



COVID-19 Weekly Surveillance Report

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Summary for the week 18 September to 24 September 2023 (inclusive)

In the week of 18 September to 24 September 2023 there were:

- 566 COVID-19 cases reported
 - 221 diagnosed by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests
 - 345 diagnosed by rapid antigen tests (RAT)
- 209 were reinfections (see definition in Table 2)
- 13 new hospital admissions and no admissions into an intensive care unit
- 4 deaths, with a median age of 79
- 4,069 COVID-19 PCR tests conducted

Surveillance summary

This week, **case numbers** decreased by 6% compared to the previous week. Cases diagnosed by PCR increased by 78% and by RAT decreased by 28%. **Reinfections** comprised 37% of total cases this week, compared with 34% last week.

The number of **PCR tests** increased by 3% compared to the previous week, with a 7-day average positivity rate of 2.5%.

The moving seven-day average **case rate** per 100,000 population decreased in most regions, except the Perth metropolitan area and Wheatbelt region, which remained steady, and the Midwest region, which increased. The seven-day average case rate for the Perth metropolitan area (3 cases/100,000 population) is the same as the non-metropolitan regions combined (3 cases/100,000 population).

The seven-day average **age-specific rate** increased in the 0 – 9 and 70+ years age groups, remained steady in the 20 – 29 and 50 – 69 years age groups, and decreased in the 10 – 19 and 30 – 49 years age groups. The highest rates were in the 70+ years age group (6 cases/100,000 population), and the lowest rates in the 10 - 19 years age group (1 case/100,000 population).

The 7-day average of **hospitalised cases** increased by 10% from 39 last week to 43 this week, and **intensive care unit cases** remained the same at 0 this week. **New hospital admissions** related to COVID-19 increased from 7 last week to 13 this week, and **direct intensive care unit admissions** remained the same at 0 this week.

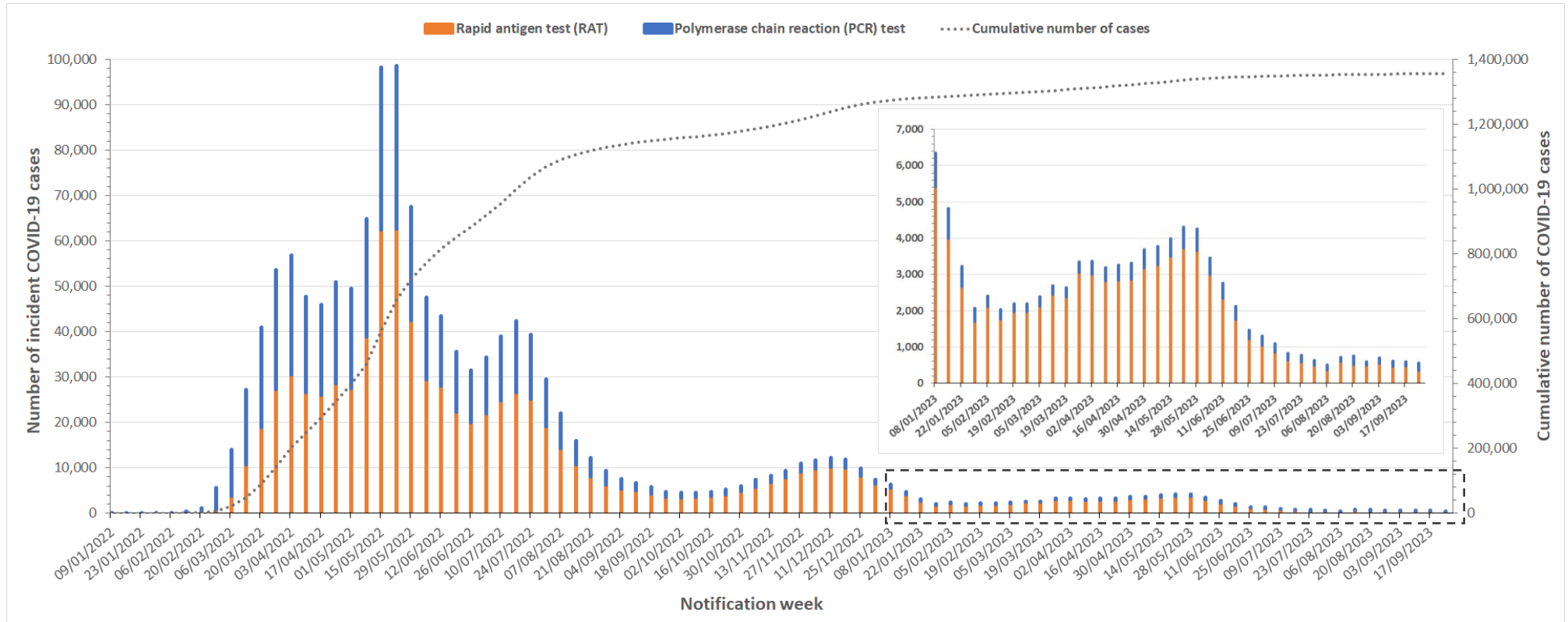
Deaths decreased this week with 4 deaths reported compared to 8 deaths last week.

