

MEDIA ALERT

Experts Gather on Gold Coast to Stop Spread of Preventable Diseases

Where: Marriott, Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast

When: Tuesday 16 - Thursday 18 September 2008

Time: Commencing 8:30am each day

Public health experts and practitioners from around the country and eminent overseas visitors are coming together for the 11th National Immunisation Conference on the Gold Coast. This year's focus on *old challenges and new frontiers* has attracted a record number of participants, looking to showcase and debate new ideas. Headline issues to be discussed include immunisation for adults (young and old) and experience in children with chicken pox vaccine and influenza vaccine in the United States.

The conference will be formally opened by Professor Rob Moodie, Chair of the Australian Government's new Preventative Health Taskforce, at 8:30am on Tuesday 16 September 2008.

The biannual Immunisation Conferences are the peak public health conferences in Australia with the prevention and control of vaccine preventable diseases through immunisation as their focus. Since their commencement in 1987, the Immunisation Conferences have grown in size and stature, with over 500 delegates due to attend this year's event.

“Since the last conference in 2006, two major new vaccine programs have been implemented in Australia - the Human Papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) program and the rotavirus vaccine program. The cost of vaccines funded on the National Immunisation Program has increased more than ten fold over the past ten years, and the HPV vaccine program for young women is a world first. With issues of compulsory vaccination for children and health workers also recently in the public spotlight, this year's conference is sure to spark much interest and debate,” said Michael Moore, Chief Executive Officer of the Public Health Association of Australia.

For further information/comment:

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