1st August, 2016

Dear Parent/Caregiver

Whooping Cough

There have been several confirmed whooping cough cases in the Albany region.

Parents and care-givers are advised to watch for signs and symptoms of this infection and take any child, adolescent or adult showing symptoms of the disease to see a doctor for testing and possible antibiotic treatment.

Symptoms of whooping cough include persistent coughing, breathing difficulties and often coughing to the point of vomiting. A flu-like illness may precede the coughing stage. Young infants and children may also make a ‘whooping’ sound during coughing bouts, but this sound does not always occur.

Adolescents and adults can have the disease with the only symptom being a persistent cough lasting several weeks or months. It is important to have such coughs assessed by a doctor because if one person in the family has whooping cough, it is likely to spread to the rest of the family, including vulnerable young children.

Whooping cough is a debilitating disease for young children who are not immunised and can be fatal in children under 2 years.

Vaccination is the most important way of reducing pertussis in our community.

If your child is due or overdue for his/her routine 4 year old booster vaccinations, please make an appointment to see your immunisation provider. If you are unsure of your child’s vaccination status, please see your doctor or community immunisation provider for information and vaccination if necessary. You can also call the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809.

Attached is a fact sheet for your information.
Should you require further information please contact the Public Health Unit – Kathleen Smedley on 98 427525

Sincerely,

Anne Taylor
A/Regional Disease Control and Immunisation Coordinator
WACHS GS Population Health
Albany 6330