



## Linked Data and the Reduction in Cervical Cancer in Australia

Data linkage has had a significant role in the reduction in cervical cancer in Australia.

The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine is a powerful tool for the prevention of cervical cancer. It was developed by industry, based on critical research done at the University of Queensland. Australia was the first country in the world to introduce the vaccine into its publically funded vaccination program.

The HPV vaccine was introduced in 2007 and the success of the vaccine has been monitored by linking vaccine registers to cervical smear registers in both Queensland and Victoria.

Prior to the introduction of the vaccine for boys in 2013 data linkage was used to determine the background levels of potential adverse events in boys so that safety could effectively be monitored after the introduction of the vaccine.

The understanding of the role of HPV in cervical cancer and the success of the vaccine have now resulted in a change to the cervical cancer screening program. Cytology screening every 2 years for women aged between 18 to 69 years, has now been replaced with HPV screening every 5 years. This program is predicted to be more accurate and cost effective.

### For more information:

- Crowe E, Pandeya N, Brotherton JM et al. *BMJ*. 2014 Mar 4;348:g1458. doi: 10.1136/bmj.g1458.
- Brotherton JM, Malloy M, Budd AC et al. *Papilloma Virus Research*. 2015. 1:59-73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pvr.2015.05.005>.
- Clothier HJ, Lee KJ, Sundararajan V et al. *Med J Aust*. 2013 Jun 3;198(10):554-8.