

# Public health update

Loddon Mallee Public Health  
Unit

11 December 2024



# Outline

- [Infectious disease update](#)
- [Chief Health Officer \(CHO\) Alert](#)
- [Q Fever resources](#)
- [National Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) Mother & Infant Protection Program \(RSV-MIPP\)](#)
- [Community Summer Heat Health](#)
- [Keeping cool in your home](#)
- [Victorian Treaty](#)
- [Communications Community of Practice](#)
- [Christmas/New Years Hours](#)
- [Contact us](#)

# Notifiable conditions

## Infectious disease update

- COVID-19 hospitalisations have continued to slowly increase across the state. The Loddon Mallee is continuing to manage a high number of outbreaks in the aged care sector.
- Pertussis cases in the Loddon Mallee have decreased 24% in the last fortnight but remain at higher levels than in the same period last year. The highest number of notifications are being seen in school aged children.

## Notifiable conditions

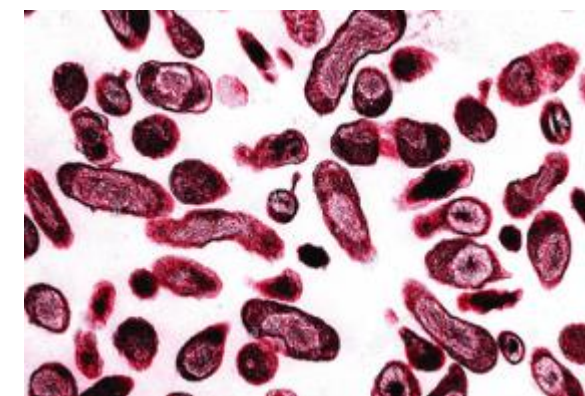
# Chief Health Officer (CHO) Alert

- A case of measles has been reported in a returned overseas traveller.
- Measles is highly infectious and can spread from person-to-person.
- Public exposures have been listed in the [CHO alert](#), including Melbourne International Airport, between the 3rd and 4th of December.
- Anyone who develops symptoms of measles should seek medical care.
- Healthcare professionals should be alert for measles in patients with a fever and rash, particularly those who have recently returned from overseas or attended a listed exposure site during the specified period.
- For further information please refer to the [CHO alert](#)

# Notifiable conditions

## Q fever resources

- [Q fever](#) is a bacterial infection that can cause severe flu-like symptoms in humans. The bacteria are spread from animals, mainly sheep, goats and cattle.
- Animal husbandry or abattoir industries are among the highest risk industries. However, the bacteria can be spread to people with no direct animal contact, through dust or contaminated clothing.
- For some people there can be long term health and lifestyle implications.
- The best defence against Q fever is vaccination.
- Q Fever information for community, health professionals, and workplaces is now available on our [website](#)
  - Including a NEW [Loddon Mallee Q fever vaccination providers list](#)



# Notifiable conditions

## National Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Mother & Infant Protection Program (RSV-MIPP)

- The Victorian Government is working with the Commonwealth to implement a National Respiratory Syncytial Virus Mother & Infant Protection Program (RSV-MIPP) for pregnant women and infants in 2025.

### What this means:

- [Eligible](#) women will have access to a free maternal respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine, Abrysvo<sup>®</sup>, under the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#) from early 2025.
- A single dose of the maternal vaccine is recommended in pregnancy at 28–36 weeks' gestation to protect the infant against RSV
- Eligible infants and young children whose mothers **did not receive** maternal Abrysvo<sup>®</sup> vaccine during pregnancy and those most at risk of severe RSV will have access to a free long-acting RSV monoclonal antibody, Beyfortus<sup>™</sup> (nirsevimab).
- The RSV-MIPP will **prioritise** uptake of the maternal RSV vaccine, to provide the baby with passive protection against RSV during the first six months of infancy.

Detailed eligibility criteria will be released soon. Please monitor the [Respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\) immunisation](#) and [National Immunisation Program update - RSV vaccine](#) webpages for updates to the RSV program and clinical information for health professionals

See [link](#) for translated resources on RSV

# Climate Change and Health

## Community Summer Heat Health

The Loddon Prevention and Population Health (LPPH) team have been leading summer heat health work across the Loddon subregion.

In Mount Alexander Shire LPPH has been working with cross sector organisations –Mount Alexander Shire Council emergency management, climate change, health and wellbeing, access and inclusion; Dhelkaya Community Health , Castlemaine Community House and Castlemaine Library.

As part of this work these organisations supported a local multicultural summer health pool party and barbeque funded and led by Loddon Campaspe Multi Cultural Services and Women's Health Loddon Mallee.

They also held a local community forum on climate change and health, heat health and household energy efficiency.

Hear what the participants had to say:

*"I learnt a lot about how heat affects you and what to do, really useful"*

*"I thought the connectivity was enormous"*

*"I really enjoyed how all the respective areas came together seamlessly- showcasing that there are many components that need to be considered for safety."*

Look at the information on our [heat health](#) web page to find out how to keep cool in summer.

# Climate Change and Health

## Keeping cool in your home

As the weather warms, it's important to take care of your health in several ways.

Anyone can have physical reactions to hot weather, so you should be sure you take steps to avoid this where you can.

Making small, low or no cost changes around your home is one way you can make a big difference.

The LMPHU has created a one-page document with some handy hints in an easy-to-read format to help you do just that.

