



# COVID-19 Weekly Surveillance Report

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## Summary for the week 21 August to 27 August 2023 (inclusive)

In the week of 21 August to 27 August 2023 there were:

- 608 COVID-19 cases reported
  - 111 diagnosed by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests
  - 497 diagnosed by rapid antigen tests (RAT)
- 242 were reinfections (see definition in Table 2)
- 5 new hospital admissions and 1 new admission into an intensive care unit
- 4 deaths, aged 73 - 95 years old
- 4,574 COVID-19 PCR tests conducted

### Surveillance summary

This week, **case numbers** decreased by 9% compared to the previous week. Cases diagnosed by PCR decreased by 29% and by RAT decreased by 3%. Of note, in the previous report week 107 PCR results from non-metropolitan regions were received in a backlog of data from June – July 2023. These have been excluded from the percentage change. **Reinfections** comprised 40% of total cases this week, compared with 31% last week.

The number of **PCR tests** conducted decreased by 13% compared to the previous week, with a 7-day average positivity rate of 2.7%.

The moving seven-day average **case rate** per 100,000 population decreased in all regions, except the Wheatbelt 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** decreased in all age groups, except the 10 – 19 and 50 – 69 years age groups, which remained steady. The highest rates were in the 50 – 69 years age group (5 cases/100,000 population), and the lowest rates in the 0 - 9 years age group (1 case/100,000 population).

The 7-day average of **hospitalised cases** decreased by 18% from 60 last week to 49 this week, and **intensive care unit cases** decreased from 2 last week to 1 this week. **New hospital admissions** related to COVID-19 decreased by 74% from 19 last week to 5 this week, and **direct intensive care unit admissions** increased from 0 last week to 1 this week.

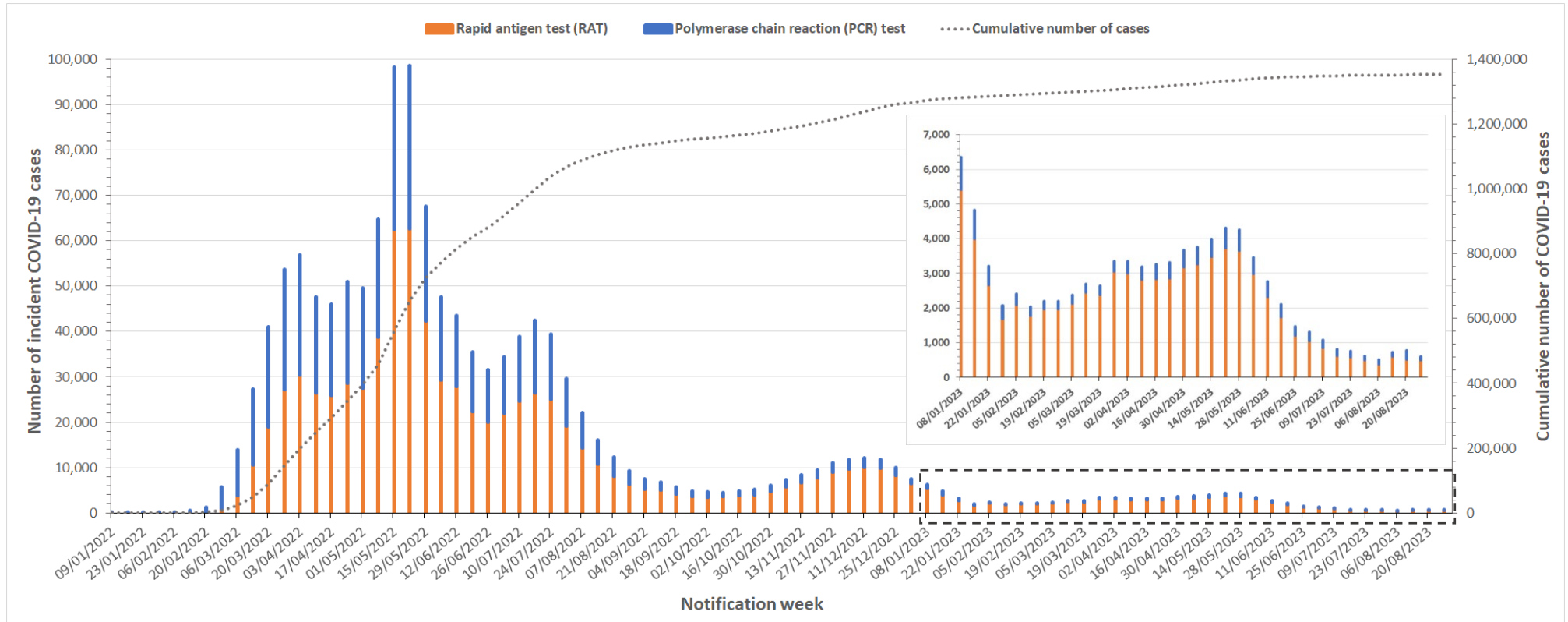
**Deaths** decreased this week with 4 deaths reported compared to 14 deaths last week.

