



# COVID-19 weekly surveillance report

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## Summary for the week 18 to 24 December 2023 (inclusive)

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

- 498 COVID-19 cases reported
- 54 new hospital admissions and 1 admission into an intensive care unit
- 10 deaths, with a median age of 82 years
- 3834 COVID-19 PCR tests conducted

### Surveillance summary

This week, **case numbers** decreased by 13% compared to the previous week.

The number of **PCR tests** increased by 3% compared to the previous week, with a 7-day average positivity rate of 7.7%.

The moving seven-day average **case rate** per 100,000 population increased in the Great Southern, Kimberley, Pilbara and Wheatbelt regions, remained steady in the South West region and decreased in the Goldfields, Perth metropolitan and Midwest regions. The seven-day average case rate for the Perth metropolitan area (3 cases/100,000 population) is higher than the non-metropolitan regions combined (2 cases/100,000 population).

The seven-day average **age-specific rate** decreased in most age groups, except the 50-69 year age group, which slightly increased. The highest rate was in the 70+ years age group (9 cases/100,000 population), and the lowest rate in the 10 - 19 years age groups (0.5 case/100,000 population).

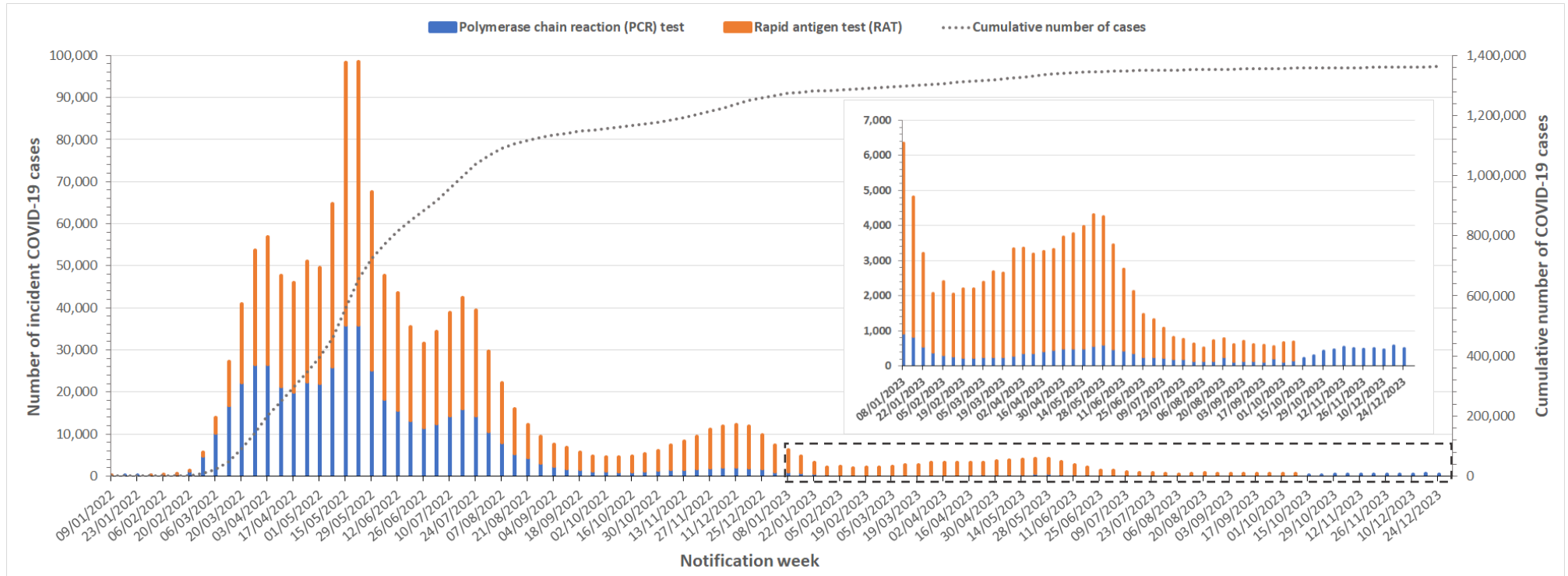
The 7-day average of currently **hospitalised cases** increased by 3% from 157 last week to 162 this week, and **intensive care unit cases** decreased from 8 last week to 5 this week. **New hospital admissions** related to COVID-19 decreased from 62 last week to 54 this week, and **direct intensive care unit admissions** were steady with 1 this week.