This week, 19 cases were reported in the **Aboriginal population**, a slight 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 0.8 this reporting week. There was one death reported in the Aboriginal population this week.

Nationally, the moving seven-day average case rates remained steady in most jurisdictions, except Western Australia and Tasmania, which decreased, and South Australia and Northern Territory, which increased. Tasmania and South Australia reported the highest rates (6 cases/100,000 population) and Queensland the lowest rate (1 case/100,000 population). The rate in Western Australia was 3 cases/100,000 population.

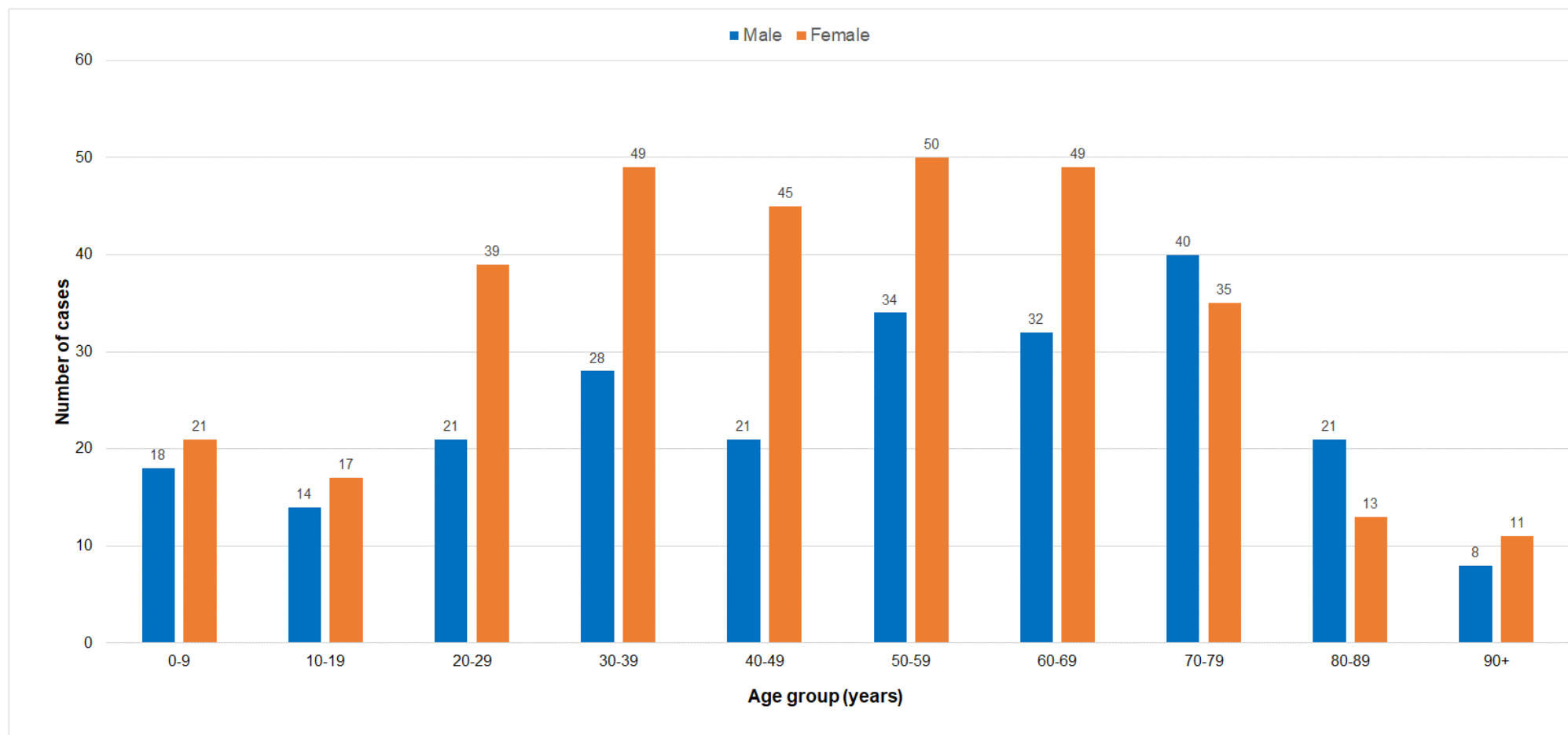
Case data

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases by notification week and test type, Western Australia, 03 January 2022 to 24 September 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24th October 2022, the daily and weekly number of COVID-19 notifications may intermittently be distorted by inclusion of vessel outbreak cases in WA data, irrespective of the place of residence of the cases