This week, 15 cases were reported in the **Aboriginal population**, a decrease 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 0.6 this reporting week. There were no deaths reported in the Aboriginal population this week.

**Nationally**, the moving seven-day average case rates remained steady in most jurisdictions, except Tasmania and South Australia, which increased, and Queensland and Western Australia, which decreased. Tasmania reported the highest rates (7 cases/100,000 population) and Victoria the lowest rate (1 cases/100,000 population). The rate in Western Australia was 3 cases/100,000 population.

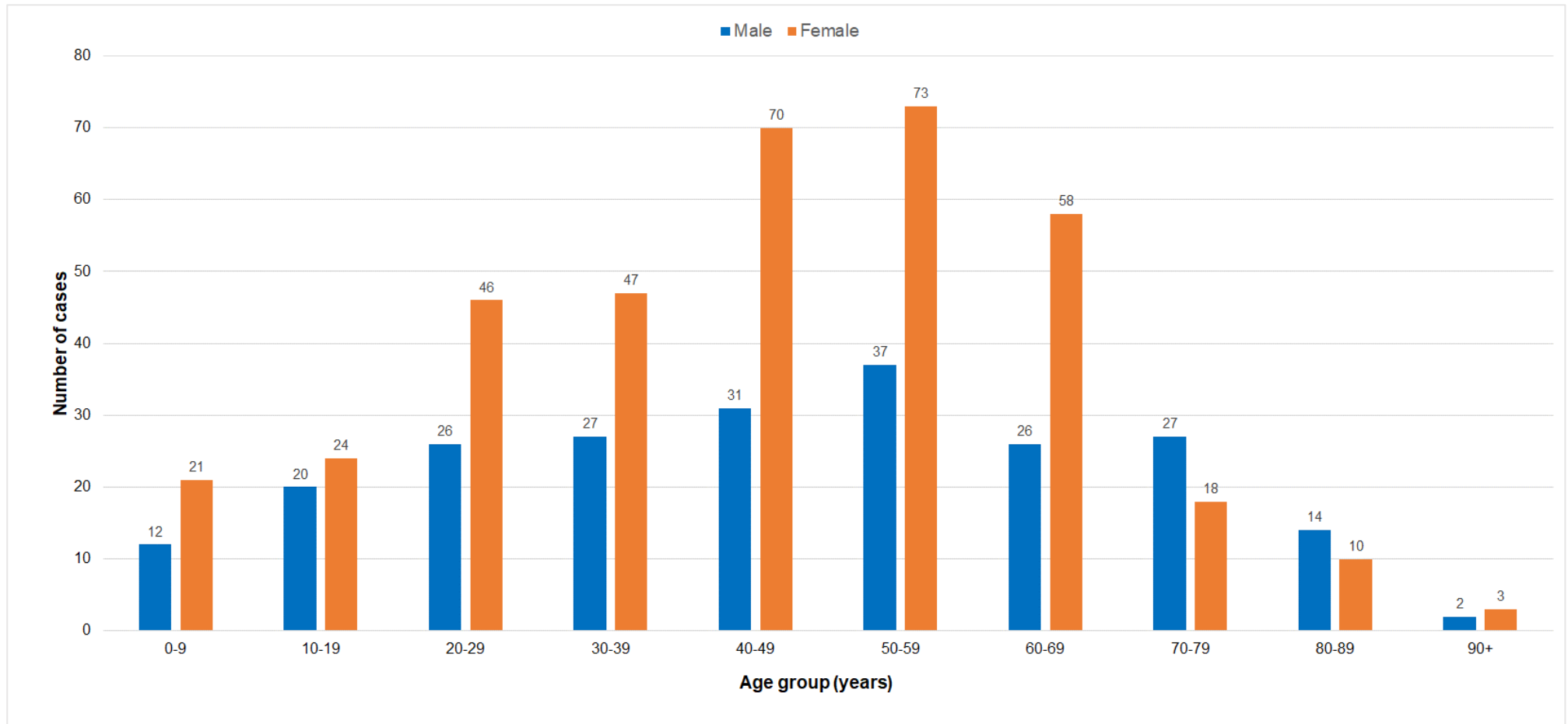
# Case data

Figure 1. COVID-19 cases by notification week and test type, Western Australia, 03 January 2022 to 27 August 2023.



