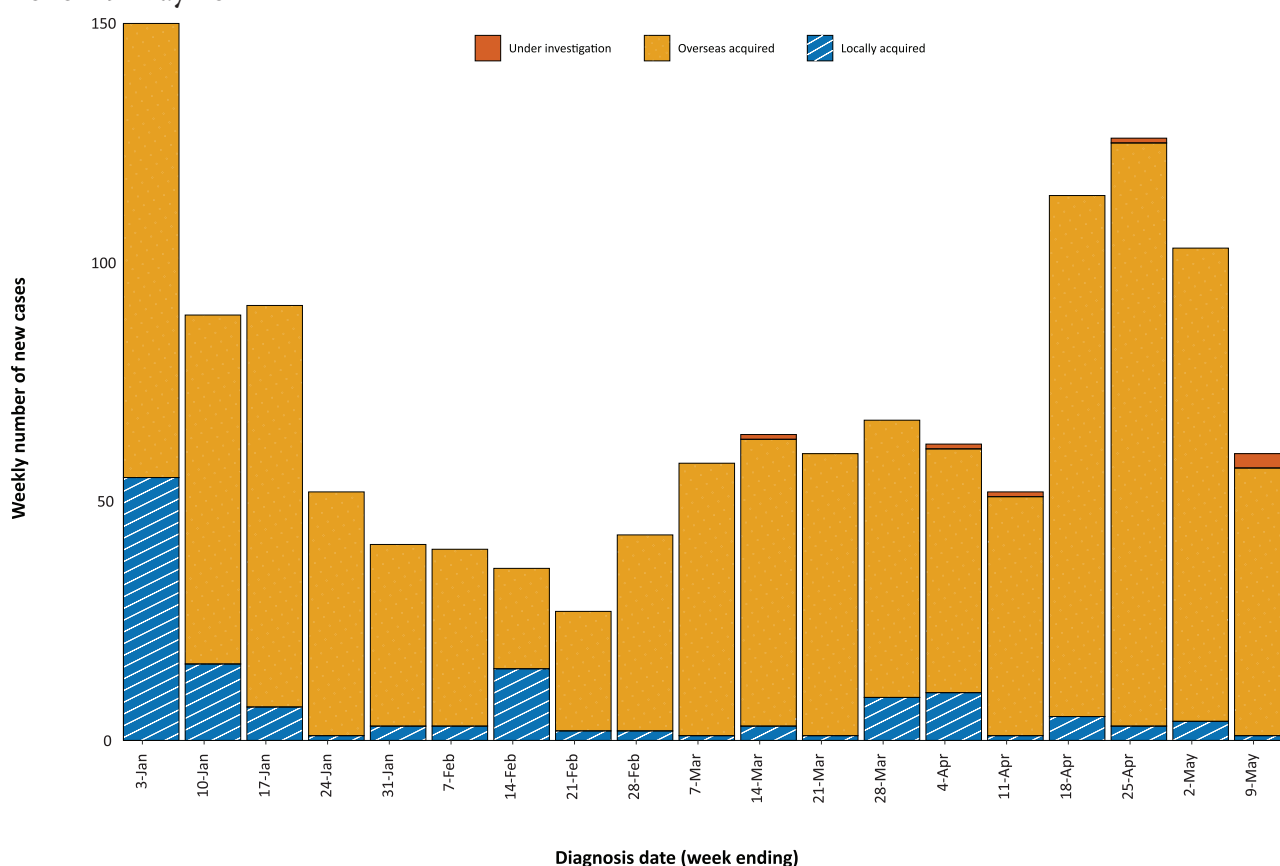
Cumulatively since the beginning of the epidemic in Australia, there have been 29,710 COVID-19 cases reported nationally (Figure 2).

Source of acquisition

(NNDSS)

In this reporting period, the majority of cases were reported as overseas acquired (95%; 155/163). There were five cases reported as locally acquired this fortnight, three from Western Australia and one from New South Wales with source known, and a further case from New South Wales with the investigation into the source ongoing. At the end of this reporting period, three cases were classified

Figure 1: COVID-19 notified cases by source of acquisition and diagnosis date, 28 December 2020 – 9 May 2021^a



a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

as under initial investigation: two from New South Wales and one from Western Australia (Table 1).

The largest number of overseas-acquired cases was reported in New South Wales in this reporting period (49%; 76/155), followed by Victoria (19%; 30/155).