**Deaths** decreased this week with 10 deaths reported compared to 21 deaths last week, which were due to a lag in reporting.

This week, 23 cases were reported in the **Aboriginal population**, a slight decrease compared to last week. Case rates in the Aboriginal population are higher than the non-Aboriginal population, with a 7-day average rate ratio of 1.3 this reporting week. There were no deaths reported in the Aboriginal population this week.

# Case data

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



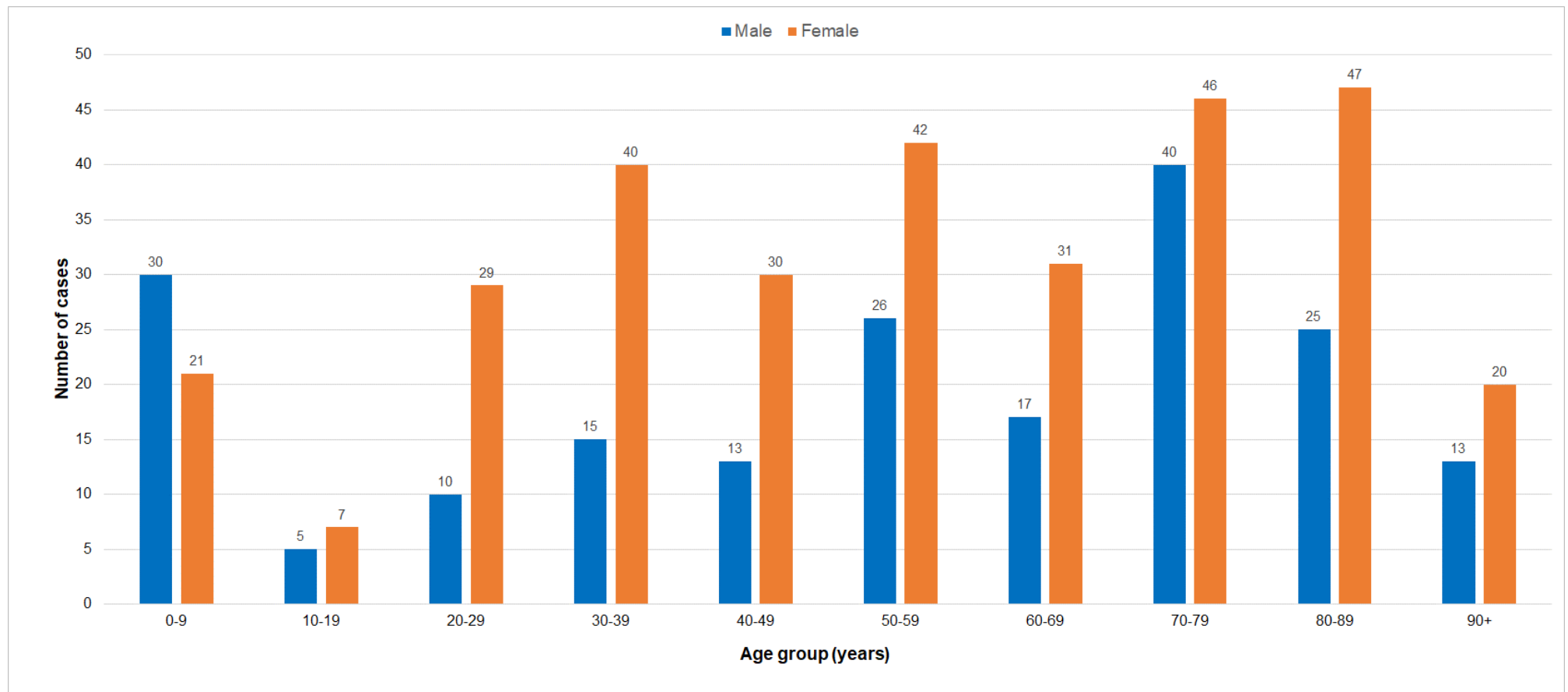
**Notes**

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system

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 to 24 December 2023.