**Notes**  
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset  
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24<sup>th</sup> 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, 21 August to 27 August 2023.**



**Notes**  
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset  
 Following the resumption of large passenger cruise vessels entering WA waters on 24<sup>th</sup> 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=222 (37.5%) Females: n=370 (62.5%)
- Median age = 46 years; range: 0 to 98 years

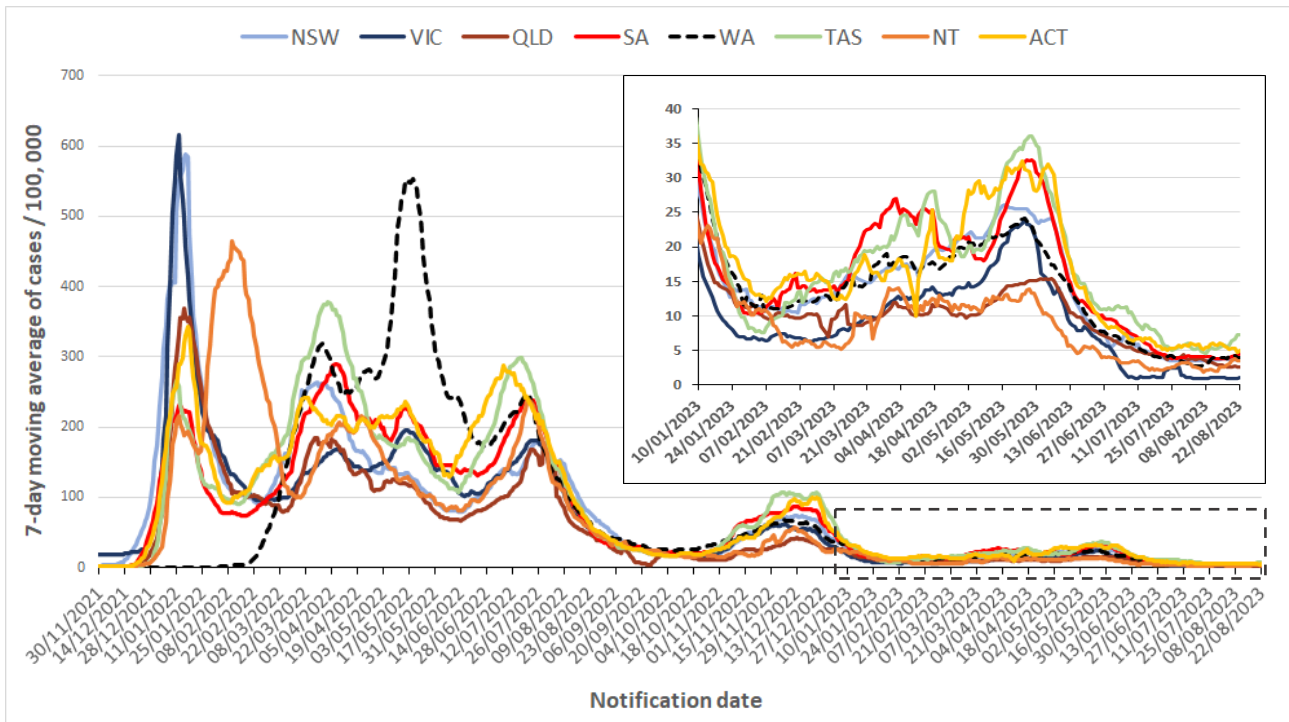
**Table 1. COVID-19 reinfections, Western Australia, 02 March 2022 to 27 August 2023.**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of reinfections *</b>
Mar-2022	14
Apr-2022	31
May-2022	122
Jun-2022	889
Jul-2022	5,099
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	5,049
Apr-2023	5,557
May-2023	7,545
June-2023	3,514
July-2023	1,345
<b>August-2023^</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,562</b>

\* Reinfection definition: between 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 and 8<sup>th</sup> 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 27<sup>th</sup> August 2023 inclusive