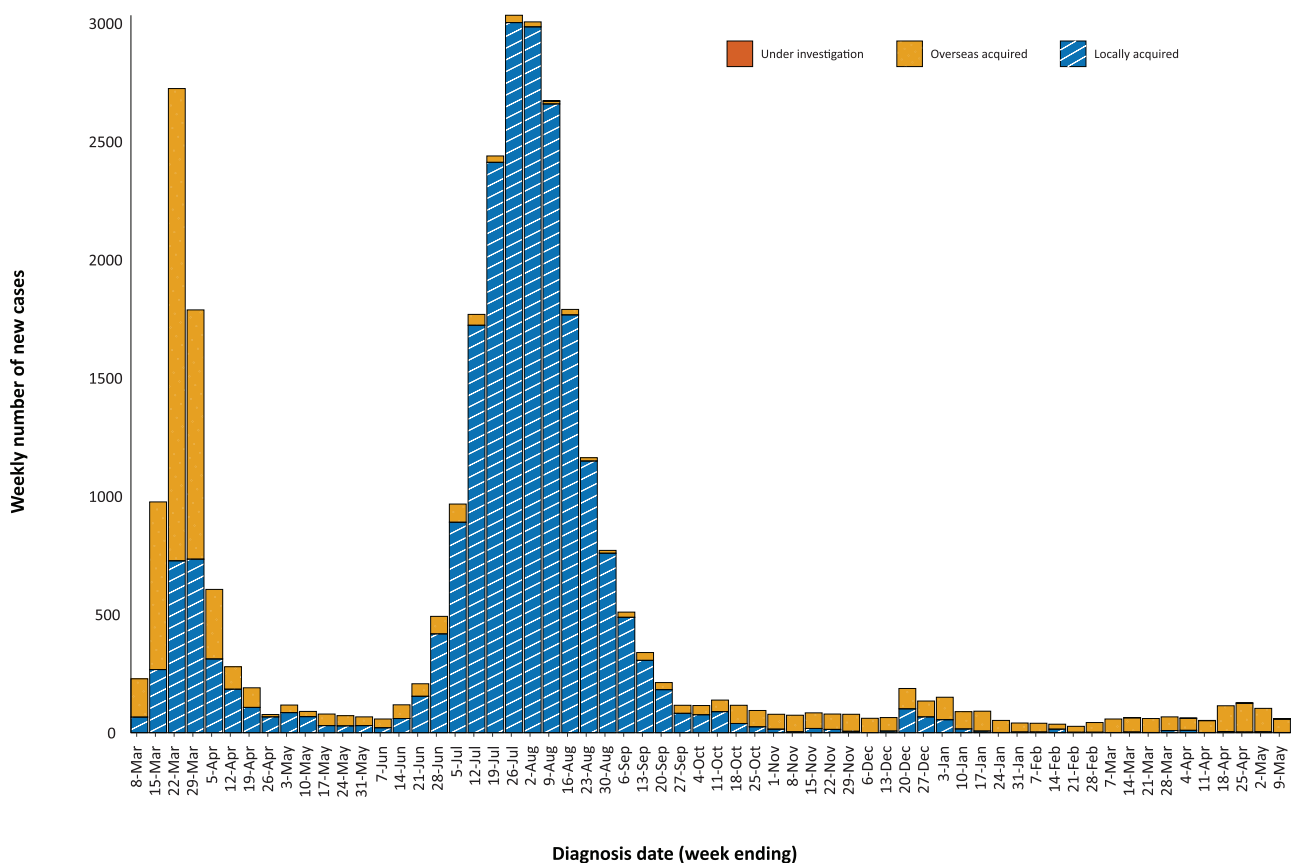
Of overseas-acquired cases that reported a country of acquisition, the largest number in this reporting period were from India (27%; 37/138), followed by Nepal (16%; 22/138), Papua New Guinea (13%; 18/138) and Pakistan (9%; 12/138). The country of acquisition was reported as unknown for 11 percent of overseas-acquired cases (17/155). The number of cases by country is influenced by travel patterns of returning Australians, by restrictions on travel enforced by the Australian government, and also by the prevalence of COVID-19 in the country the person arrived from.

For 2021 to date, Victoria has the highest infection rate for locally-acquired cases with 0.52 infections per 100,000 population (Table 2). At the end of this reporting period, there had been four days since the last locally-acquired case of known source and seven days since the last locally-acquired case of unknown source (Table 3).

Demographic features (NNDSS)

In this reporting period, the largest number of cases occurred in those aged 30 to 39 years (32%; 52/163 cases). For notifications this year, the highest rate of infection is in those aged 30 to 39 years with a rate of 9.1 infections per 100,000 population (Figure 3; Appendix A, Table A.1). Adults over 80 years of age have the lowest rate of infection this year.

