



COVID-19 Weekly Surveillance Report

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Summary for the week 20 March to 26 March 2023 (inclusive)

In the week of 20 March to 26 March 2023 there were:

- 3,349 COVID-19 cases reported
 - 289 diagnosed by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests
 - 3,060 diagnosed by rapid antigen tests (RAT)
- 1,139 were reinfections (see definition in Table 2)
- 25 new hospital admissions and 0 new admissions into an intensive care unit
- 7 deaths, aged 48 to 93 years old
- 3,915 COVID-19 PCR tests conducted

Surveillance summary

This week, **case numbers** increased by 27% compared to the previous week. Cases diagnosed by PCR increased by 16% and by RAT increased by 28%. **Reinfections** comprised 34% of total cases this week, compared with 40% last week.

The number of **PCR tests** conducted increased by 7% compared to the previous week, with a 7-day PCR test positive rate of 7.8%.

The moving seven-day average **case rates** per 100,000 population increased in all regions except the Great Southern region, which decreased, and the Wheatbelt region, which remained steady. The seven-day average case rate for the Perth metropolitan area (17 cases/100,000 population) is approximately 21% higher than the non-metropolitan regions combined (14 cases/100,000 population).

The seven-day average **age-specific rates** increased in all age groups. The highest rates were in the 70+ years age group (25 cases/100,000 population), and the lowest rates in the 0 - 9 years age group (10 cases/100,000 population).

The 7-day average of **hospitalised cases** increased by 16% from 55 last week to 64 this week, while **intensive care unit cases** remained the same at 1 this week. **New hospital admissions** related to COVID-19 decreased by 29% from 35 last week to 25 this week, and **direct intensive care unit admissions** remained the same at 0 this week.

Deaths decreased this reporting week with 7 deaths reported compared to 28[^] last week.

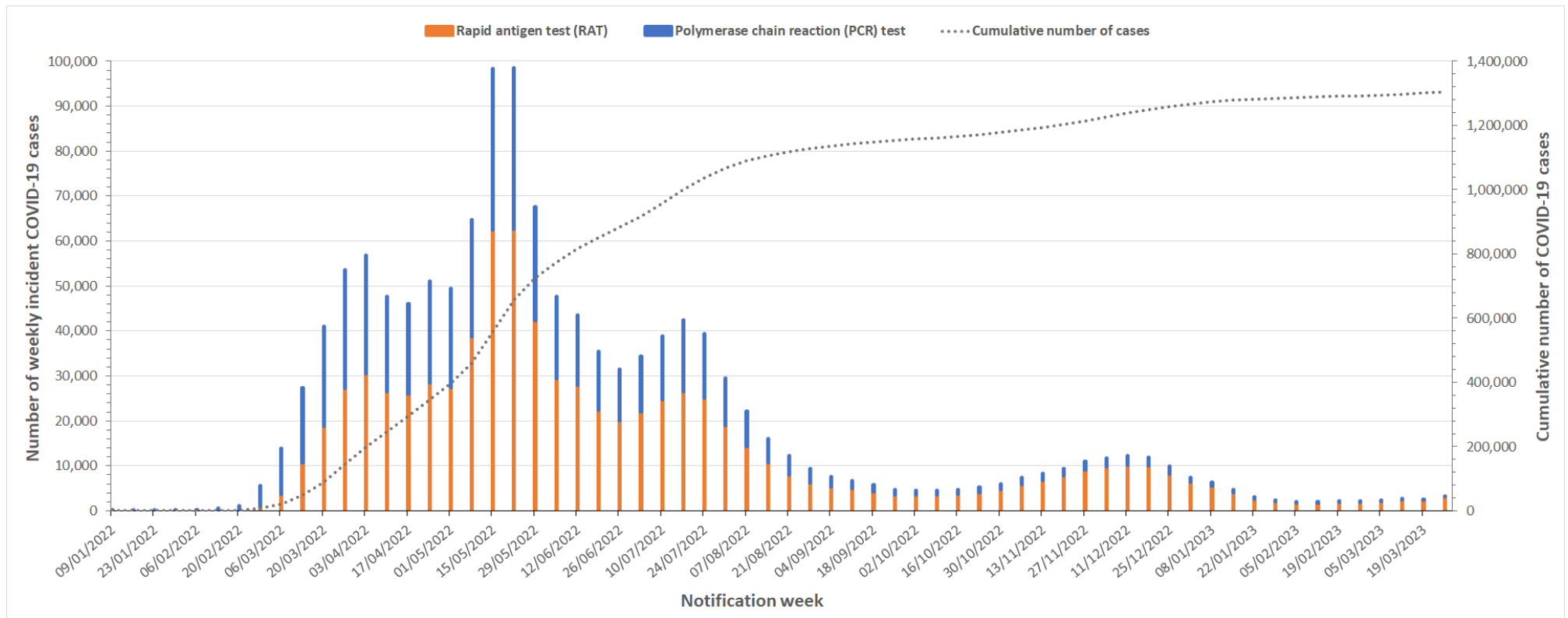
This week, 114 cases were reported in the **Aboriginal population**, an 11% increase compared to last week. Case rates in the Aboriginal population are lower than the non-Aboriginal population, with a 7-day average rate ratio of 0.9 this reporting week. There were no deaths reported in the Aboriginal population this week.

Nationally, the moving seven-day average case rates increased in all jurisdictions except New South Wales, which decreased, and Queensland, which remained steady. South Australia reported the highest rate (23 cases/100,000 population) and Queensland the lowest rate (9 cases/100,000 population). The rate in Western Australia was 15 cases/100,000 population.

