

# **Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy**

*(To be read with Infectious Diseases Policy)*

## **NQS**

QA2	2.1.1	Each child's health needs are supported.
	2.1.4	Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines.

## **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

<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

Phone number 1800 671 811

The NSW Immunisation Schedule can be accessed from <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au>

NSW Health

Local NSW Public Health Unit Contact Details

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/Infectious/phus.asp>

Note homeopathic immunisation is not recognised.

## **Immunisation Records**

Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to provide at the time of enrolment evidence about the immunisation status of the child unless the evidence is provided by another education and care Service.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will record evidence of the child's immunisation status in a register. This information must be kept for 3 years from the date the child ceases to attend the Service unless the information is provided to another Service.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will ask a parent of a child at the Service to provide updated evidence about the child's immunisation status when a child reaches the age for a specified vaccine.

Parents may provide copies of Certificates instead of the originals, including copies of:

- An Immunisation History Statement provided by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR). The ACIR maintains immunisation records for children up until their seventh birthday and can be contacted on 1800 653 809.

Parents/guardians should 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.

The parents of any child who is not enrolled in a primary school must provide, at the time of enrolment, an immunisation history statement by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register showing that the child is fully immunised.

## **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.

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.

An Immunisation register template is available from

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Documents/immunisation-register-child-care.pdf>

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.
- Catering for Children with Overseas Immunisation Records
- Overseas immunisation schedules 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 Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR), if your child is less than seven years of age.
- A medical practitioner, registered nurse, registered midwife, enrolled nurse, or a person authorised by the state/territory Health Officer may transcribe overseas immunisation records.

#### 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.

#### **Immunisation for Educators**

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, require 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
- exclude all non-immune (unvaccinated) educators and staff for the periods outlined under Exclusion Periods during an outbreak of an infectious disease or until they determine it is safe for the educator to return OR
- 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 in line with the **National Immunisation Program** 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 conscientious objection, medical reason, existing natural immunity, or a vaccine is unavailable.

Information on how a child's immunisation status affects payments made to a family, and more information on exemptions is available on the following website -

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/services/acir/family-assist.jsp#N10059>

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

### **Sources**

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

National Quality Standard

Department of Health and Ageing: 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 (as amended by Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Act 2013)

Public Health Regulation 2012

Public Health Amendment (Vaccination of Children Attending Child Care Facilities) Regulation 2013

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually. The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Party