 Notification week refers to data reported over the 7 days Monday to Sunday.

Figure 2. COVID-19 cases by age group and sex, Western Australia, 18 September to 24 September 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24th October 2022, the daily and weekly number of COVID-19 notifications may intermittently be distorted by inclusion of vessel outbreak cases in WA data, irrespective of the place of residence of the cases
 Higher case numbers in females relative to males, particularly in those aged 20-69 years, are likely due to increased propensity of women to seek and undertake testing, whether by RAT or PCR, rather than true differences in the incidence of infection
 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=237 (41.9%) Females: n=329 (58.1%)
- Median age = 51 years; range: 0 to 96 years

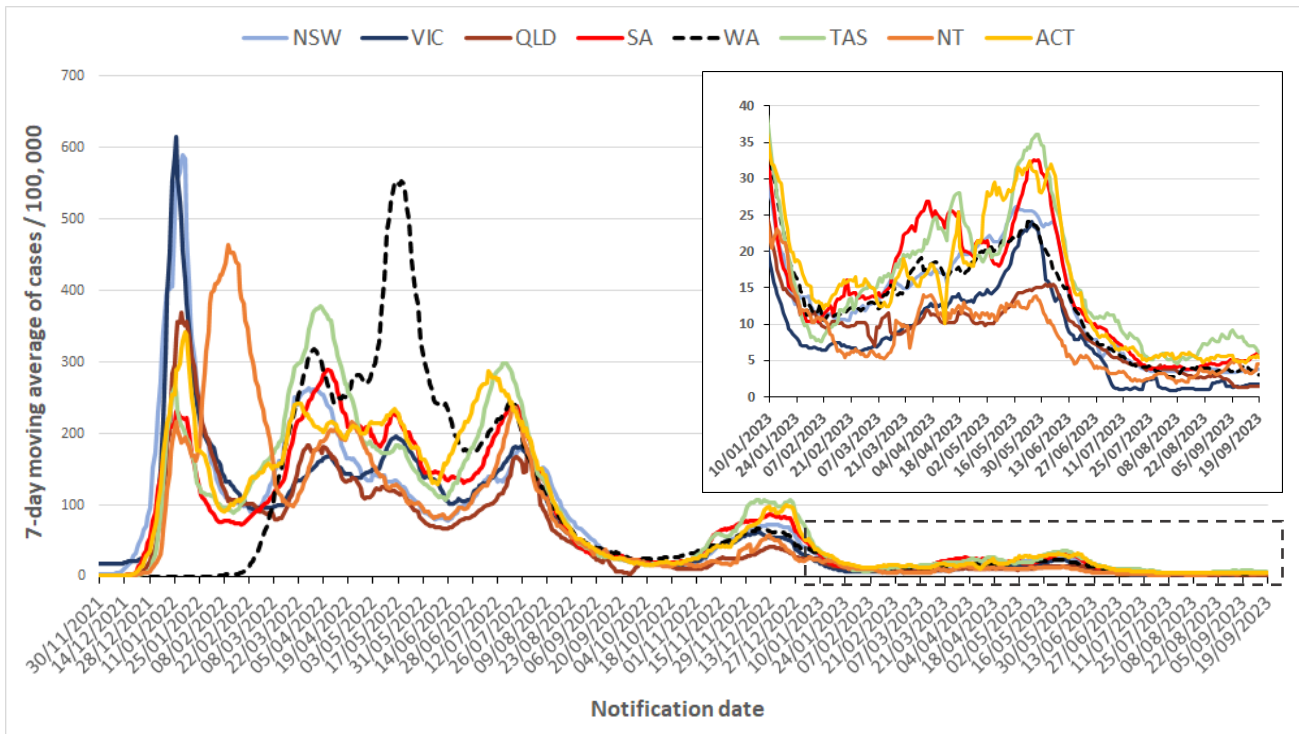
Table 1. COVID-19 reinfections, Western Australia, 02 March 2022 to 24 September 2023.