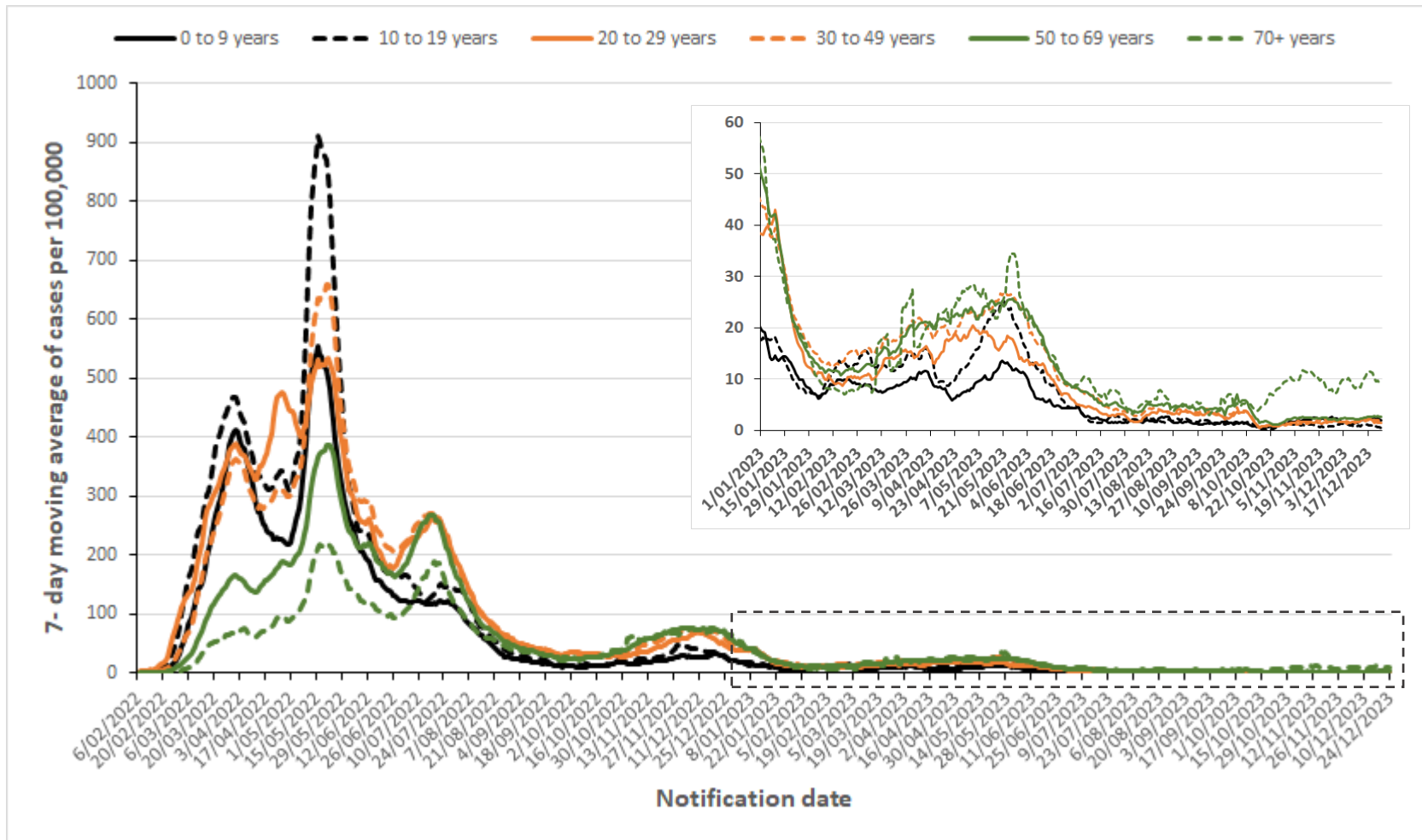
**Notes**

Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system

- Males: n=194 (38.3%) Females: n=313 (61.7%)
- Median age = 58 years; range: 0 to 98 years

Figure 3. 7-day moving average of COVID-19 age-specific rates per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 06 February 2022 to 24 December 2023.



