



# Notifiable infectious diseases in Western Australia 2020



- Total notifications dropped by 24 per cent in 2020 compared to the previous 5 year average.
- COVID-19 emerged as a global pandemic with 871 notifications in WA.
- Infectious syphilis notifications reached a record high.



- COVID-19 related public health measures resulted in a decrease in communicable diseases acquired overseas (e.g. measles, dengue virus infection) but also in other communicable respiratory diseases.



## Key trends and notification rates\* versus previous 5 year average

### Blood-borne viruses

56.1 (2020) vs 65.5  
(-14.4%)



- Newly acquired hepatitis B and C rates were 23 and 34 per cent lower.

### Sexually transmissible infections

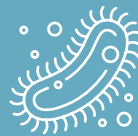
581.0 (2020) vs 592.8  
(-2.0%)



- Gonococcal infection rate was 7 per cent higher.
- Syphilis rate was 90 per cent higher due to an ongoing syphilis outbreak.
- HIV rate was 80 per cent lower.

### Enteric diseases

216.1 (2020) vs 249.5  
(-13.4%)



- Salmonellosis rate was 17 per cent lower.
- 20 foodborne outbreaks.
- 280 non-foodborne outbreaks.

### Vaccine-preventable diseases

274.6 (2020) vs 602.6  
(-54.4%)



- Influenza rate was 88 per cent lower.
- Measles and mumps rates were low.

### Vector-borne diseases

24.7 (2020) vs 45.3  
(-45.5%)



- Ross River virus infection rate was 27 per cent lower.
- Dengue virus infection rate was 83 per cent lower, due to overseas travel restrictions.

**COVID-19**  
33.1 (2020)



- Pandemic declared March 2020.
- Of the 871 notifications in WA, 55 per cent was acquired overseas, 33 per cent at sea and 11 per cent was acquired in Australia.
- 9 COVID-19 related deaths.

### Other diseases

- Legionellosis rate was 47 per cent higher than the 5 year average, mostly due to *L. longbeachae* associated with soil and potting mixes
- 10 cases of invasive meningococcal disease, with one associated death.

### Outbreaks in focus

- One strain of *Salmonella* Typhimurium caused 16 outbreaks in 2020, with most outbreaks due to egg containing dishes.
- Infectious syphilis: 41 per cent of notifications in Aboriginal people and 59 per cent in non-Aboriginal people. The increase in 2020 was attributed to an ongoing outbreak in Aboriginal people. In the metropolitan region, most notifications were in men who have sex with men.

\*notifications per 100,000 population.