

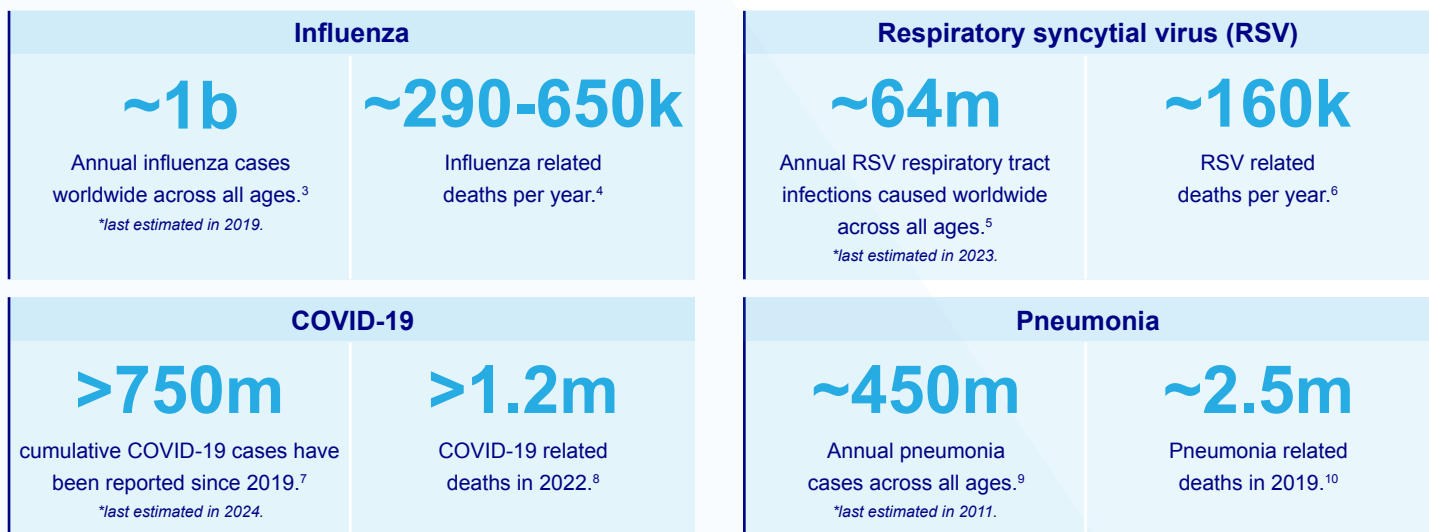


One of the core ambitions for the *WHO Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030)* is to expand immunisation services beyond infancy to include the whole of the life-course and ensure **“a world where everyone, everywhere, at every age, fully benefits from vaccines for good health and well-being”**.<sup>1</sup>

The Immunisation for All Ages (IFAA) initiative calls for action in support of a life-course approach to immunisation, and for national and international health and advocacy organisations and governments to:<sup>2</sup>

- 1** Prioritise immunisation throughout life as a key pillar of expanded prevention strategies and a central component of universal health coverage.
- 2** Remove barriers to access for appropriate immunisation throughout life to ensure all people are protected and no one is left behind.
- 3** Reduce inequities in timely, appropriate, and affordable access to immunisation throughout life.

## Vaccine preventable respiratory diseases are a public health burden



Health systems are managing the co-circulation of multiple infectious respiratory diseases, particularly in the winter.<sup>11</sup> These contribute to severe illness and high levels of hospitalisations in vulnerable populations every year putting additional pressure on already strained healthcare systems.<sup>12,13,14,15</sup>

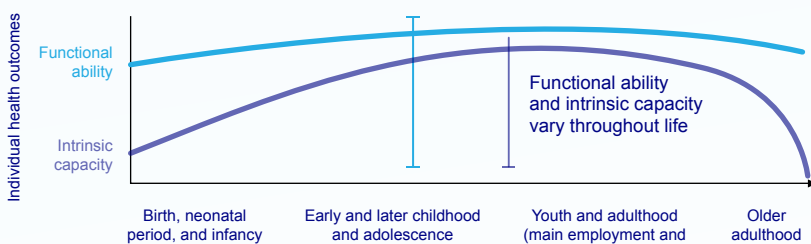
## Older adults and those with underlying medical conditions are at even a greater risk of serious and life threatening consequences of vaccine-preventable deaths (VPD).



