

Your support can build a better future

The value of the research undertaken by APSU is priceless. The information that is collected ultimately helps to treat and prevent serious diseases on a national scale.

You can be part of the APSU team by donating towards this worthy cause. By donating, you will be enhancing Australia's economic, social and cultural wellbeing and improving the health of children for generations to come.

Children are our future – secure that future today.



Further Information

If you would like to know more about the work of APSU, please use the following contacts:

Professor Elizabeth Elliott,
Director

OR

Dr Yvonne Zurynski,
Deputy Director

Australian Paediatrics Surveillance Unit
The Children's Hospital at Westmead
Locked Bag 4001 WESTMEAD NSW 2145

Tel: (02) 9845 3005
(02) 9845 1202

Fax: (02) 9845 3082

Email: apsu@chw.edu.au

Web: www.apsu.org.au

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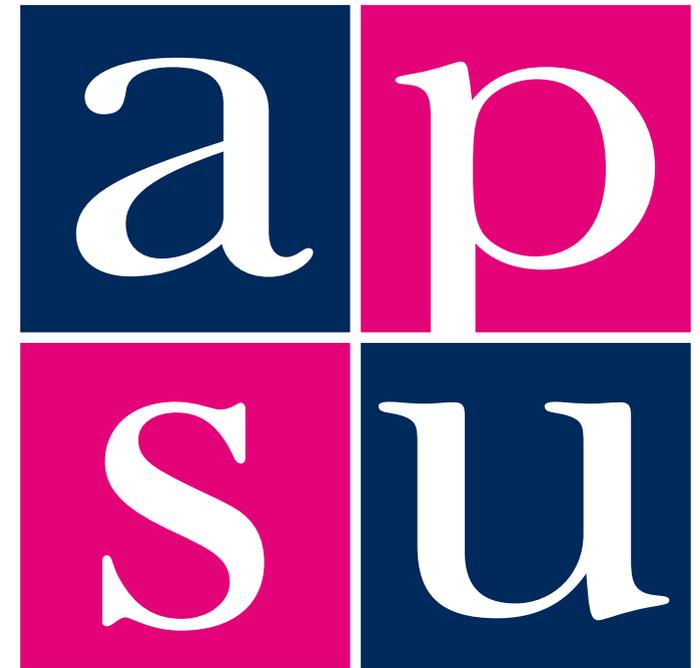
The University of Sydney



**The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians**

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the **children's** hospital at Westmead



Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit



*Generating evidence to improve
the health of Australian children*

APSU improving the health of Australian children

We have all heard of illnesses such as cancer and diabetes in children. But what about the lesser known illnesses that rarely affect children?

The APSU is a unique national resource designed to monitor uncommon but important medical conditions in children. Information on the frequency of these conditions is collected from doctors from around Australia who treat children with infectious and vaccine preventable diseases, genetic disorders, childhood injuries and mental health conditions.

It is estimated that around 1.6 million Australians have a rare disease – many of these diseases develop in childhood.

Although each individual disease monitored is relatively rare, these conditions have significant impact on the sick child and their families. Many of these conditions are lifelong and require long-term care from a range of doctors and healthcare professionals, making them demanding on precious health resources.

Not just statistics

The primary aim of the APSU is to document the features, treatment and outcome of specific rare childhood diseases.

This information can be used for research purposes, to educate doctors and health professionals, to design appropriate prevention and treatment strategies and to correctly allocate health resources throughout Australia.

“The APSU is an incredibly powerful tool to help us track not only rare diseases and disorders, but also to act as an early warning system of new and emerging problems that demand our urgent attention. It provides a timely national snapshot of children’s health and will both guide and inform research to improve the health of Australia’s children.”

**Professor Fiona Stanley AC
Patron of APSU,
Australian of the Year 2003**



Why is the APSU so important?

The work of the APSU directly impacts on the health and wellbeing of Australian children and families. It is the only source of national data on most conditions studied.

The APSU has influenced public health outcomes by:

- Providing data to support public health policy, eg. the APSU study into the adverse effects of using complementary medicines informed the community.
- Providing information on emerging or previously poorly recognised diseases, eg. of children affected by alcohol during their mother’s pregnancy.
- Providing information during outbreaks, eg. identified new bacteria responsible for severe food poisoning.
- Facilitating studies on birth defects and genetic disorders, eg. looking into the causes of Rett Syndrome, a debilitating genetic disorder.
- Documenting mental health problems in children, eg. recording the incidence of anorexia in children under 13 years of age.
- Rapidly identifying cases of new diseases, eg. monitoring for cases of Hepatitis C and HIV infection.