To access the document, visit: [Keeping cool in summer](#)

**BENDIGO HEALTH** **LODDON MALLEE PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT**

### Keeping cool in your home

No or low cost actions to reduce your energy use and keep cool and well in your home:

- Keep yourself rather than the whole room cool - wet your clothes, use a fan, drink plenty water
- Manage the living space by zoning - try to zone/close off your main living space where you spend most of your time
- Live in cooler, south-facing areas of the home
- Consider bubble wrap or reflective screen for windows - while it's unsightly, they can help keep your home - and you cooler
- Block gaps with door snakes or twisted old towels and use velcro on each end to ensure it isn't a tripping hazard
- Close your curtains or use a sheet to cover windows
- Seal gaps in walls and around the doors and windows
- Open doors and windows at night when the outside temperature drops

If we improve the energy efficiency of our homes, we can save money and improve our health and wellbeing in summer.

More detailed guides to keeping cool and reducing energy usage:  
<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/energy-efficiency-and-reducing-emissions/save-energy-in-the-home/reduce-cooling-costs-at-home-use-your-cooling-system-efficiently/>  
<https://www.beg.org.au/get-involved/resources/>  
<https://smartretiree.org/home-energy-overview/>

Bendigo Health website - Heat Health

1800 959 400 Excellent Care. Every Person. Every Time.



# Mental Wellbeing

# Victorian Treaty

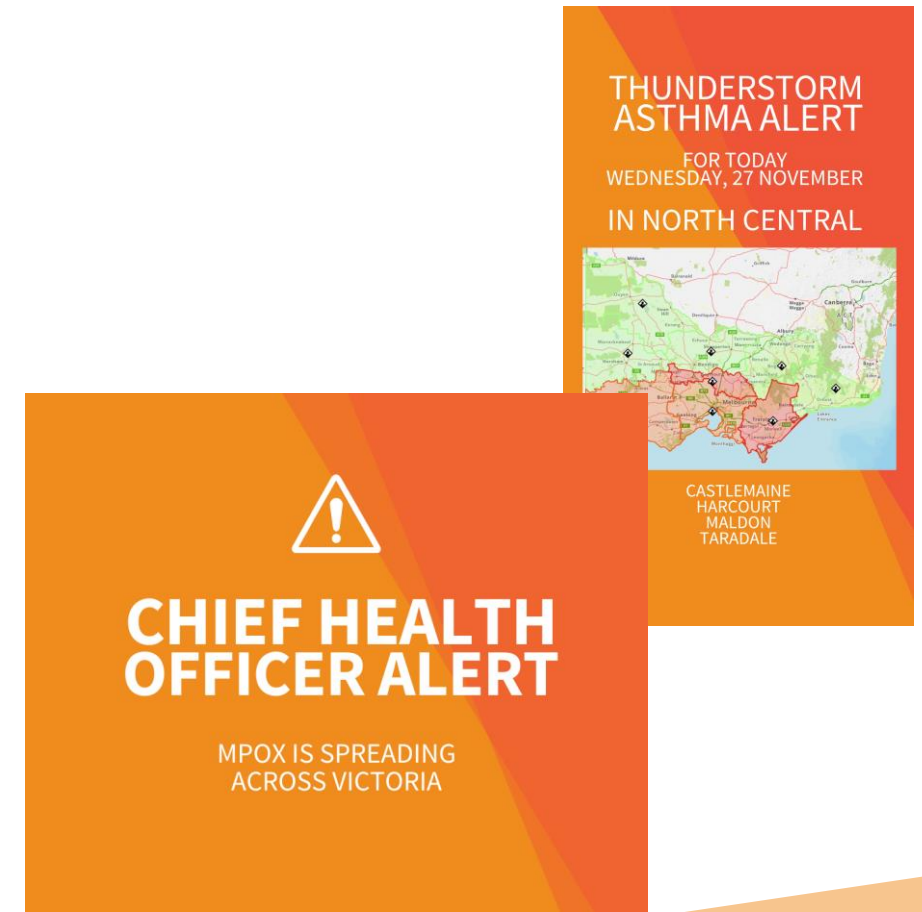
In late November, an Australian government took a historic step by engaging in negotiations with a collective of Aboriginal communities to discuss a treaty, after the Voice to Parliament was rejected. This momentous action recognizes their sovereign rights over land that was colonized without their consent.

Victoria's Treaty is about putting practical frameworks in place to implement better policies and make sure First People have a say in decisions that impact First Peoples' lives. Ngarra Murray, co-chair of the First Peoples' Assembly and a representative in the treaty negotiations for the state's Indigenous communities, emphasized that these discussions are a vital move toward achieving justice and healing for historical wrongs.

Click the link for more information: [Treaty for Victoria | firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au](https://firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au)

# Communicaitons Community of Practice

- Did you know we have a communications community of practice?
- This is a group that allows us to share social media assets, messaging and more tailored to your organisation and region.
- We plan on bringing in regular meetings to discuss your needs and what else we can help you with.
- Feedback is always welcome
- Do you have representation to receive the communication from LMPHU? If not, please send your request to [lmphu@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:lmphu@bendigohealth.org.au)





# Christmas/New Years Hours

The Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit will be open during the festive season, except public holidays. The unit has an on call function on weekends and public holidays.

For urgent matters, call 1800 959 400 [lmphu@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:lmphu@bendigohealth.org.au)

# Loddon Mallee infectious disease surveillance

You can report unusual symptoms or clusters of symptoms in patient/s to the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit. We are a locally-based team of public health professionals, who can help you navigate the department of health notification process and provide advice in all areas of public health. We also have a wide range of resources available on our [website](#).



For any questions or feedback please contact the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit via:

- 5454 9139
- 1800 959 400
- Email: [LMPHU@bendigohealth.org.au](mailto:LMPHU@bendigohealth.org.au)
- [Bendigo Health Website - Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit](#)