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New app helps on-time vaccination for children

Parents and carers in the South Western Sydney Local Health District are encouraged to download the improved, free 'Save the Date to Vaccinate' app to ensure their children receive vaccinations on time.

With better functionality and new features, the app is a part of NSW Health's annual campaign to remind parents and carers to get their children immunised from serious vaccine preventable diseases.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Director of Public Heath Dr Naru Pal said on-time vaccination is the most effective way to protect children from serious diseases.

"Babies, particularly in their first six months, are susceptible to dangerous diseases. For their best defence, vaccination needs to happen on-time, in line with the NSW Immunisation Schedule," Dr Pal said.

"The new Save the Date to Vaccinate app assists parents and carers to manage their child's vaccinations by creating a personalised immunisation schedule.

"One of the features of the app includes reminder notifications, letting parents and carers know when it's time to vaccinate their child and the vaccinations they need.

"Delaying vaccination when your little one is feeling off colour is a normal response. But the truth is, even if they have a runny nose or slight cold, they can still receive their shot.

"Delaying vaccination for even a few weeks can put a child at risk of getting a life-threatening disease.

"By five years of age 94.99 per cent of children in South Western Sydney Local Health District were recorded as fully vaccinated.

"In NSW, 94.39 per cent of children in that age group are fully immunised.

"For sustained control of vaccine preventable diseases or 'herd immunity', a childhood immunisation rate of 95 per cent is necessary," Dr Pal said.

With a spike in whooping cough (pertussis) being experienced across NSW, Dr Pal said it was a timely reminder to urge parents and carers to download the app.

NSW Health recently issued a community alert after recording almost 800 people in NSW were diagnosed with whooping cough, the highest number since October 2016.

Broad community support for childhood immunisation has continued to improve, with the childhood immunisation rate increasing from 91.4% in 2012 to 93.9% in 2017.

Protecting children from potentially deadly diseases is a key priority for the NSW Government, which has invested approximately $120 million in the 2018-19 Immunisation Program budget, including Commonwealth and state vaccines.

Download the free 'Save The Date To Vaccinate' app at:
www.immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au