[^] Please note that 23 historical deaths were reported in the previous week following the conclusion of coronial investigations, where COVID-19 was attributed as a significant factor in death

Case data

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases by notification week and test type, Western Australia, 03 January 2022 to 26 March 2023.



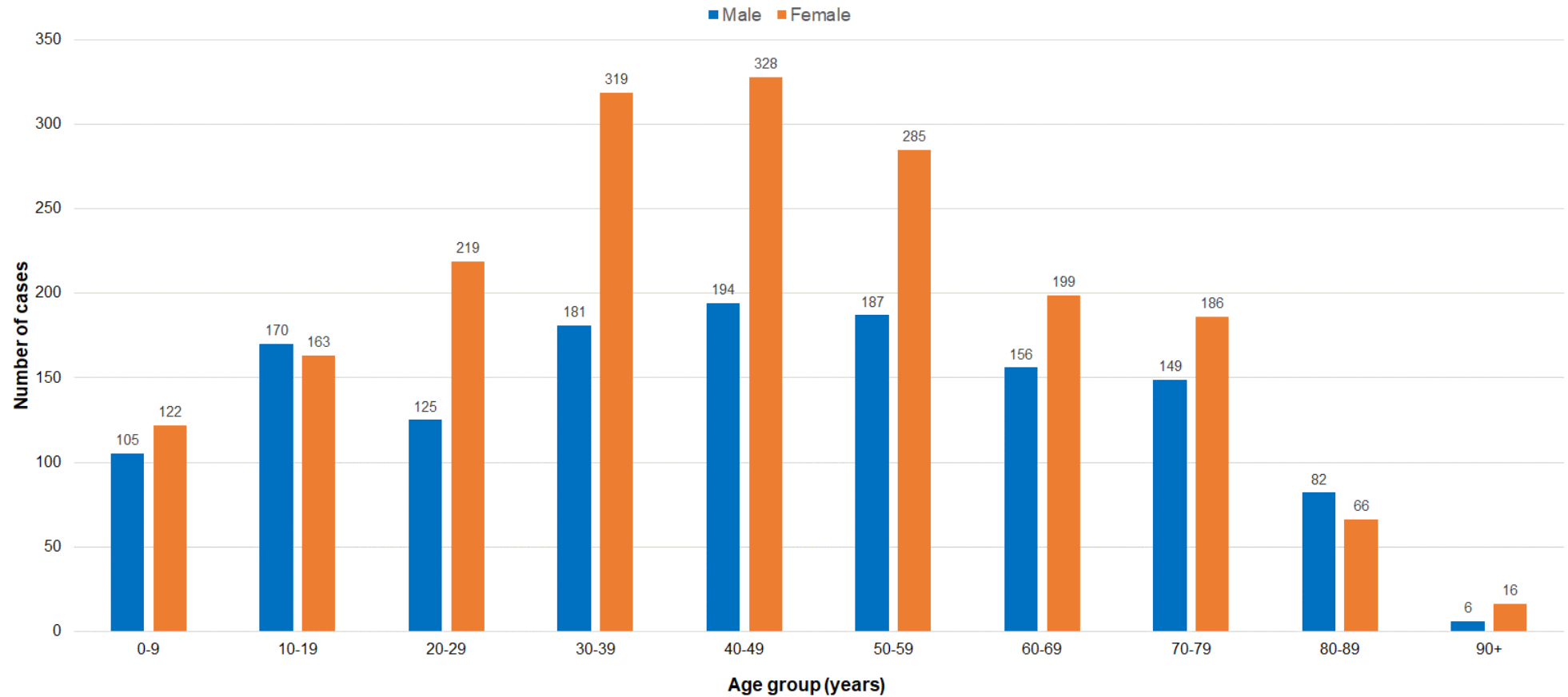
Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

COVID-19 cases notified by cruise vessels were included in report week ending 26th March 2023, resulting in higher than expected case numbers

Notification week refers to data for Monday to Sunday.

Figure 2. COVID-19 cases by age group and sex, Western Australia, 20 March to 26 March 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

Sex data is partially incomplete due to the unavailability of this variable during rapid antigen test registration, resulting in a discrepancy to total case numbers reported for the week.

- Males: n=1,355 (41.6%) Females: n=1,903 (58.4%)
- Median age = 43 years; range: 0 to 97 years