**Notes**

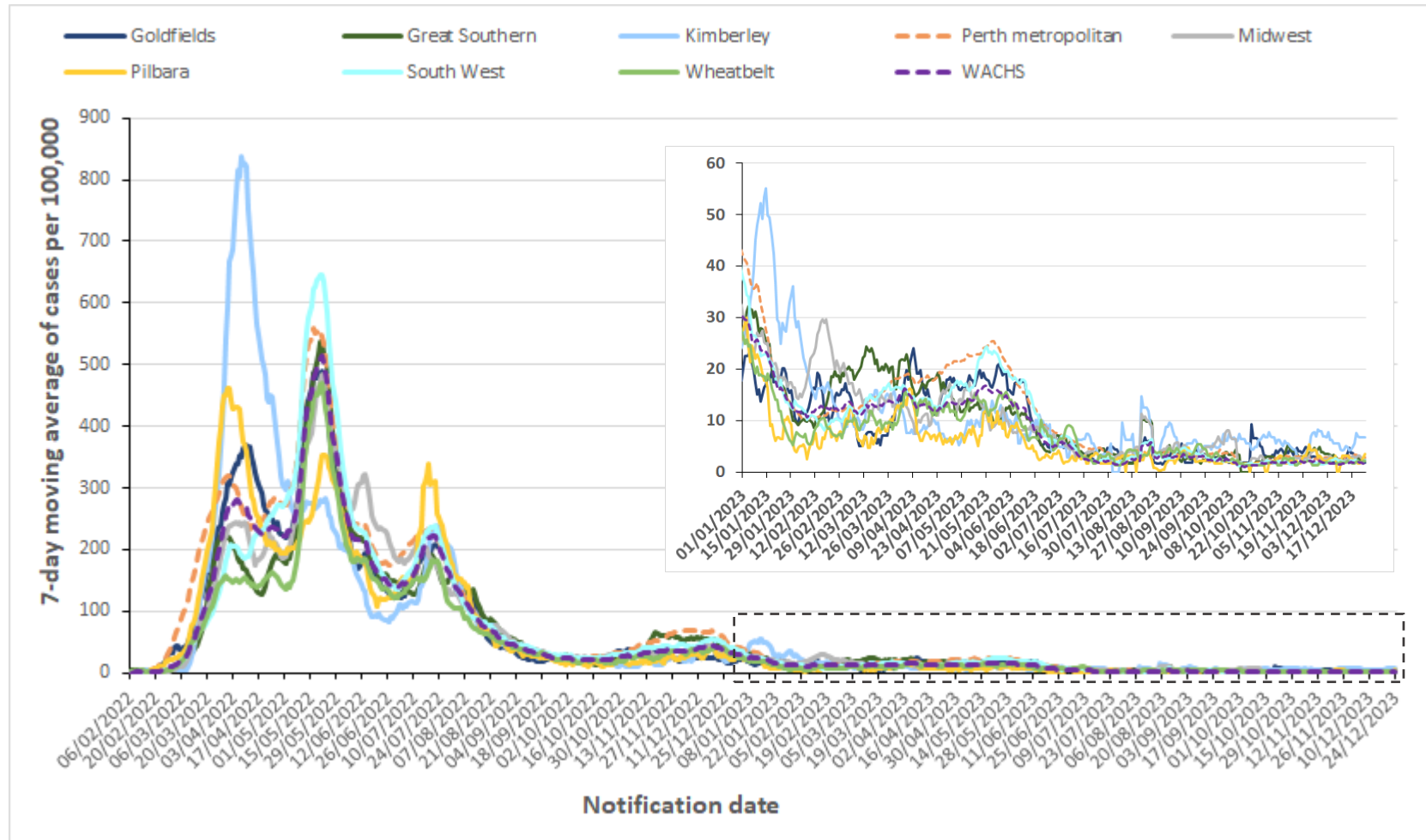
Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

Notification date refers to the date that a case is notified to Western Australia Department of Health

From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system

Population denominator sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics June 2021 estimates.