Month	Number of reinfections *
Mar-2022	14
Apr-2022	31
May-2022	122
Jun-2022	889
Jul-2022	5,100
Aug-2022	5,762
Sep-2022	4,066
Oct-2022	3,007
Nov-2022	7,160
Dec-2022	11,261
Jan-2023	5,530
Feb-2023	3,607
Mar-2023	5,051
Apr-2023	5,558
May-2023	7,551
June-2023	3,519
July-2023	1,347
Aug-2023	1,225
Sept-2023^	808
Total	71,608

* Reinfection definition: 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 were 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. Sourced from [Series of National Guidelines \(SoNG\)](#)

^ Data up to 24th September 2023 inclusive

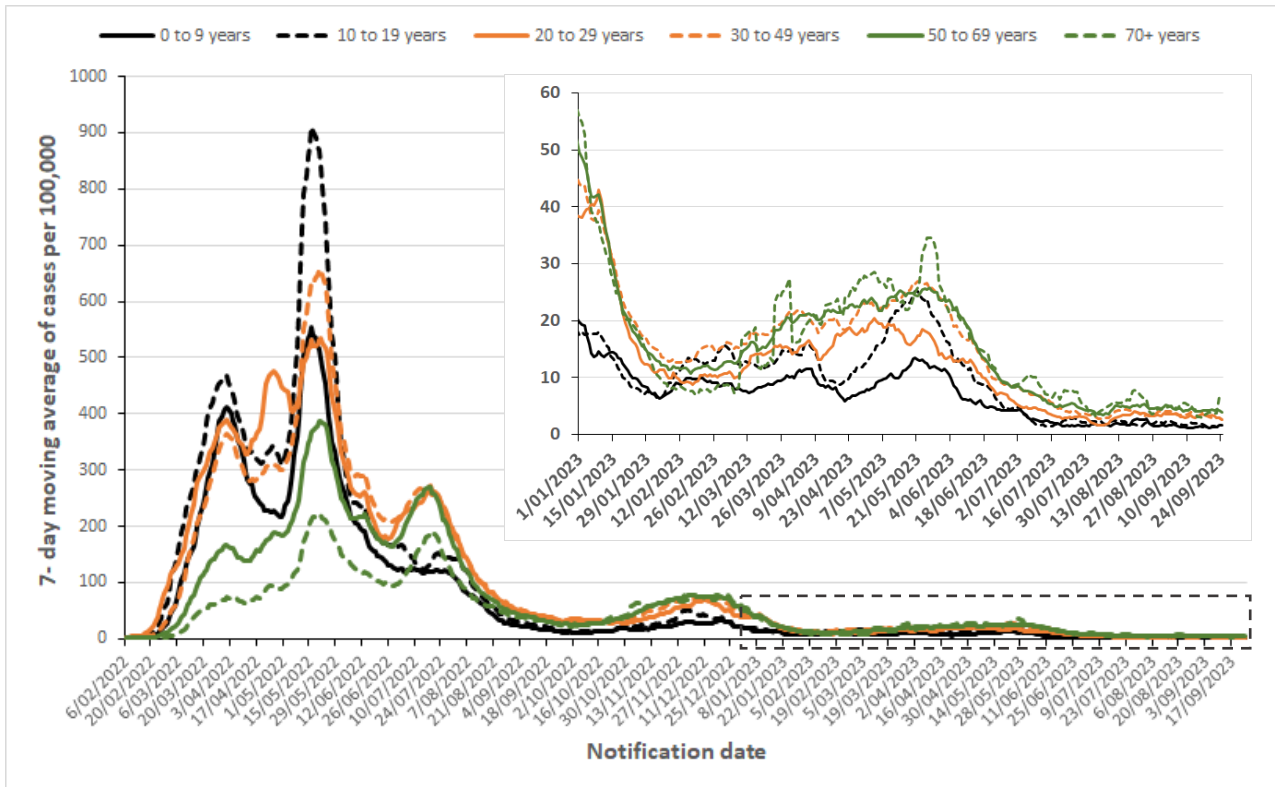
Figure 3. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population by Australian jurisdiction, 01 December 2021 to 19 September 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from the jurisdictional health department datasets
 Notification date refers to the date that a case is notified to the relevant jurisdictional health department
 Data is only available up to and including Tuesday of current report week for all jurisdictions except Western Australia
 From 01 July 2023, Victoria ceased reporting COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Tests
 Population denominators are sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics December 2020 estimates.