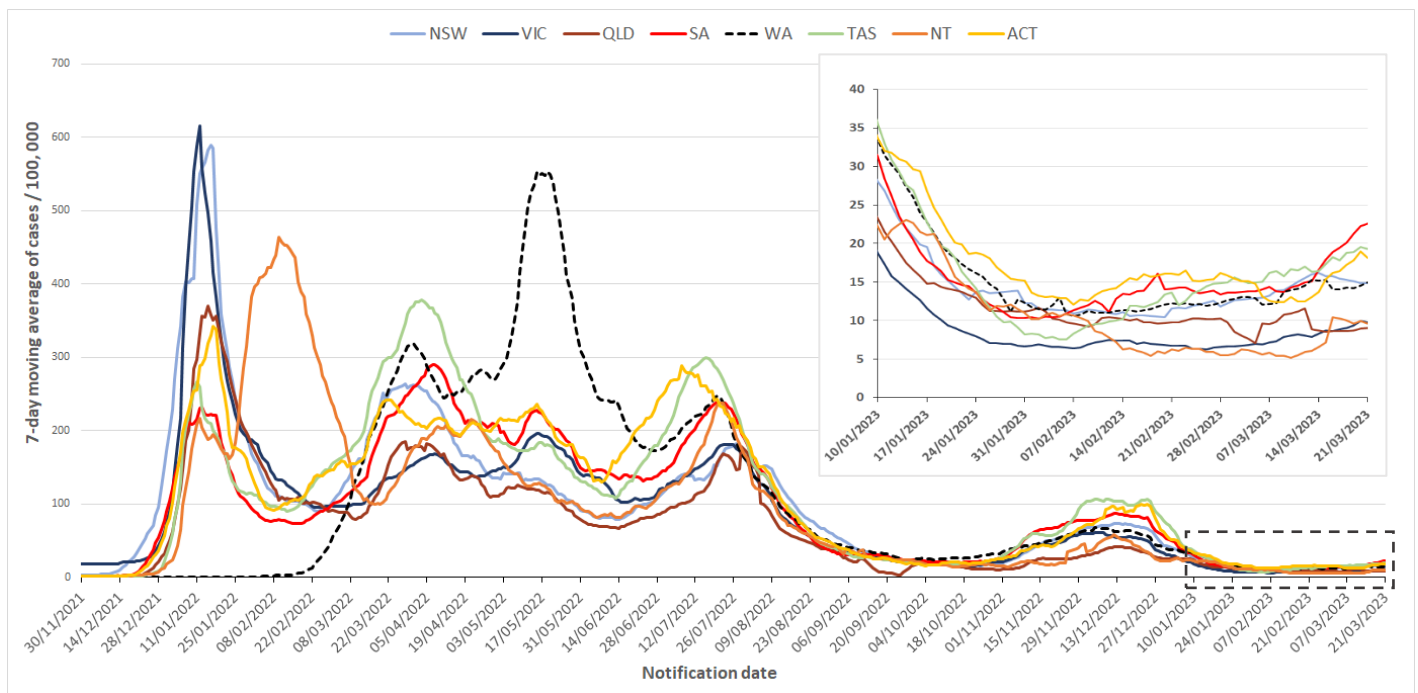
Table 1. COVID-19 reinfections, Western Australia, 02 March 2022 to 26 March 2023.

Month	Number of reinfections *
Mar-2022	14
Apr-2022	30
May-2022	111
Jun-2022	859
Jul-2022	5,058
Aug-2022	5,721
Sep-2022	4,042
Oct-2022	2,980
Nov-2022	7,074
Dec-2022	11,104
Jan-2023	5,472
Feb-2023	3,563
Mar-2023[^]	3,873
Total	49,901

* Reinfection definition as per [Series of National Guidelines \(SoNG\)](#) published by the Communicable Disease Network Australia (CDNA): between 2nd March 2022 and 8th July 2022, COVID-19 reinfections were defined as a positive COVID-19 test that occurred more than 12 weeks after an initial infection. From 9 July 2022 to 13 October 2022, COVID-19 reinfections are defined as a positive COVID-19 test occurring 28 days after previously recovering from the virus. From 14 October 2022 to date, COVID-19 reinfections are defined as a positive COVID-19 test occurring 35 days after the date of positive test for the most recent infection.

[^] Data up to 26th March 2023 inclusive

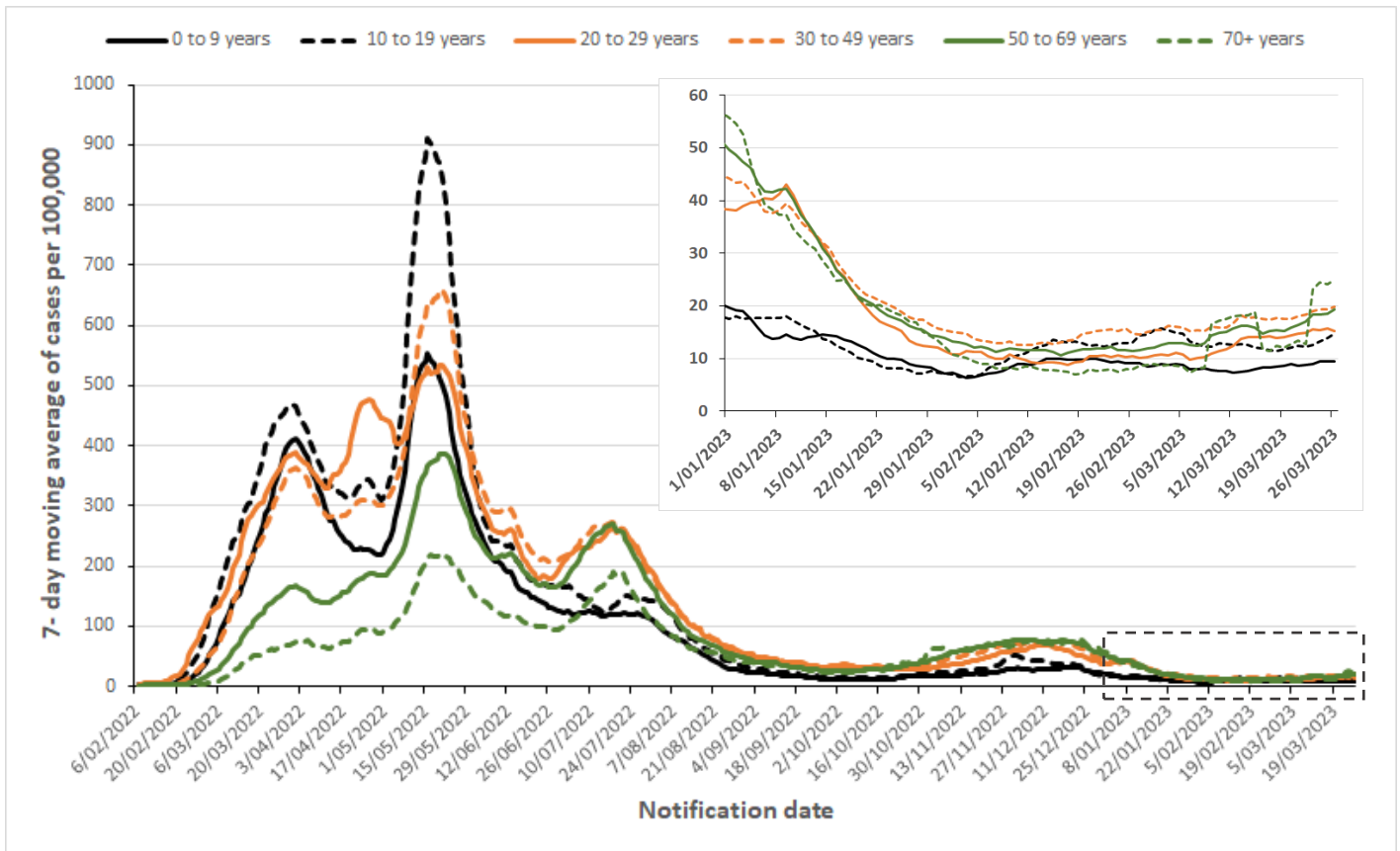
Figure 3. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population by Australian jurisdiction, 01 December 2021 to 21 March 2023.



