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## Bubs protected thanks to general practice

A report released last week stating that in the first year of the Childhood Pneumococcal Vaccination Program there was a 75 per cent reduction in Pneumococcal cases in children aged under two years old shows the ongoing success of the Federal Government's National Immunisation Program (NIP). This is largely attributable to general practices' commitment to immunisation, according to the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN).

*Invasive Pneumococcal Disease in Australia 2005* was published in the *Communicable Diseases Intelligence* also indicated a 30 per cent decrease in the overall number of cases reported in Australia.

Australian General Practice Network (AGPN) Chair Dr Tony Hobbs said Pneumococcal disease causes serious illnesses and even death especially in young children.

"The Pneumococcal bacteria is a highly contagious organism that causes conditions such as pneumonia, meningitis and otitis media.

"Being able to vaccinate against these conditions is very important for the health and wellbeing of both children and the broader population.

"77 per cent of all vaccinations take place in the general practice setting. The National Immunisation Program covers a range of childhood and other diseases with government funding provided for babies and children," Dr Hobbs said.

The Australian General Practice Network represents 119 divisions of general practice and eight state-based organisations that provide general practice with essential immunisation support services such as reminder notes, data management, training and essential resources helping to ensure vaccination rates remain at an all time high.

"The statistics in this report clearly show the benefits of a co-ordinated and organised approach to primary health care. Reducing childhood Pneumococcal infection figures by 75 per cent is an outstanding result and in no small part thanks to the general practice network," Dr Hobbs said.

Immunisation is an excellent example of the way the Network delivers local health solutions through general practice.

**For more information please phone AGPN CEO Kate Carnell on 0415 662 266**