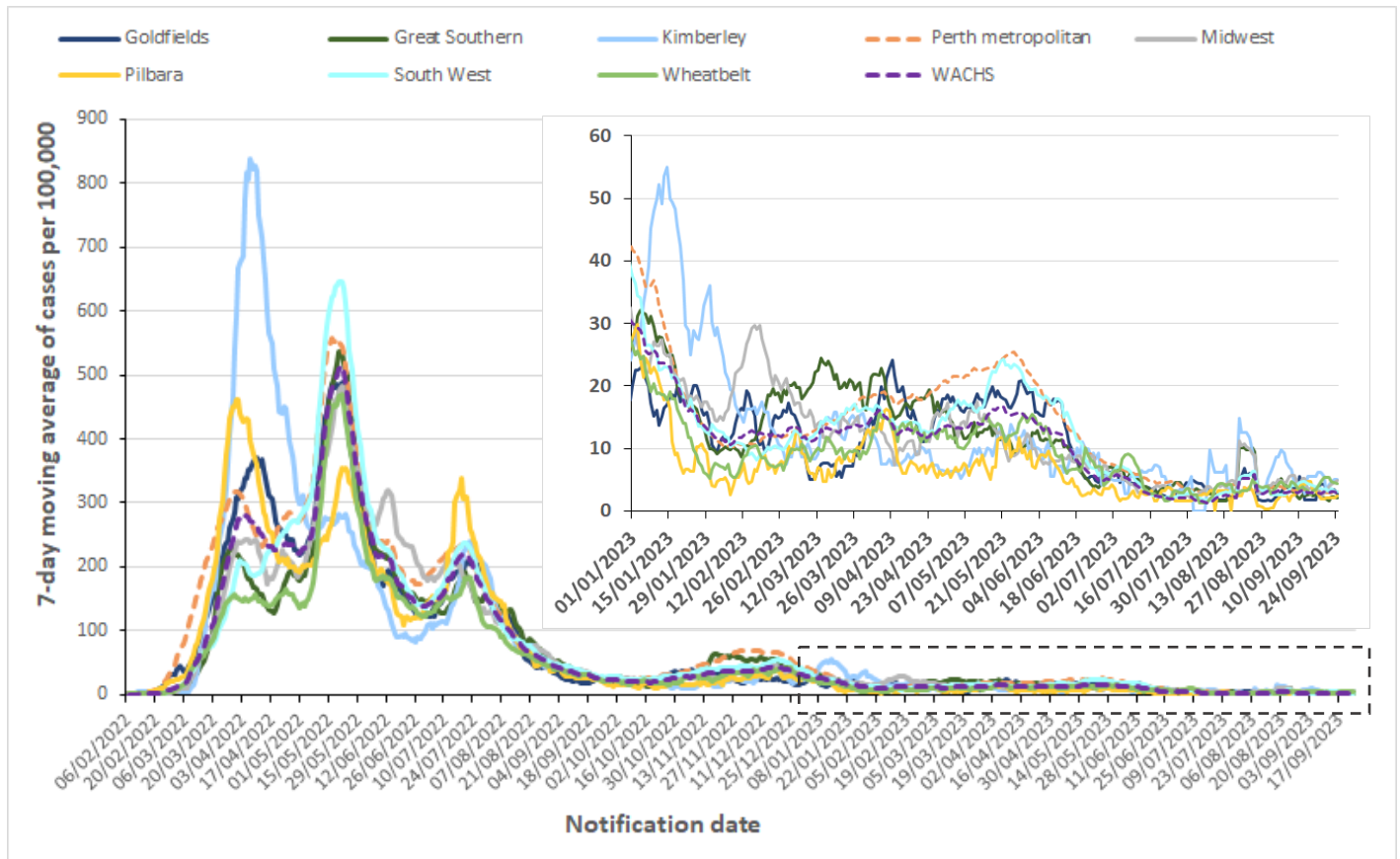
Figure 4. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 age-specific rates per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 06 February 2022 to 24 September 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date that a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24th October 2022, the daily and weekly number of COVID-19 notifications may intermittently be distorted by inclusion of vessel outbreak cases in WA data, irrespective of the place of residence of the cases
 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, 06 February 2022 to 24 September 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date that a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health
 Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS) region includes all non-metropolitan health 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
 Please note for the report week ending 20th August 2023, an additional 107 PCR confirmed cases, all from non-metropolitan regions, were reported due to a backlog of data between June – July 2023.
 Population denominator sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