Notes

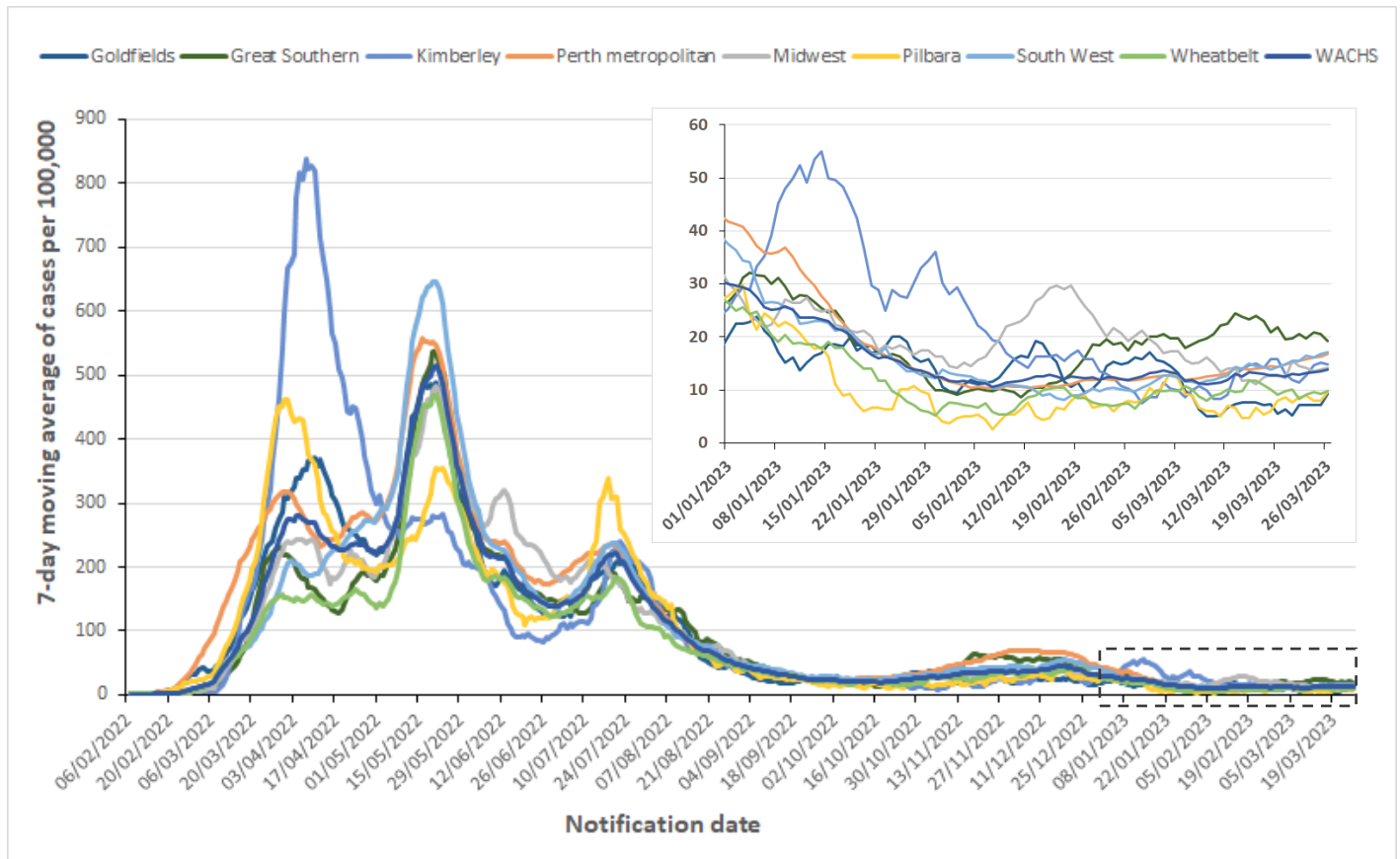
Data sourced from the jurisdictional health department datasets
 Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to the relevant jurisdictional health department
 Population denominators are sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics December 2020 estimates.