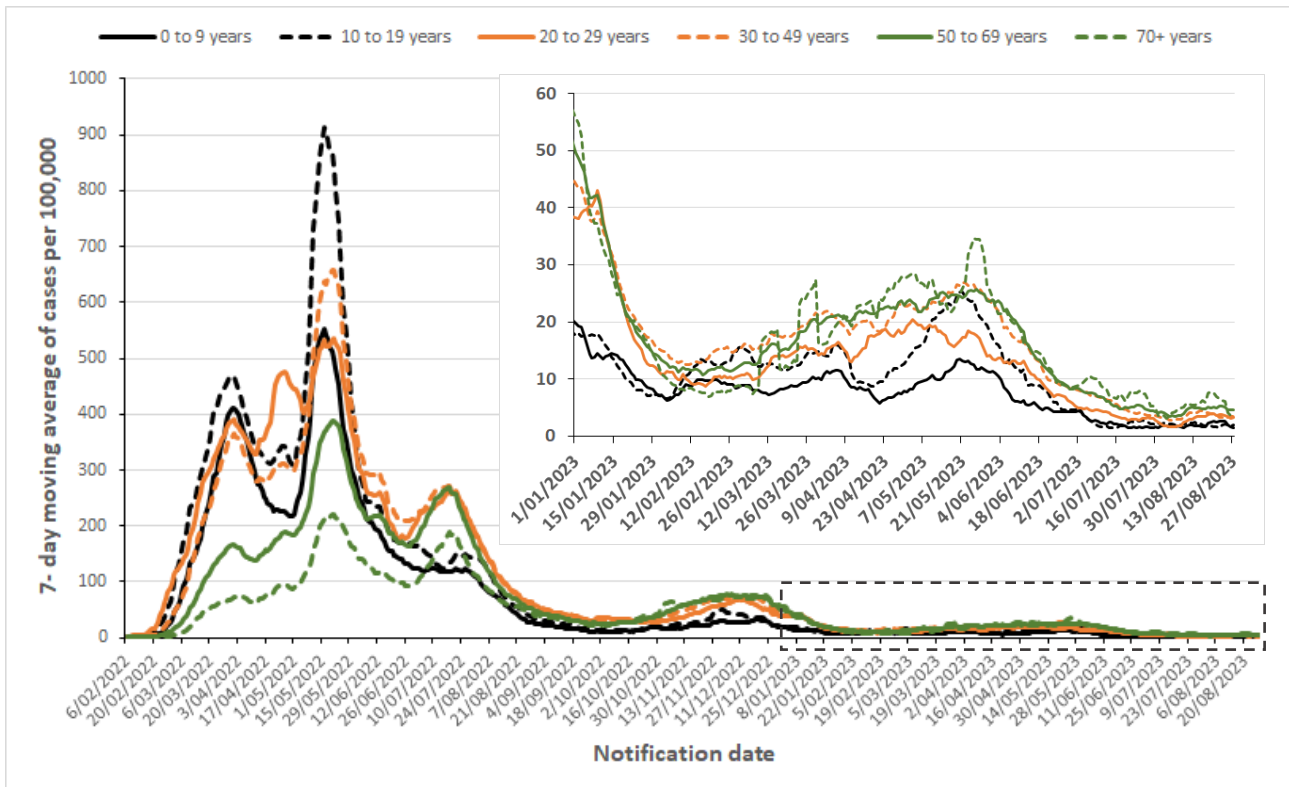
**Figure 3. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population by Australian jurisdiction, 01 December 2021 to 22 August 2023.**



**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.

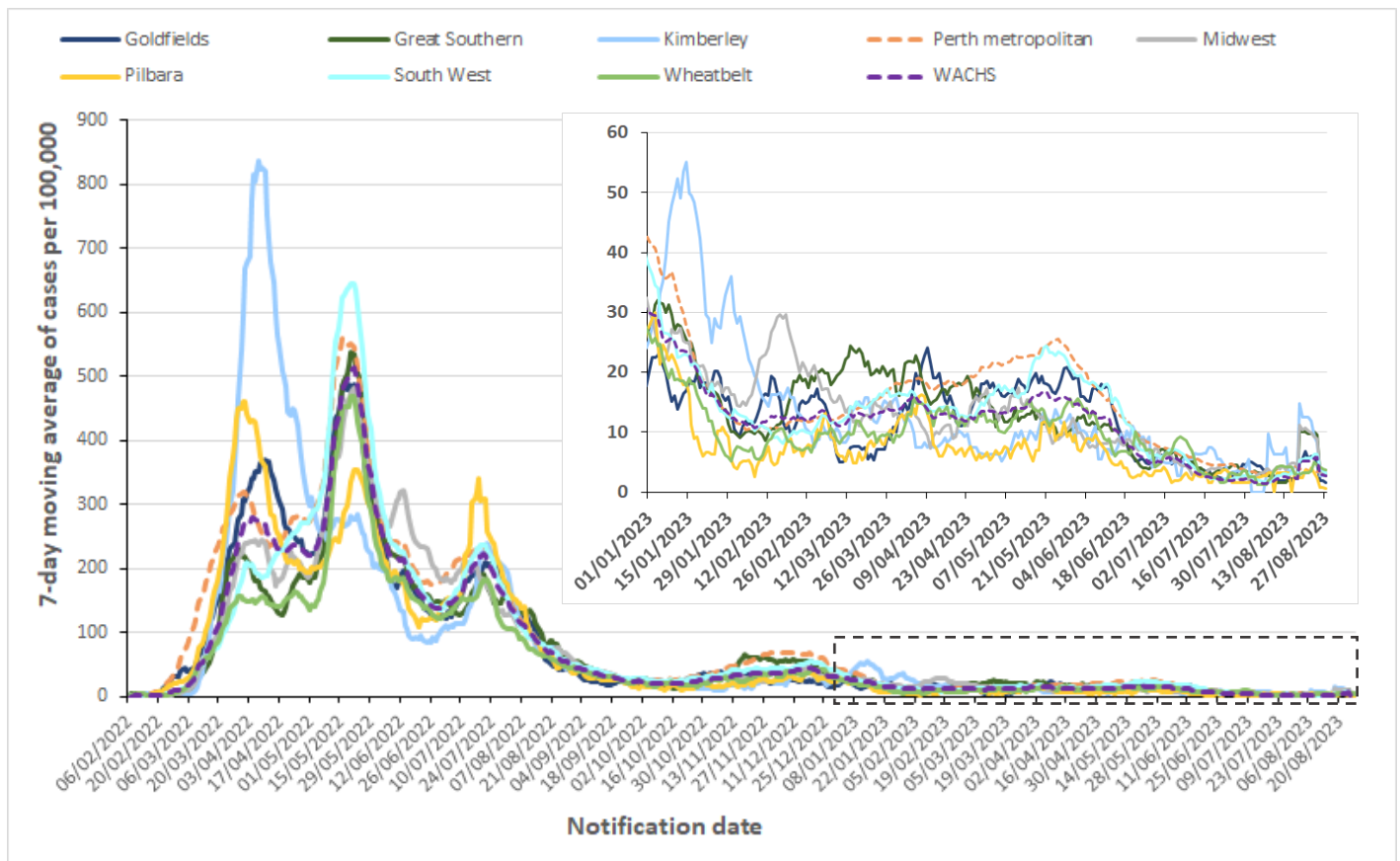
**Figure 4. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 age-specific rates per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 06 February 2022 to 27 August 2023.**