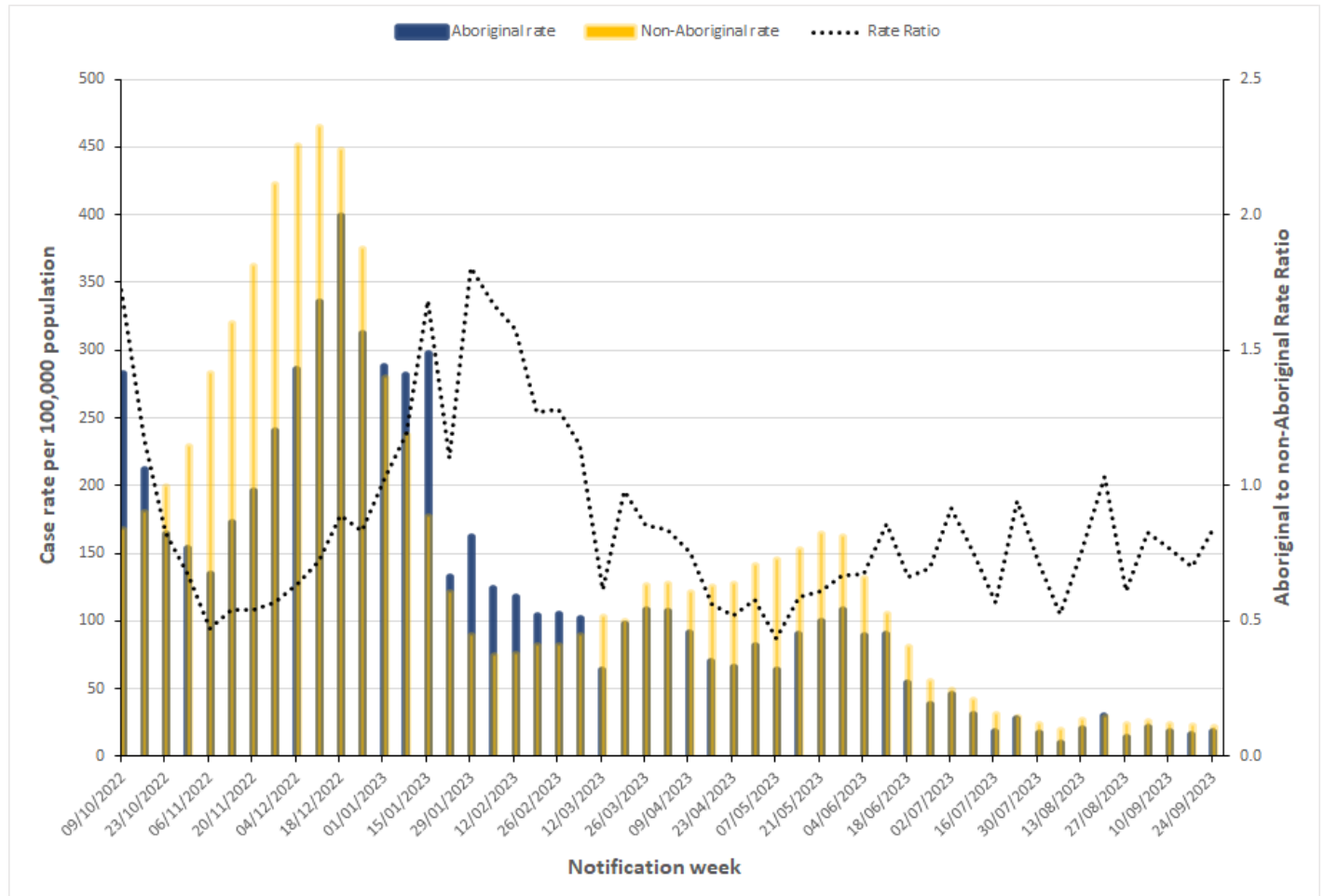
Table 2. Number of COVID-19 cases and rates per 100,000 population by reporting week and health region of residence, Western Australia.