Figure 4. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 age-specific rates per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 06 February 2022 to 26 March 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 COVID-19 cases notified by cruise vessels were included in report week ending 26th March 2023, resulting in higher than expected case numbers
 Population denominator sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics June 2021 estimates.

Figure 5. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population by health region of residence, Western Australia, 08 February 2022 to 26 March 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS) region includes all the non-metropolitan regions: Central-Wheatbelt, Goldfields, Great Southern, Kimberley, Midwest, Pilbara and South West
 Perth metropolitan region includes East Metropolitan Health Service, North Metropolitan Health Service and South Metropolitan Health Service
 Population denominator sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

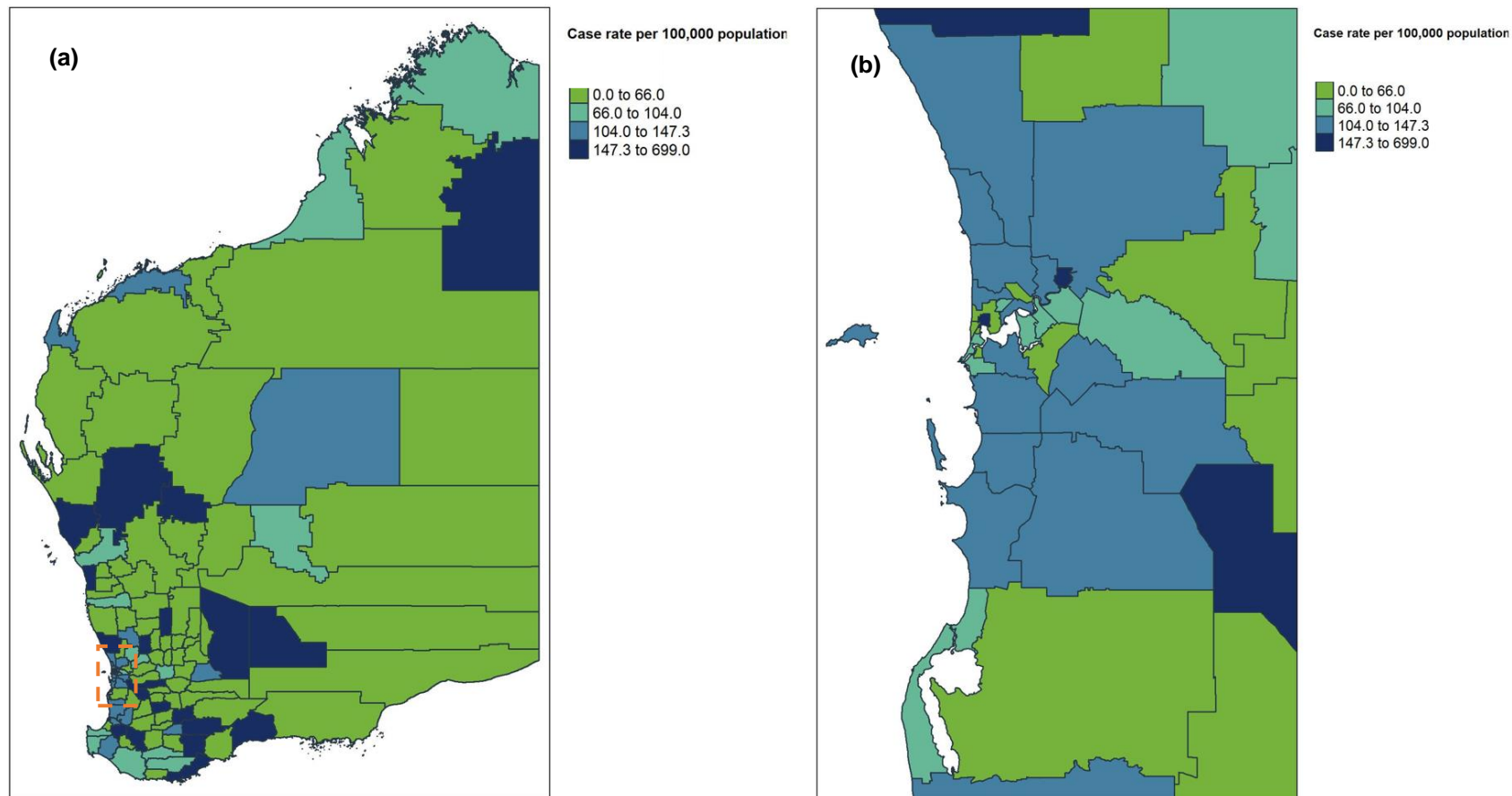
Table 2. Number of COVID-19 cases and rates per 100,000 population by reporting week and health region of residence, Western Australia.

Health Region		Current report week		Previous report week	
		Week 20 March to 26 March 2023		Week 13 March to 19 March 2023	
		Number	Rates [^]	Number	Rates [^]
Perth metropolitan region		2,510	118	2,151	101
WACHS Regions		520	97	476	89
	Goldfields	35	65	21	39
	Great Southern	83	135	94	153
	Kimberley	32	89	40	111
	Midwest	62	100	56	90
	Pilbara	37	59	33	53
	South West	219	120	183	101
	Wheatbelt	52	68	49	64
Other*		319	-	18	-
Total		3,349	114	2,645	98

Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS) region includes all the non-metropolitan regions: Central-Wheatbelt, Goldfields, Great Southern, Kimberley, Midwest, Pilbara and South West
 Perth Metropolitan region includes East Metropolitan Health Service, North Metropolitan Health Service and South Metropolitan Health Service
 * Other includes cases with overseas and interstate residential addresses, and cases without residential address information
 ** COVID-19 cases notified by cruise vessels were included in report week ending 26th March 2023, resulting in higher than expected case numbers
[^] Rates reported as cases per 100,000 population. The total rate excludes "Other" cases, as there is no denominator population representing this group.
 Population denominator is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

Figure 6 (a). Locally acquired COVID-19 weekly case rates per 100,000 population by Local Government Area, Western Australia, 20 March to 26 March 2023.