With increasing age the likelihood of an adult having two or more chronic medical conditions increases.<sup>16</sup>



During the 2021/2022 winter season, **94%** of US adults who were hospitalised with flu-related complications had at least one underlying medical condition, such as diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and chronic heart disease.<sup>17</sup>



Conceptual framework for a life-course approach to health<sup>20</sup>

**Maintaining functional capacity is central to healthy ageing. Preventive medicine, including vaccination, can play a major role in preserving this.**<sup>18</sup>

Vaccine-preventable diseases are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in older people, and severe infections are associated with the loss of independence, function, and quality of life.<sup>19</sup>





Vaccination is recognised as one of the most cost-effective ways of saving lives and promoting good health and wellbeing leading to significant societal and economic value.<sup>21</sup>

If the universal 75% influenza vaccination coverage target rate is achieved, vaccines could potentially reduce the public health and economic burden in Europe by an estimated:<sup>22</sup>



**31,400**  
hospitalisations<sup>22</sup>



**14,300**  
deaths<sup>22</sup>



**767,800**  
physician visits<sup>22</sup>



**1,015,100**  
working days  
lost annually<sup>22</sup>

Targeting specific adult populations, such as older adults, those with chronic medical conditions, healthcare workers, and pregnant women, can help protect at-risk populations.<sup>1,7,23</sup>

Adult immunisation rates are lagging behind child immunisation rates worldwide.<sup>24</sup>

	Adult Pneumococcal Vaccination Rates	Paediatric PCV-13 Pneumococcal Vaccination Rates
	44%	92%
	62%	88%
	37%	81%
	18%	81%
	60%	82%

<sup>24</sup>as of 2021

Closing the immunisation gaps amongst healthcare workers helps to:<sup>25</sup>



Protect their safety



Prevent the spread of disease



Ensure continuity of care and maintain an adequate workforce



Improve the overall effectiveness of healthcare systems



Strengthening maternal immunisation pathways has been recognised as a means of helping to protect new-born infants, from the day of birth, when they are most vulnerable from respiratory diseases, such as RSV, pertussis and influenza.<sup>26,27</sup>

Community pharmacies help build health system capacity to support increased immunisation uptake across the life-course.



Over  
**320 million**

COVID-19 vaccines had been administered by pharmacists around the world by November 2022.<sup>28,29,30,31,32</sup>

Pharmacists not only provide an accessible pathway for vaccination,<sup>33</sup> but are a feasible solution to building vaccination awareness and confidence.<sup>34</sup> As trusted healthcare professionals at the heart of communities, pharmacists are ideally placed to identify those who require vaccination and engage in conversations that encourage vaccine uptake and improve health literacy.<sup>35,36</sup>

To achieve the goals of IA2030, it is crucial to have strategies and plans of action to build and sustain comprehensive national immunisation programmes that are equitable across the lifecourse and all ages and strengthen health systems.





## What is RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common respiratory infection that can result in serious illness and death in vulnerable populations, including premature and very young infants, children and adults with chronic lung disease or congenital heart disease, and people who are over the age of 65.<sup>37</sup>

## Complications of RSV infection in older adults can include<sup>39</sup>



Pneumonia



Exacerbation of COPD\*



Exacerbation of asthma



Exacerbation of congestive heart failure

\*Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

RSV affects an estimated 64 million people and causes an estimated 160,000 deaths each year worldwide.<sup>37</sup>



**~101,400**

children aged ≤ 5 years globally died from RSV in 2019.<sup>40</sup>



**~336,000**

estimated annual hospital admissions for RSV acute respiratory infections in adults aged >65 years globally.<sup>38</sup>



**60%**

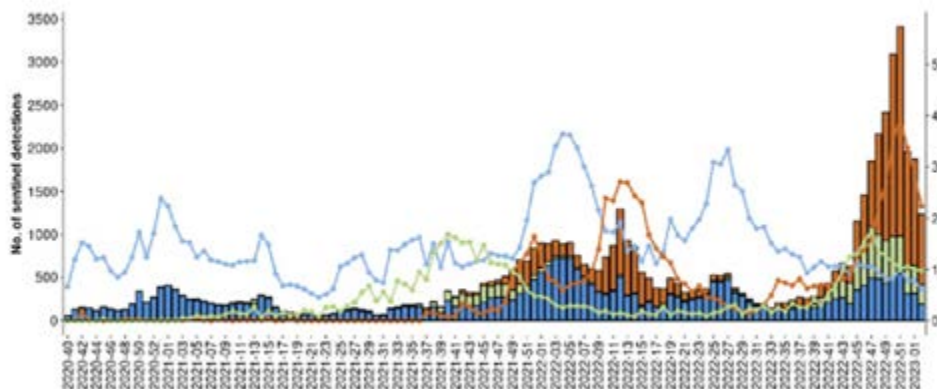
of people aged ≥75 years who were hospitalised with RSV require additional care following discharge from hospital in one US study.<sup>41</sup>

## The impact of co-circulation of respiratory viruses on healthcare systems.

Health systems are simultaneously responding to the consequences of multiple infectious respiratory diseases, particularly in the winter. RSV often circulates alongside other winter respiratory viruses, potentially placing substantial burden on health systems.<sup>42</sup>

### COVID-19, Influenza and RSV detections in primary care sentinel-source specimens by week, WHO European Region (as of week 9 of 2023)\*

- Influenza positivity
- RSV positivity
- SARS-CoV-2 positivity
- Influenza positive specimens
- RSV positive specimens
- SARS-CoV-2 specimens



Immunisation is projected to significantly transform how RSV is combatted, helping to address its existing burden on individuals and health systems.<sup>43</sup>

Vaccination against RSV for all eligible populations, alongside other vaccine preventable diseases, remains an important measure to help protect populations and strengthen health systems and economies.

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