Health Region		Current report week		Previous report week	
		18 September to 24 September		11 September to 17 September	
		Number	Rate [^]	Number	Rate [^]
Perth metropolitan region		455	21	483	23
WACHS Regions		107	20	110	21
	Goldfields	9	17	6	11
	Great Southern	8	13	7	11
	Kimberley	9	25	9	25
	Midwest	15	24	12	19
	Pilbara	7	11	8	13
	South West	39	21	47	26
	Wheatbelt	20	26	21	28
Other*		4	-	11	-
Total		566	21	604	22

Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification date refers to the date that 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
 ^ Rate reported as cases per 100,000 population. The total rate excludes "Other" cases, as there is no denominator population representing this group.
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24th October 2022, the daily and weekly number of COVID-19 notifications may intermittently be distorted by inclusion of vessel outbreak cases in WA data, irrespective of the place of residence of the cases
 Population denominator is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

Aboriginal case summary

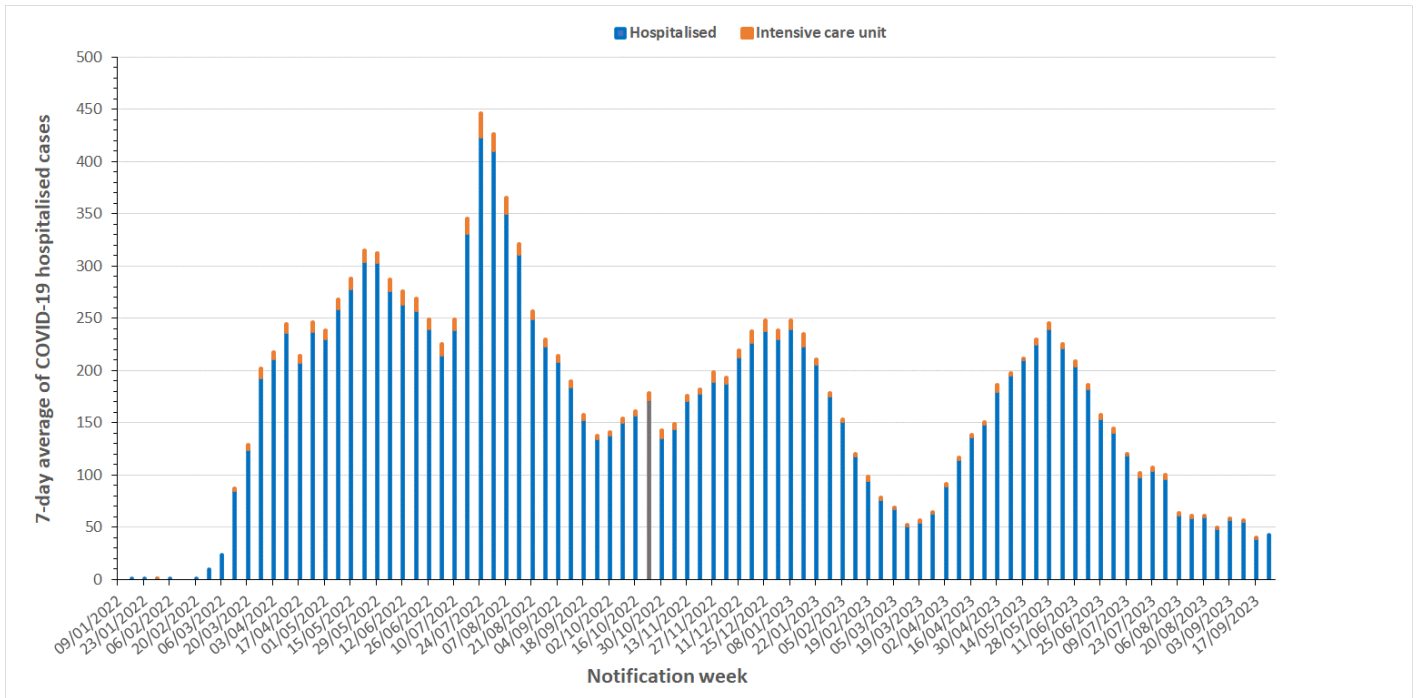
Figure 6. COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population and rate ratio by Aboriginal status and notification week, Western Australia, 09 October 2022 to 24 September 2023.



Notes
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification week refers to data reported over the 7 days Monday to Sunday
 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 7. 7-day average of COVID-19 cases currently in hospital or in ICU, 09 January 2022 to 24 September 2023.



