



# Press Release

For immediate release

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## UPTAKE OF FREE CERVICAL CANCER VACCINE EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

Uptake of Australia's cervical cancer vaccine through the National Immunisation Program in secondary schools has been highly successful, CSL Limited said today. Amongst the eligible school-based population, vaccine distribution and usage is running at levels not previously achieved in other vaccination programs in this age group. In some states the uptake rate has been as high as 80-90%. CSL has confirmed that in spite of the greater than expected demand, it is able to supply the full needs of the program without difficulty.

"This outstanding result could not have been achieved without the sustained commitment of Federal and State Governments to the program", public health physician Dr Jeffrey Hanna said today.

In addition to the vaccination program in schools for girls aged 12-18 years which commenced in March, a program to vaccinate women aged 18-26 through General Practice commenced in all States and Territories in July and will continue until mid-2009.

"Traditionally it has been difficult to get young people to commit to a course of vaccines in General Practice, but the National HPV (Human Papillomavirus) Vaccination Program has evoked wide interest." Rural GP Dr Jenny May commented.

"Young women are highly motivated to take up vaccination and have responded well to the public education campaign. GPs are reporting excellent uptake of the vaccine in women aged 18-26 years".

"The vaccination program, in combination with regular pap smears, is ensuring that a generation of women is protected against cervical cancer. It is a clear indication that Australian Governments and the public have demonstrated their commitment to immunization. Vaccination is one of the world's most effective public health interventions and young women in the eligible age groups should take up this opportunity to protect themselves from cervical cancer and cervical disease," Dr Hanna said.

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