Figure 2: Cumulative COVID-19 notified cases by source of acquisition and diagnosis date, 2 March 2020 – 9 May 2021^a



a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

Table 2: Locally-acquired COVID-19 case numbers and rates per 100,000 population by jurisdiction and reporting period, Australia, 1 January to 9 May 2021^a

Jurisdiction	Reporting period 26 April – 9 May 2021	Reporting period 12–25 April 2021	Cases this year 1 January 2021 – 11 April 2021	
	Number of cases ^b	Number of cases ^b	Number of cases ^b	Rate per 100,000 population ^c
ACT	0	0	0	—
NSW	2	3	36	0.44
NT	0	0	0	—
Qld	0	0	25	0.48
SA	0	0	0	—
Tas.	0	0	0	—
Vic.	0	1	35	0.52
WA	3	4	8	0.30
Australia	5	8	104	0.40

a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

b This total does not include cases that are under initial investigation.

c Population data based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Estimated Resident Population (ERP) as at June 2020.

Table 3: Days since last locally-acquired COVID-19 case (source unknown and source known), by jurisdiction, 9 May 2021^a

Jurisdiction	Locally acquired — source unknown		Locally acquired — source known	
	Date of last case	Days since last case	Date of last case	Days since last case
ACT	21 March 2020	414	7 July 2020	306
NSW	2 May 2021	7	5 May 2021	4
NT ^b	–	–	3 April 2020	401
Qld	23 August 2020	259	3 April 2021	36
SA	24 March 2020	411	27 November 2020	163
Tas.	9 August 2020	273	24 April 2020	380
Vic.	30 December 2020	130	22 April 2021	17
WA	3 April 2020	401	1 May 2021	8

a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

b The Northern Territory has not reported any locally-acquired cases with an unknown source of infection.

Focusing on cases in this year only, there is a difference in notification rates among males and females in most age groups. The notification rate is higher in males than females in all age groups over 30 years old (Figure 3). The largest difference in rates this year is in the 40 to 49 years age group, where the cumulative rate among males is 9.3 cases per 100,000 population and among females is 3.5 cases per 100,000 population (Appendix A, Table A.1). The median age of cases in this reporting period is 34 years (range: 0 to 72).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons (NNDSS)

There have been 153 confirmed cases of COVID-19 notified in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since the beginning of the epidemic. No new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cases were notified with a diagnosis date within this reporting period. Overall, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent approximately 0.5% (153/27,687) of all confirmed cases with Indigenous status known. The Indigenous status is unknown for 6.8% (2,023/29,710) of all cases. The majority of locally-acquired cases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been reported in people residing in major cities of Australia (79%; 93/117), with only a very small number

of cases ($n < 10$) reported in people residing in outer regional Australia or remote or very remote Australia. The median age of COVID-19 cases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is 31.5 years (range: 1–95).