(b) Locally acquired COVID-19 weekly case rates per 100,000 population by Local Government Area, Perth metropolitan area, 20 March to 26 March 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health

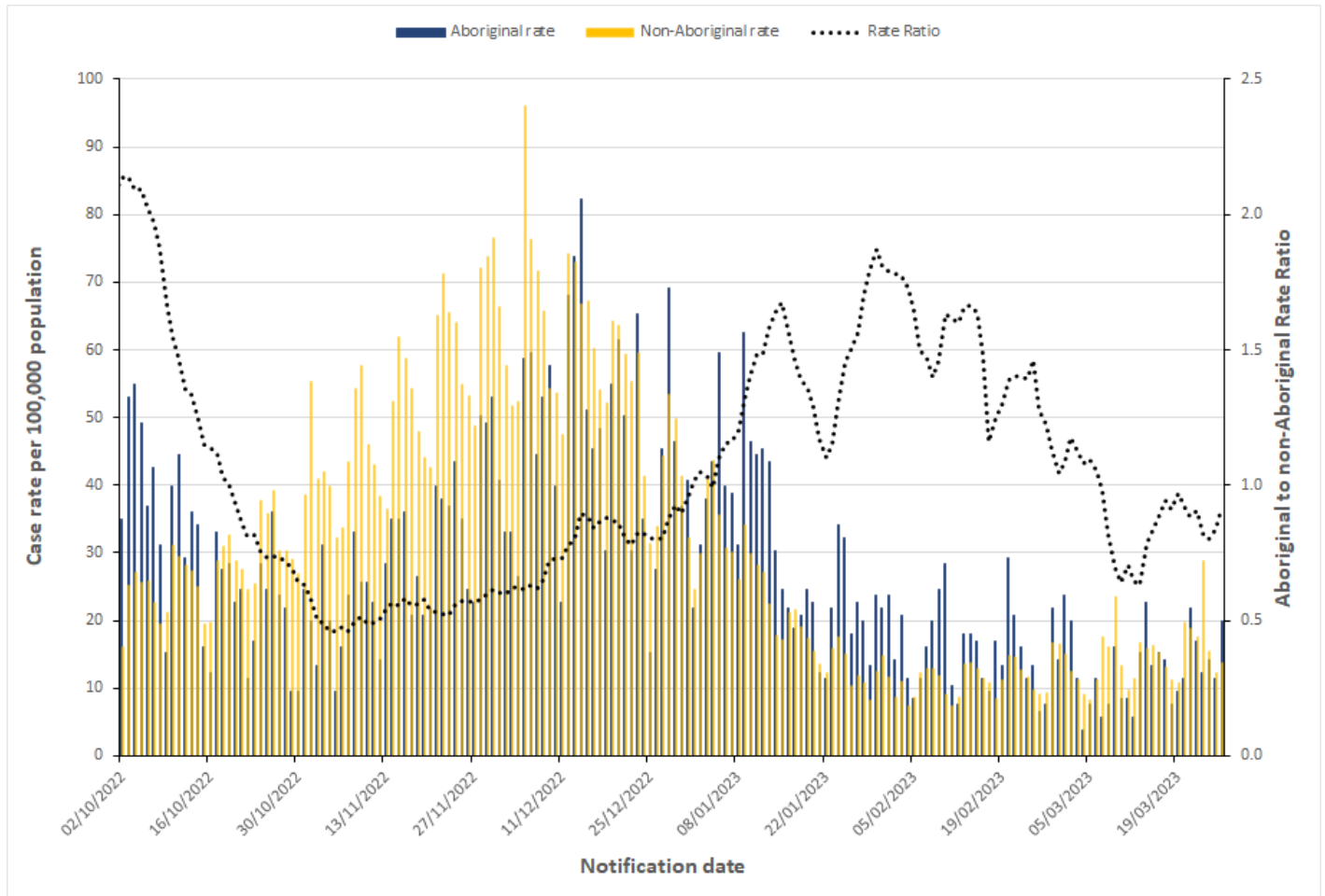
Areas on the map are defined by Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries

Cases are represented on the map according to their place of usual residence in an LGA (no information for specific location of acquisition)