Notes

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset
 Notification week refers to data reported over the 7 days 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 sex and age group, 18 September to 24 September 2023 and 01 January 2022 to 24 September 2023.

	Current report week 18 September – 24 September 2023	Year 2022 to date 1 Jan 2022 – 24 September 2023
Sex	Deaths (n= 4)	Deaths (n= 1,241)
Female	3 (75.0%)	604 (48.7%)
Male	1 (25.0%)	637 (51.3%)
Unspecified	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Age group (years)		
0-9	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
10-19	0 (0%)	2 (0.2%)
20-29	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
30-39	0 (0%)	8 (0.6%)
40-49	0 (0%)	14 (1.1%)
50-59	1 (25.0%)	37 (3.0%)
60-69	0 (0%)	85 (6.8%)
70-79	1 (25.0%)	234 (18.9%)
80-89	2 (50.0%)	468 (37.7%)
90+	0 (0%)	392 (31.6%)

Notes

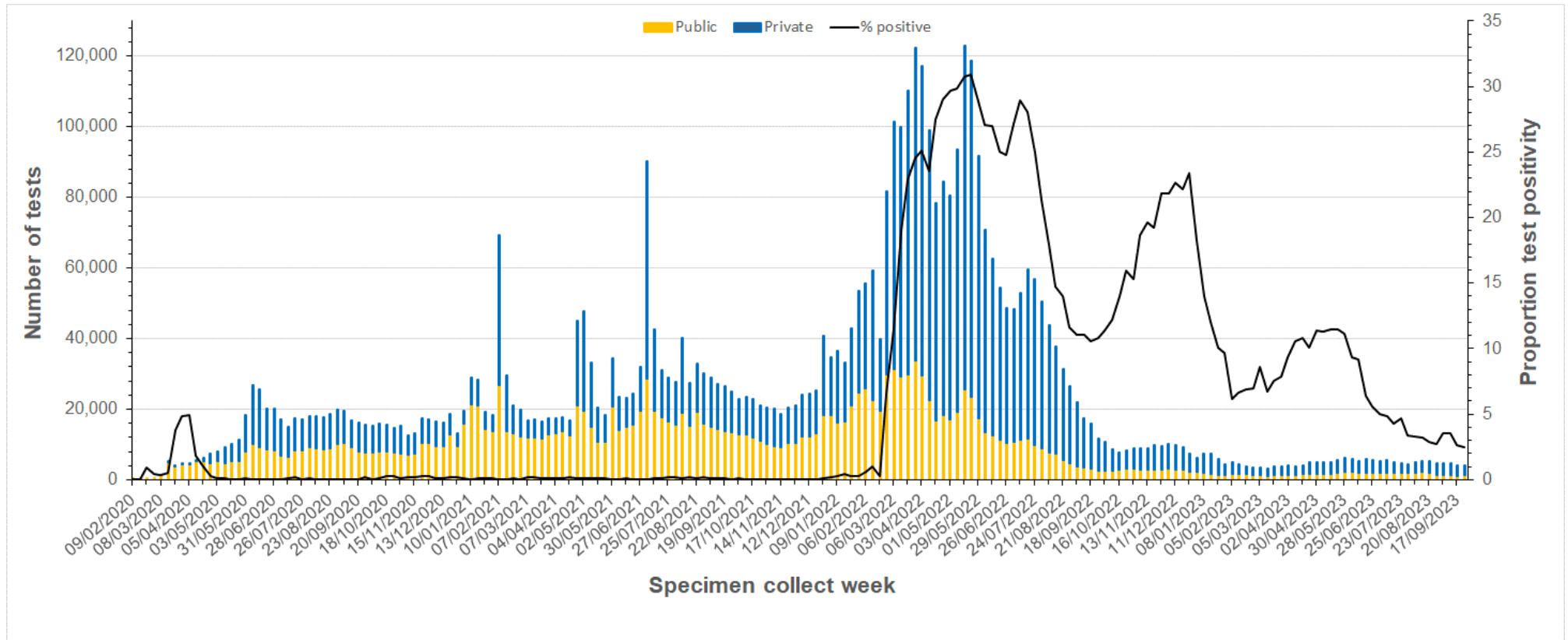
Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

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 8. Number of COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction tests and positivity by laboratory category and week of specimen collection, 09 February 2020 to 24 September 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.

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