Figure 4. 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 December 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

From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system

Population denominator sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

**Table 1. 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 18 to 24 December		Previous report week 11 to 17 December	
		Number	Rate <sup>^</sup>	Number	Rate <sup>^</sup>
Perth metropolitan region		<b>425</b>	20	<b>494</b>	23
WACHS Regions		<b>70</b>	13	<b>71</b>	13
	Goldfields	2	4	6	11
	Great Southern	7	11	8	13
	Kimberley	12	33	7	19
	Midwest	4	6	8	13
	Pilbara	11	18	8	13
	South West	29	16	28	15
	Wheatbelt	5	7	6	8
Other*		<b>3</b>	-	<b>6</b>	-
Total		<b>498</b>	19	<b>571</b>	21

**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

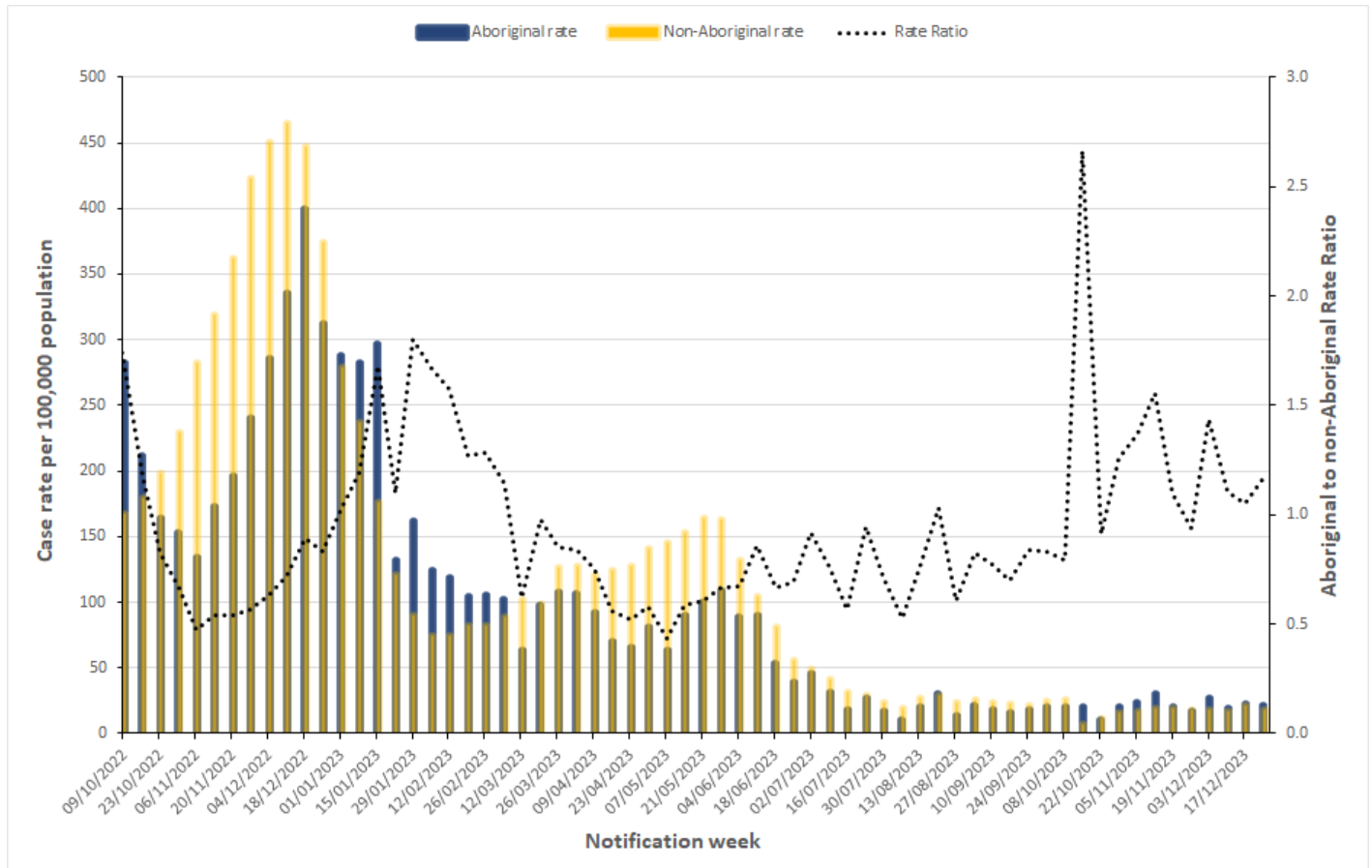
<sup>^</sup> Rate reported as cases per 100,000 population. The total rate excludes "Other" cases, as there is no denominator population representing this group

From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system

Population denominator is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates.