Population denominator is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

Aboriginal case summary

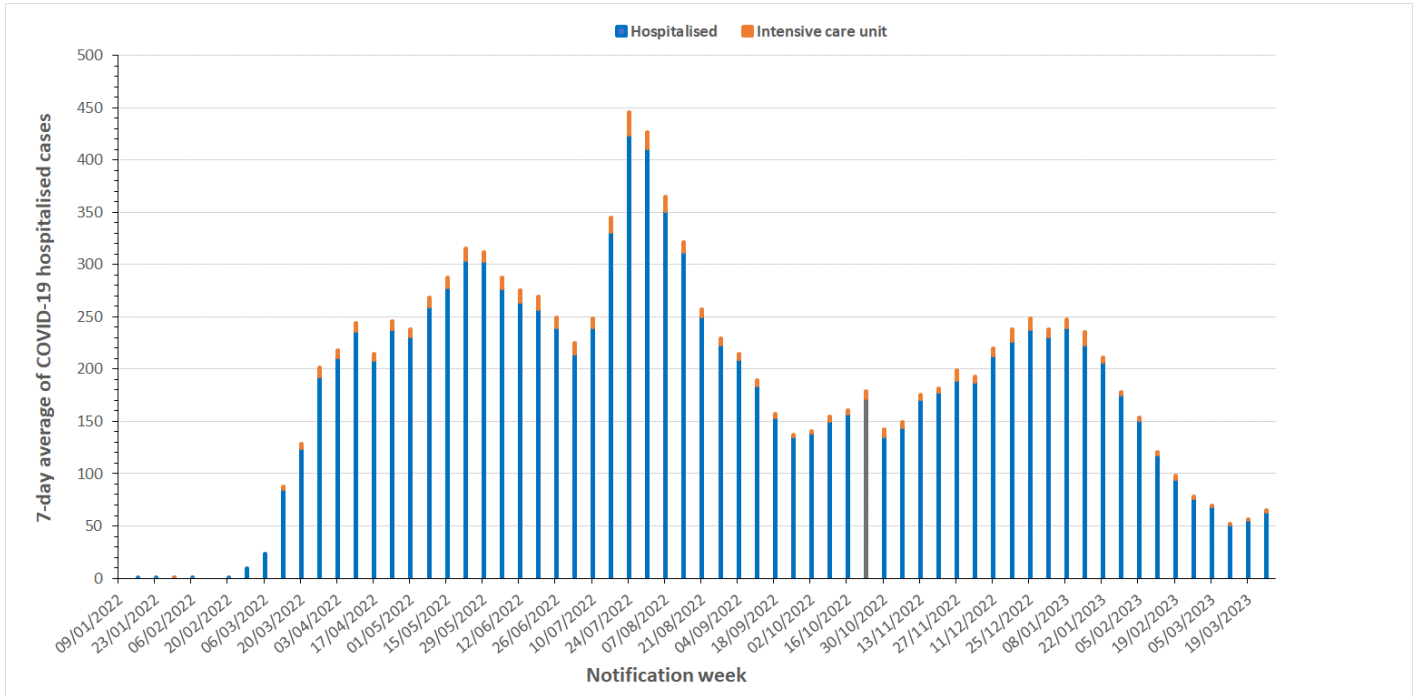
Figure 7. COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population and rate ratio by Aboriginal status and notification date, Western Australia, 02 October 2022 to 26 March 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date in which a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 Aboriginal status is defined as those who identify as 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (TSI) origin'/'Aboriginal but not TSI origin'/'TSI but not Aboriginal origin'
 Cases where Aboriginal status was not stated were designated as non-Aboriginal
 Population denominator data were sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates
 Rate ratio is calculated by dividing the Aboriginal rate by the non-Aboriginal rate, with a 7-day average of the respective rate ratios applied to smooth the trend

Hospitalisations, intensive care unit (ICU) inpatients and deaths

Figure 8. 7-day average of COVID-19 cases currently in hospital or in ICU, 09 January 2022 to 26 March 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification week refers to data for Monday to Sunday
 ‘Hospitalised’ relates to active and cleared COVID-19 cases that are current hospital inpatients. The reason for admission may be unrelated to COVID-19 for some people
 ‘Intensive care unit’ (ICU) is a subset of hospitalised and relates to active/cleared COVID-19 cases that are currently in an ICU
 The definition of COVID-19 related hospitalisation was updated on 21 October 2022 to exclude cases where more than 60 days have passed since their positive COVID-19 test. This new definition more accurately captures cases in whom COVID-19 may have contributed to their reason for ongoing hospitalisation. Data reported after 21 October cannot be compared directly to data recorded prior to that date.

Table 3. Number of COVID-19 related deaths by vaccination status and age group, 20 March to 26 March 2023 and 01 January 2022 to 26 March 2023.

	Current report week	Year 2022 to date
	Week 20 Mar – 26 Mar 2023	1 Jan 2022 – 26 Mar 2023
Number of COVID-19 vaccine doses	Deaths (n= 7)	Deaths (n= 982)
0	1 (14.3%)	178 (18.1%)
1	0 (0%)	29 (3.0%)
2	0 (0%)	105 (10.7%)
3+	6 (85.7%)	670 (68.2%)
Age group (years)		
0-9	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
10-19	0 (0%)	2 (0.2%)
20-29	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
30-39	0 (0%)	6 (0.6%)
40-49	1 (14.3%)	11 (1.1%)
50-59	0 (0%)	30 (3.1%)
60-69	0 (0%)	66 (6.7%)
70-79	1 (14.3%)	183 (18.6%)
80-89	4 (57.1%)	376 (38.3%)
90+	1 (14.3%)	308 (31.4%)

Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

Number of vaccination doses sourced from Australian Immunisation Register. Vaccination data are available for WA residents only, therefore, the number of unvaccinated individuals (0 doses) may be overestimated

A high proportion of the WA population (16 years and above) is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (as of 24th March 2023 – 79.5% for 3+ doses, >95% for 2 doses), therefore interpretation of people whom have died with both 3+ and 2 doses requires consideration within this context.