**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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 27 August 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

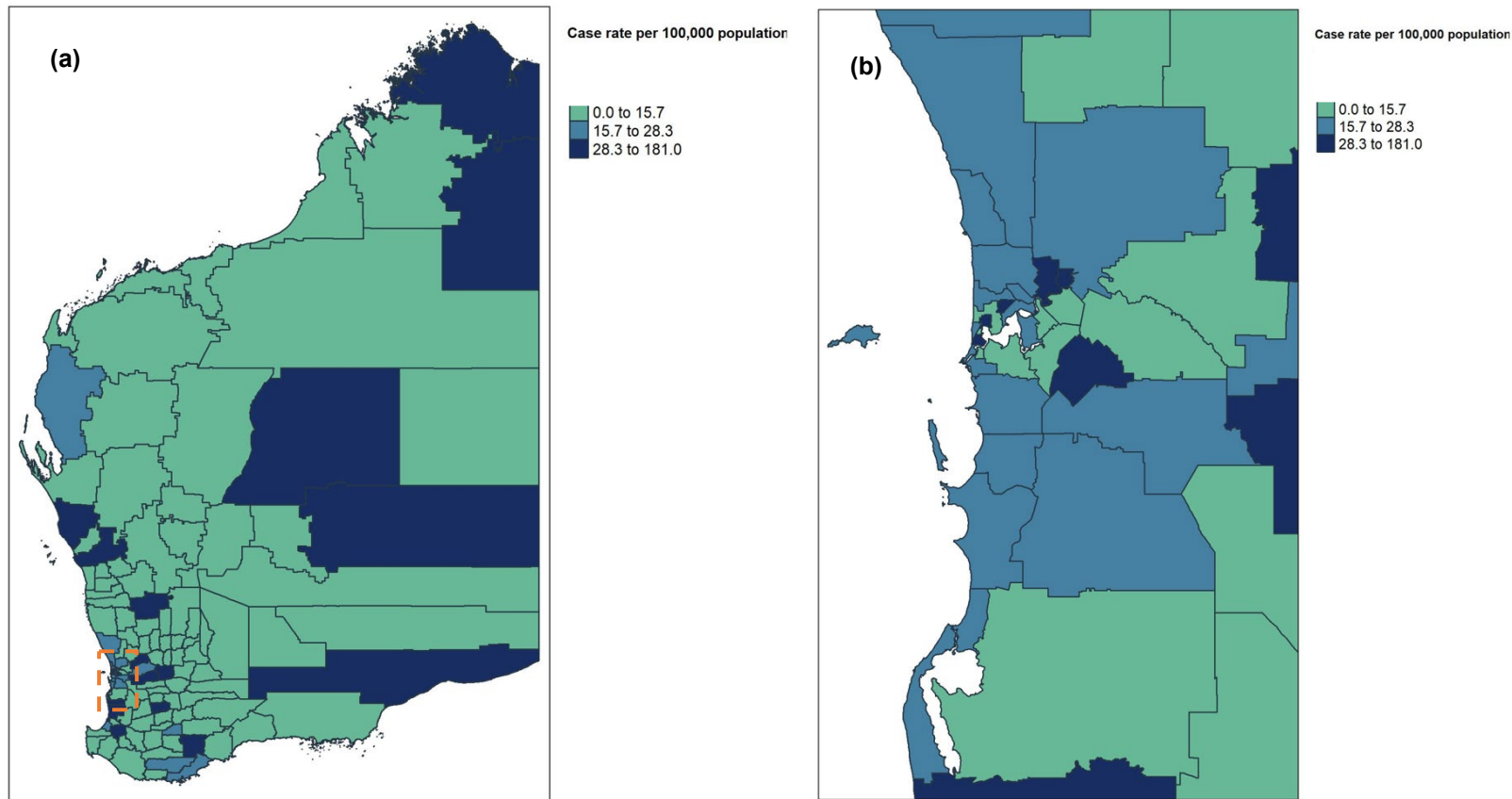
**Table 2. Number of COVID-19 cases and rates per 100,000 population by reporting week and health region of residence, Western Australia.**