# Aboriginal case summary

Figure 5. COVID-19 case rates per 100,000 population and rate ratio by Aboriginal status and notification week, Western Australia, 09 October 2022 to 24 December 2023.

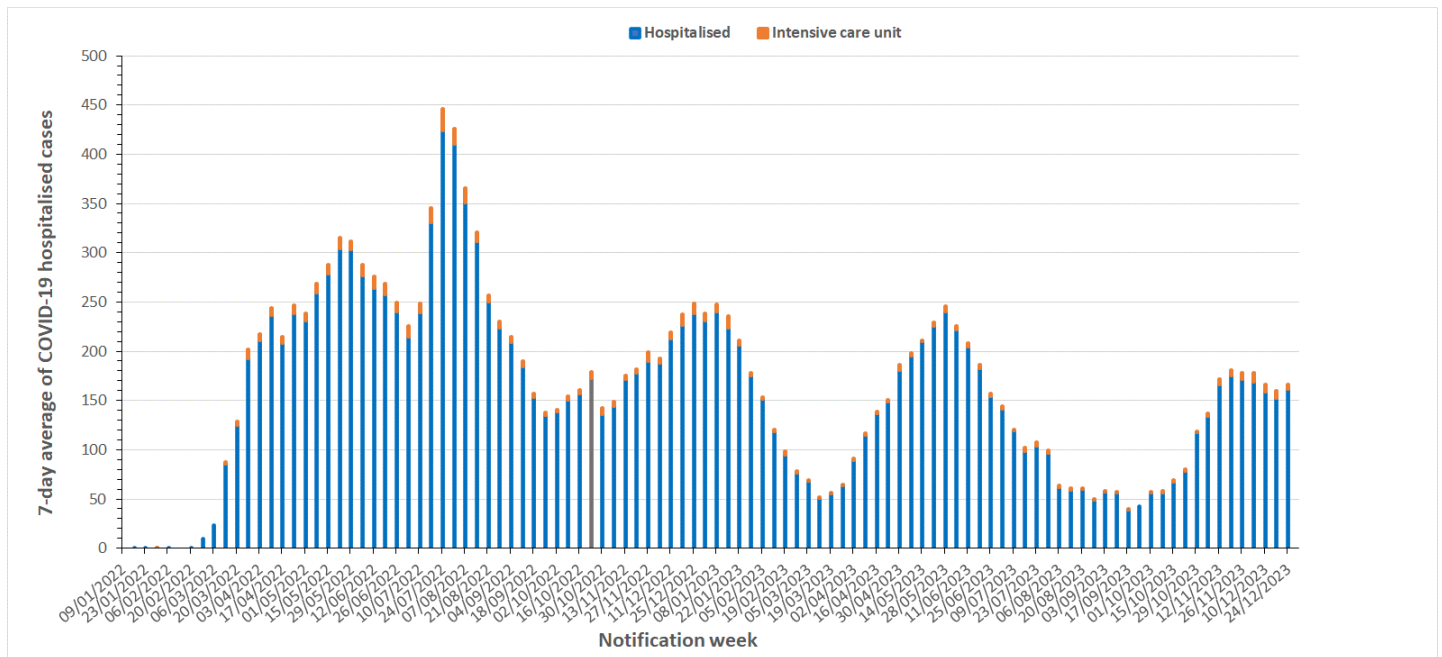


**Notes**  
 Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset  
 Notification week refers to data reported over the 7 days Monday to Sunday  
 Aboriginal status is defined as those who identify as 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (TSI) origin'/'Aboriginal but not TSI origin'/'TSI but not Aboriginal origin'  
 Cases where Aboriginal status was not stated were designated as non-Aboriginal  
 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  
 From 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023, COVID-19 cases detected by Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) are no longer counted due to the closure of the online RAT registration system  
 Population denominator data were sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020 estimates



# Hospitalisations, intensive care unit (ICU) inpatients and deaths

Figure 6. 7-day average of COVID-19 cases currently in hospital or in ICU, 09 January 2022 to 24 December 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 2. Number of COVID-19 related deaths by sex and age group, 18 - 24 December 2023 and 01 January 2022 to 24 December 2023.**