Vaccinations

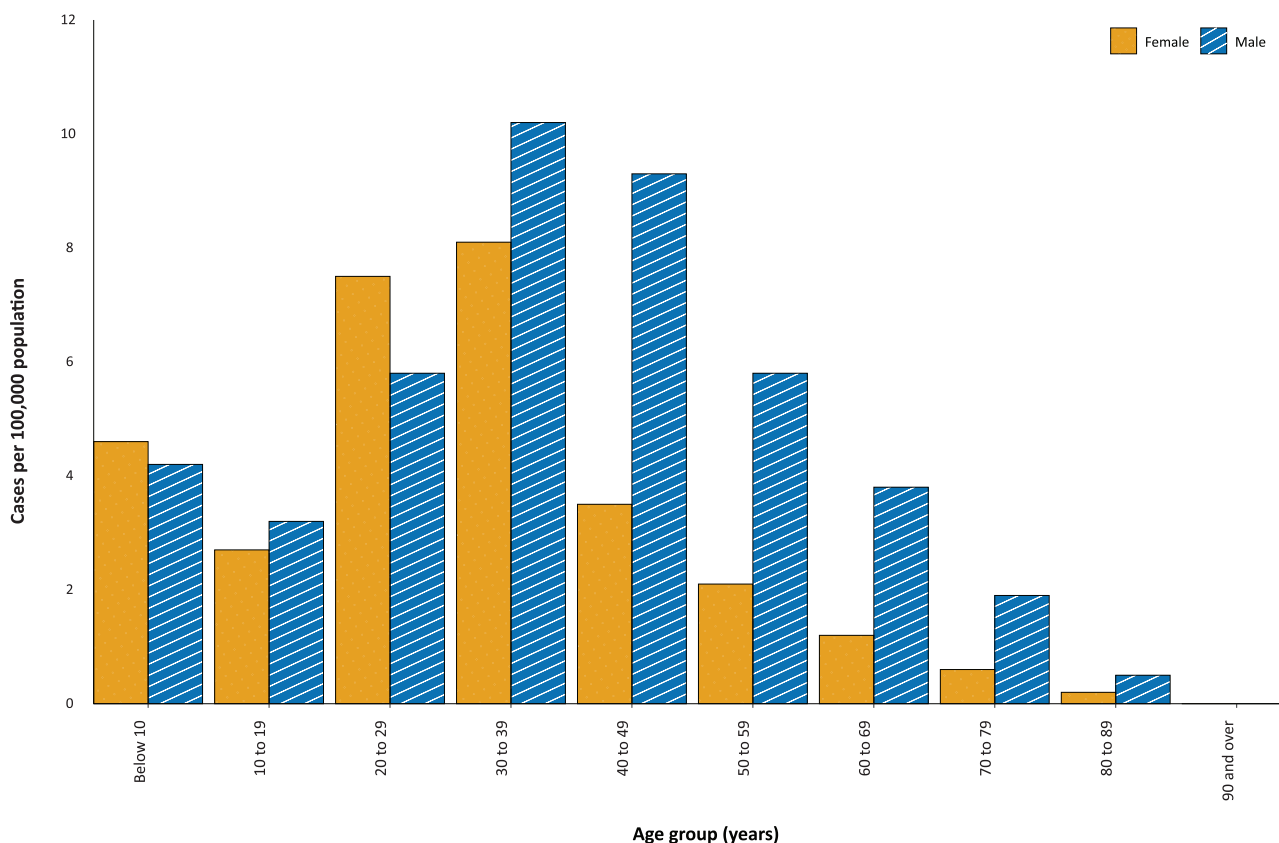
(Department of Health)

As of 10 May 2021, a total of 2,736,107 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered (Table 4), including 267,120 doses provided to aged care and disability residents.

Acknowledgements

We thank public health staff from incident emergency operations centres and public health units in state and territory health departments, and the Australian Government Department of Health, along with state and territory public health laboratories.

Figure 3: Cumulative COVID-19 cases for the calendar year to date, by age group and sex, Australia, 1 January 2021 to 9 May 2021^a



a Source: NNDSS, extract from 11 May 2021, based on diagnosis date.

Table 4: Total number of vaccinations administered, by jurisdiction, Australia, 10 May 2021^a

Jurisdiction	Total number of doses administered
ACT	34,757
NSW	242,149
NT	20,040
Qld	159,795
SA	72,110
Tas.	44,804
Vic.	273,220
WA	116,975
Aged care and disability facilities ^b	267,120
Primary care ^c	1,505,137
Total	2,736,107

a Source: Australian Government Department of Health website.³

b Commonwealth vaccine doses administered in aged care and disability facilities.

c Commonwealth vaccine doses administered in primary care settings.

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Appendix A: Supplementary figures and tables

Table A.1: COVID-19 case notifications and rates per 100,000 population, by age group and sex, Australia, 9 May 2021^{a,b}

Age group	This reporting period 26 April – 9 May 2021						This year only ^c 1 January 2021 – 9 May 2021					
	Cases			Rate per 100,000 population			Cases			Rate per 100,000 population		
	Male	Female	People	Male	Female	People	Male	Female	People	Male	Female	People
0 to 9	10	10	20	0.6	0.6	0.6	68	81	139	4.2	4.6	4.4
10 to 19	4	8	12	0.3	0.5	0.4	50	40	90	3.2	2.7	2.9
20 to 29	17	14	31	0.9	0.8	0.9	106	134	240	5.8	7.5	6.6
30 to 39	31	21	52	1.7	1.1	1.4	189	154	343	10.2	8.1	9.1
40 to 49	18	7	25	1.1	0.4	0.8	152	59	211	9.3	3.5	6.4
50 to 59	9	4	13	0.6	0.3	0.4	88	34	122	5.8	2.1	3.9
60 to 69	7	0	7	0.5	0.0	0.3	50	17	67	3.8	1.2	2.5
70 to 79	2	1	3	0.2	0.1	0.2	17	6	23	1.9	0.6	1.2
80 to 89	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2	1	3	0.5	0.2	0.4
90 and over	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

a Source: NNDS, extracted on 11 May 2021.

b Population data based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Estimated Resident Population (ERP) as at June 2020.

c Note the change to focus on rates in this year only. For cumulative rates since the beginning of the epidemic in Australia, readers are encouraged to consult previous reports.