Health Region		Current report week		Previous report week	
		Week 21 August to 27 August		Week 14 August to 20 August	
		Number	Rate <sup>^</sup>	Number	Rate <sup>^</sup>
<b>Perth metropolitan region</b>		<b>506</b>	24	<b>568</b>	27
<b>WACHS Regions</b>		<b>102</b>	19	<b>195</b>	37
	<b>Goldfields</b>	6	11	11	20
	<b>Great Southern</b>	12	20	31	51
	<b>Kimberley</b>	7	19	18	50
	<b>Midwest</b>	14	23	40	64
	<b>Pilbara</b>	2	3	8	13
	<b>South West</b>	41	23	72	40
	<b>Wheatbelt</b>	20	26	15	20
<b>Other*</b>		-	-	<b>4</b>	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>608</b>	23	<b>767</b>	29

**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 24<sup>th</sup> 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.



**Figure 6 (a). Locally acquired COVID-19 weekly case rates per 100,000 population by Local Government Area, Western Australia, 21 August to 27 August 2023.**  
**(b) Locally acquired COVID-19 weekly case rates per 100,000 population by Local Government Area, Perth metropolitan area, 21 August to 27 August 2023.**

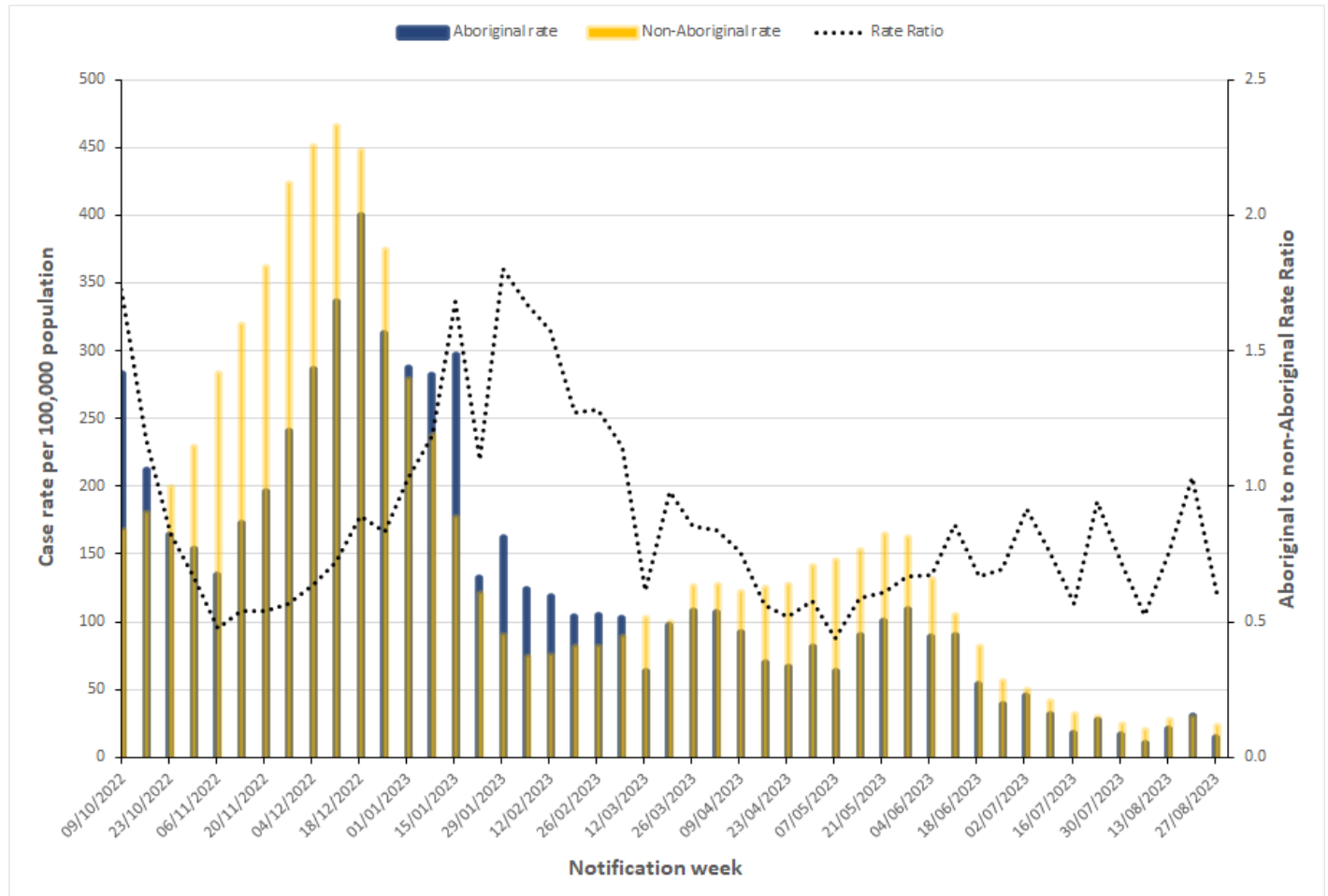


**Notes**

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  
 Areas on the map are defined by Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries  
 Cases are represented on the map according to their place of usual residence in an LGA (no information for specific location of acquisition)  
 Population denominator is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

# Aboriginal case summary

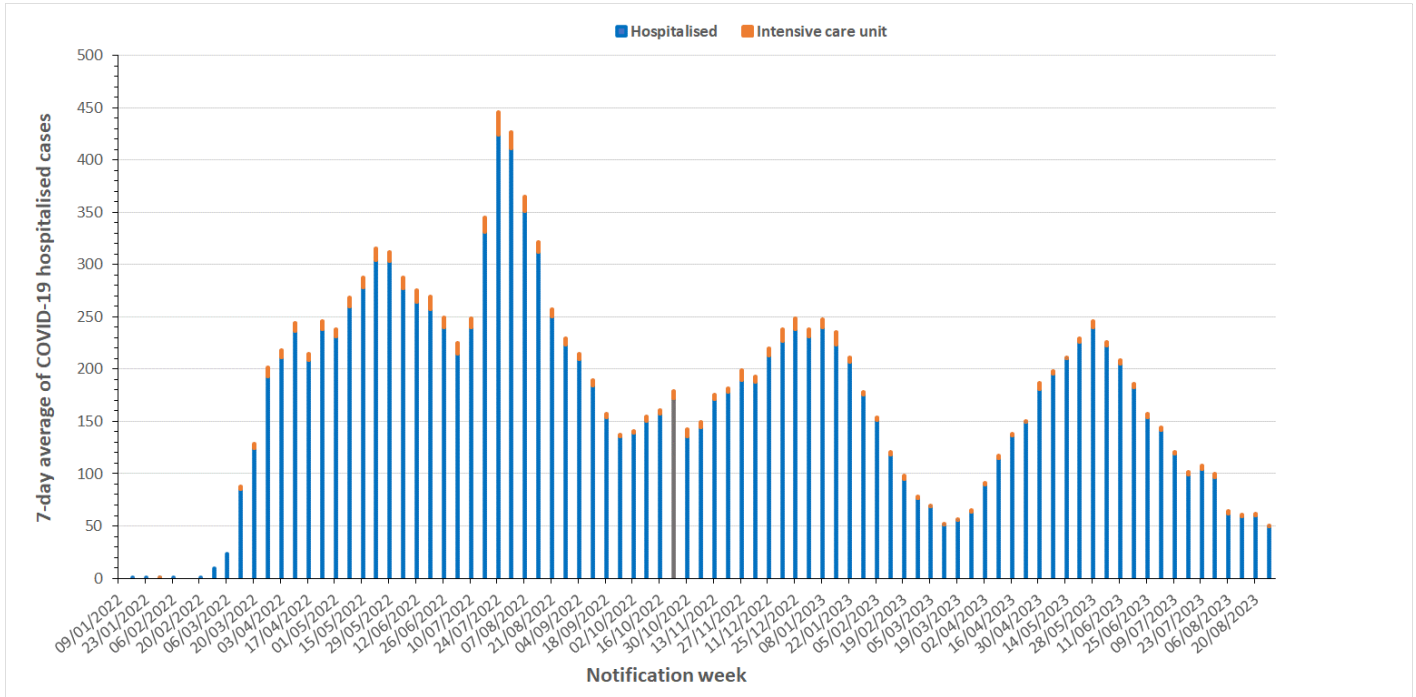
Figure 7. COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population and rate ratio by Aboriginal status and notification week, Western Australia, 09 October 2022 to 27 August 2023.