	<b>Current report week</b> <b>18 – 24 December 2023</b>	<b>Year 2022 to date</b> <b>1 Jan 2022 – 24 December 2023</b>
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Deaths (n= 10)</b>	<b>Deaths (n= 1,314)</b>
<b>Female</b>	6 (60%)	637 (48.5%)
<b>Male</b>	4 (40%)	677 (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 (0.15%)
<b>20-29</b>	0 (0%)	1 (0.08%)
<b>30-39</b>	0 (0%)	11 (0.8%)
<b>40-49</b>	0 (0%)	14 (1.07%)
<b>50-59</b>	0 (0%)	38 (2.9%)
<b>60-69</b>	2 (20%)	98 (7.4%)
<b>70-79</b>	1 (10%)	249 (18.9%)
<b>80-89</b>	5 (50%)	486 (37.0%)
<b>90+</b>	2 (20%)	415 (31.6%)

**Notes**

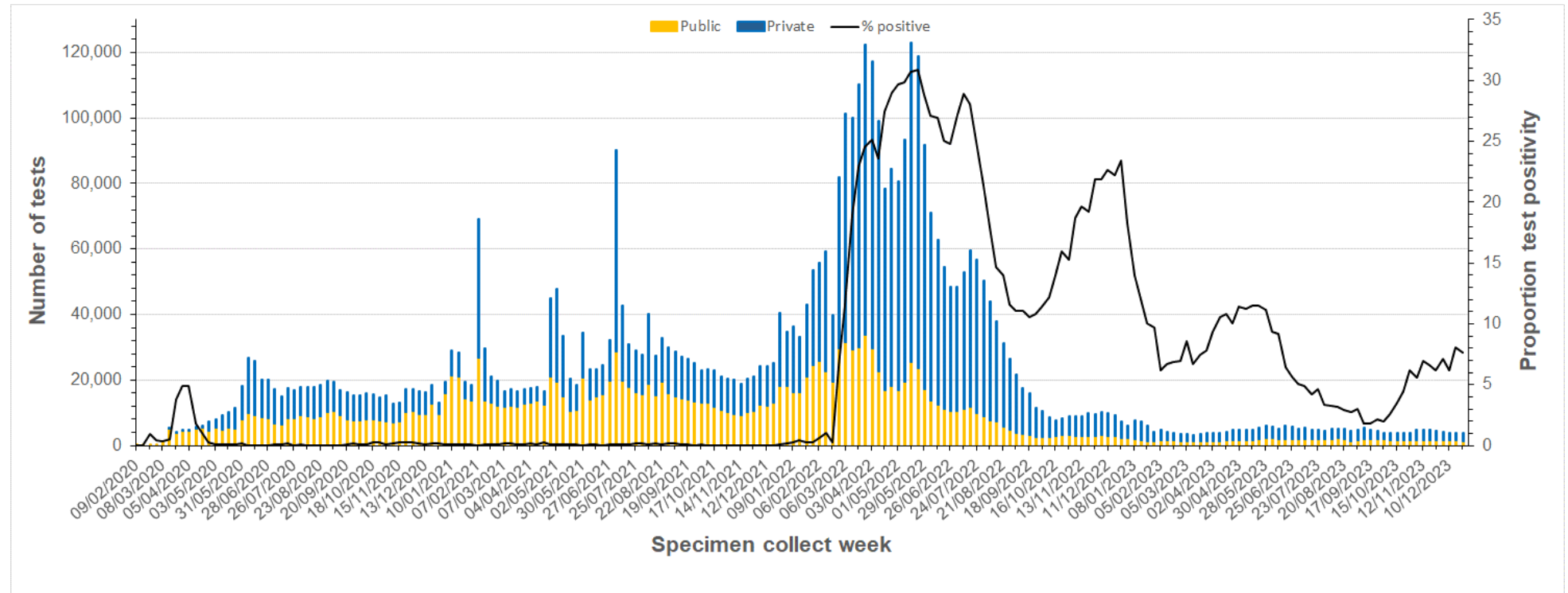
Data sourced from Western Australia Department of Health dataset

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