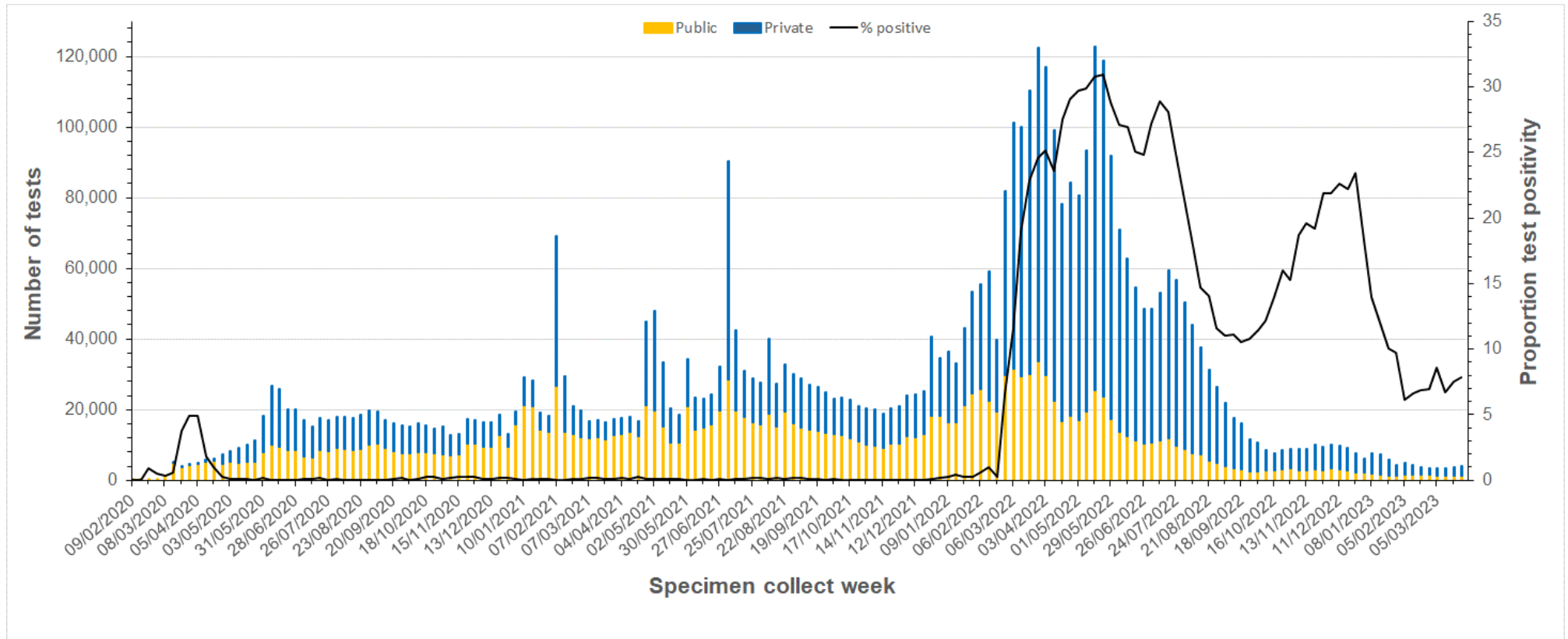
Vaccination data can be found on Australian Government website located [here](#)

Deaths are counted by notification date and may include historical deaths that occurred (i.e. date of death) prior to the current report week

Deaths are not necessarily associated with hospital and/or ICU admissions

Testing data

Figure 9. The number of COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction tests and positivity by laboratory category and week of specimen collection, 09 February 2020 to 26 March 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australian public and private pathology laboratories

Specimen collect week refers to specimens collected between Monday to Sunday

Number of tests includes both positive and negative tests

From 01 October 2022, testing at private pathology providers requires a referral from a GP

From 03 March 2023, Murdoch COVID-19 public PCR testing clinic closed. From this time forward public access to COVID-19 PCR testing is only via GP referral to private pathology providers.

Appendix 1

Number of regional cases by postcode, 20 March – 26 March 2023

WACHS Regions	Postcode	Week 20 Mar to 26 Mar 2023	WACHS Regions	Postcode	Week 20 Mar to 26 Mar 2023	WACHS Regions	Postcode	Week 20 Mar to 26 Mar 2023
Goldfields	6346	<5	Midwest (continued)	6707	<5	South West (continued)	6282	<5
	6429	8	Pilbara	6713	<5		6284	<5
	6430	19		6714	22		6285	7
	6438	<5		6720	<5		6289	<5
	6442	<5		6721	<5		6290	<5
	6450	<5		6722	<5	Wheatbelt	6041	5
	6646	<5		6751	<5		6302	<5
Great Southern	6317	5		6753	<5		6306	<5
	6321	<5	6754	<5	6308		<5	
	6324	5	South West	6218	<5		6312	10
	6326	<5		6220	<5		6352	<5
	6327	<5		6224	<5		6369	<5
	6330	60		6225	9		6383	<5
	6333	5		6227	<5		6391	<5
	6335	<5		6230	62		6401	6
	6338	<5		6232	18	6415	<5	
	6343	<5		6233	30	6426	<5	
6348	<5	6236		<5	6460	<5		
Kimberley	6725	11		6237	<5	6475	<5	
	6726	5	6239	10	6503	<5		
	6728	<5	6244	<5	6516	<5		
	6743	<5	6251	<5	6560	<5		
	6770	7	6254	<5	6562	<5		
Midwest	6515	<5	6255	<5	6564	<5		
	6525	6	6258	6	6566	<5		
	6530	41	6260	<5	6568	<5		
	6532	6	6262	<5	6603	<5		
	6535	<5	6271	<5				
	6632	<5	6275	<5				
	6635	<5	6280	27				
	6640	<5	6281	13				

Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

Exact number of cases less than 5 not reported for confidentiality

Notification date refers to data collected up to the end of the 24-hour reporting period

Case data is based on the residential postcode of each case. The case may have an isolation address based in another regional postcode.

Case data includes those determined by both polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and rapid antigen tests (RAT)

*Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS) includes Goldfields, Great Southern, Kimberley, Midwest, Pilbara, South West and Wheatbelt public health regions

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