**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 8. 7-day average of COVID-19 cases currently in hospital or in ICU, 09 January 2022 to 27 August 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, 21 August to 27 August 2023 and 01 January 2022 to 27 August 2023.**

	<b>Current report week</b> Week 21 August – 27 August 2023	<b>Year 2022 to date</b> 1 Jan 2022 – 27 August 2023
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Deaths (n= 4)</b>	<b>Deaths (n= 1,219)</b>
<b>Female</b>	2 (50.0%)	591 (48.5%)
<b>Male</b>	2 (50.0%)	628 (51.5%)
<b>Unspecified</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>Age group (years)</b>		
<b>0-9</b>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
<b>10-19</b>	0 (0%)	2 (0.2%)
<b>20-29</b>	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
<b>30-39</b>	0 (0%)	8 (0.6%)
<b>40-49</b>	0 (0%)	13 (1.0%)
<b>50-59</b>	0 (0%)	36 (2.9%)
<b>60-69</b>	0 (0%)	84 (6.9%)
<b>70-79</b>	3 (75.0%)	230 (18.9%)
<b>80-89</b>	0 (0%)	459 (37.7%)
<b>90+</b>	1 (25.0%)	386 (31.7%)

**Notes**

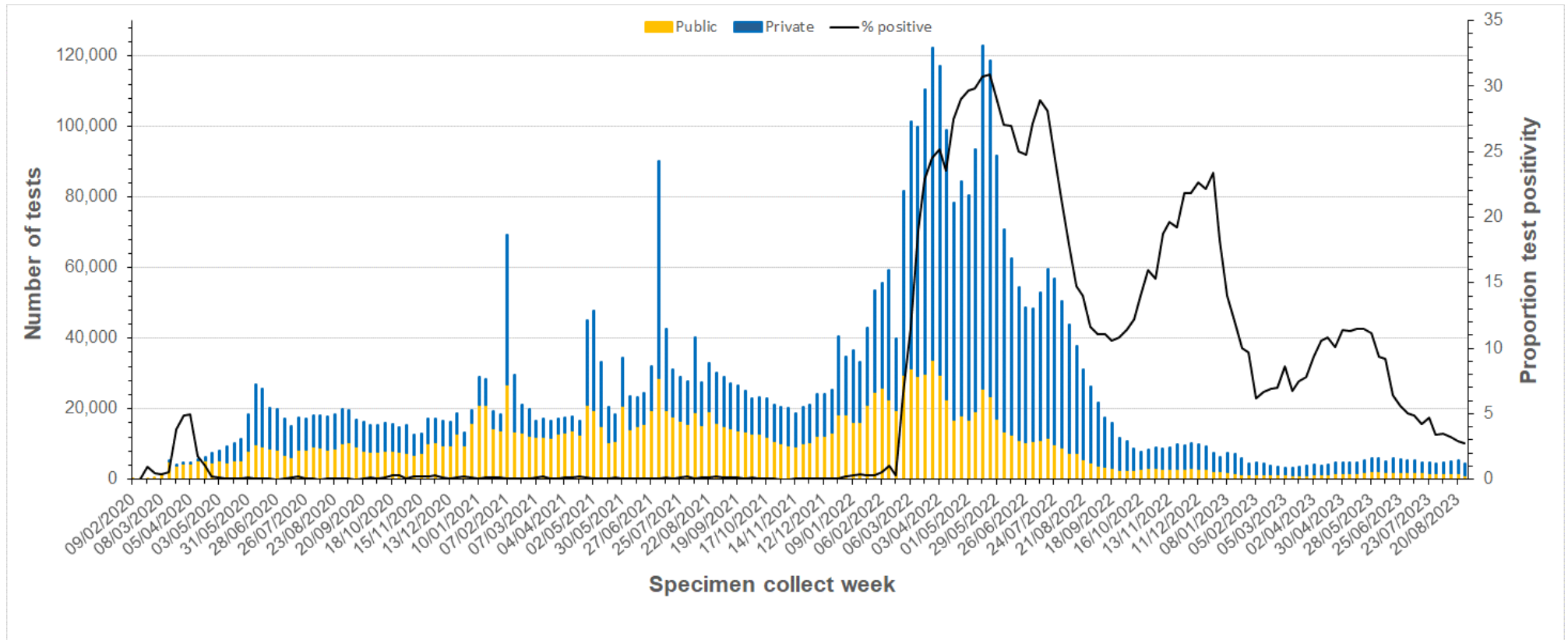
Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

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 9. Number of COVID-19 polymerase chain reaction tests and positivity by laboratory category and week of specimen collection, 09 February 2020 to 27 August 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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