

# Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy

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To be read with -  
Infectious Diseases Policy

## NQS

QA2 2.1.2 Health practices and procedures - Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

## National Regulations

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	88	Infectious diseases
	90	Medical conditions policy
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record

## Aim

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease.

## Related Policies

Enrolment Policy  
Food Nutrition and Beverage Policy  
Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy  
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy  
Infectious Diseases Policy  
Medical Conditions Policy  
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

## Who is affected by this policy?

Child  
Parents  
Family  
Educator  
Management  
Visitors  
Volunteers

## Implementation

## TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE

The **National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule** can be accessed and downloaded from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

Phone number 1800 671 811

The **NSW Immunisation Schedule (DISPLAY IN SERVICE)** and immunisation exemption certificates for medical contraindication can be accessed from <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/>

Local **NSW Public Health Unit Contact Details** are also available at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/>

Note homeopathic immunisation is not recognised.

## Immunisation Records

Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to **provide a copy of one or more of the following at the time of enrolment:**

- a current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations in line with the **NSW Immunisation Schedule**
- a current AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule) in line with the **NSW Immunisation Schedule**
- an AIR Immunisation Exemption – Medical Contraindication Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider for a child who cannot receive one or more vaccine(s) for medical reasons.

The following groups of children have 12 weeks from the date of enrolment to provide immunisation documentation as it's recognised they may need extra time to source records:

- children subject to a guardianship order under the Children and Young persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- children placed in out of home care
- children being cared for by an adult who's not their parent due to exceptional circumstances like illness or incapacity
- children who've been evacuated following a state of emergency
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.

The AIR maintains immunisation records for children up until their 20th birthday and can be contacted on 1800 653 809. AIR Immunisation History and Exemption forms are available on the Department of Human Services website <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/>

Parents/guardians must provide the Service with an updated copy of their child's immunisation record when the child receives a vaccine which is on the National or State immunisation schedule. We will regularly remind parents to do this via newsletters, emails or letters.

### **Immunisation Register**

Our service will keep an Immunisation Register which:

- records the immunisation status of each child enrolled at the Service and
- contains immunisation certificates and other certificates provided by parents.

An Immunisation register template is available from <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/>

If requested, our Service will provide a copy of the record and certificates kept for a child in the Immunisation Register to:

- the parent of the child so they can enrol the child at another education and care Service or
- the Approved provider or Nominated Supervisor of another Service at which the child may enrol.

Information about each child will be kept for three years from the date a child last attends the service.

### **Catering for Children with Overseas Immunisation Records**

Overseas immunisation records must not be accepted. They often differ from the schedule recommended in Australia and a child may require extra vaccinations to be up to date with the Australian schedule. Parents are responsible for having their child's overseas immunisation record transcribed onto the AIR.

Children vaccinated overseas must attend an immunisation provider (eg doctor) to have their overseas record assessed and be offered appropriate immunisations. The Provider will complete an Immunisation History Form which should be provided to the Service. A copy of the AIR Immunisation History Statement should also be provided to the service when it is received by families.

### **Exclusion Periods**

Any child that is not fully immunised may be excluded for a period of time if there is a case of a vaccine preventable disease at the service, or if the child has been in contact with someone outside the Service who has a vaccine preventable disease. We will consider the Exclusion Periods recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

It is the responsibility of families to inform the Service that their child has come into contact with someone with a vaccine preventable or infectious disease.

Parents are responsible for payment of fees while their child is excluded.

## Immunisations for Educators and Staff

It is important that educators remain up to date with their vaccinations in order to protect themselves as well as children in their care. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommend that educators should be immunised against -

- Hepatitis A
- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)

Educators born during or since 1966 who do not have vaccination records of two doses of MMR, or do not have antibodies for rubella, should consider vaccination

- Varicella if they have not previously been infected with chickenpox
- Pertussis (whooping cough). An adult booster dose is especially important for those educators caring for the youngest children who are not fully vaccinated
- Influenza (annually)
- Hepatitis B if caring for unimmunised children with intellectual disabilities (although the risk is low).

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- regularly provide educators and staff with information about diseases that can be prevented by immunisation through in-service training sessions, fact sheets and the Staying Healthy in Childcare publication
- regularly advise educators and staff that some infectious diseases may injure an unborn child if the mother is infected while pregnant through in-service training sessions, fact sheets and the Staying Healthy in Childcare publication. These infections include chickenpox, cytomegalovirus and rubella (German measles)
- ask new employees to confirm in writing that we have provided this information during their induction.
- strongly encourage all non-immune staff to be vaccinated
- advise female educators / staff who are not fully immunised to consider doing so before getting pregnant
- advise pregnant educators and staff to review the Staying Healthy in Childcare publication and consult their medical practitioner to consider the risks of continuing to work at the service
- ensure pregnant educators and staff follow good infection control and hygiene procedures
- consider restricting pregnant educators and staff to working only with toilet trained children
- allow educators who are not immunised to use their best judgement to decide whether they exclude themselves from the service during an outbreak of an infectious disease.

## Immunisation Related Payments for Parents - Child Care Benefit

The benefit applies to children who are fully immunised or have an approved exemption from immunisation. This initiative ensures parents are reminded of the importance of immunising their children at each of the milestones. For parents to receive CCB without their child being fully immunised their doctor or immunisation provider needs to certify that the child:

- is on a catch-up immunisation schedule or
- has an approved exemption from the immunisation requirements. Approved exemptions include medical contraindications and existing natural immunity but do not include conscientious objection.

Information on how a child's immunisation status affects payments made to a family is available on the Department <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/>

## Sources

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

National Quality Standard

Department of Human Resources: National Immunisation Program Schedule

NHMRC. Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services 5th edition

Medicare Australia

Public Health Act 2010

Public Health Regulation 2012

Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for ECEC Services NSW Health

No Jab No Pay legislation Federal Government

## Review

The policy will be reviewed by:

The Management, Employees, Families and interested parties will monitor and review the effectiveness of this Policy annually. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

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| • Reviewed by: Elizabeth Price<br>Date: 07/09/2022 | Position: Director/ Nominated Supervisor<br>Signature:  |
| • Accepted by Committee Member:<br>Date: 06/10/22  | Position: Secretary<br>Signature:                      |
| • Previously reviewed: 24/03/2021                  | Date for next review: 24/07/2023  |