

Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy

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.
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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

Implementation

The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE can be accessed and downloaded from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

Immunise Australia National Hotline

1800 671 811

Queensland Health Immunisation Program

The Queensland Health Immunisation Program provides information for service providers about ordering vaccine for the National Immunisation Program and other state vaccine programs.

Postal: PO Box 2368, Fortitude Valley BC Queensland 4006

Telephone: 07 3328 9888

Facsimile: 07 3328 9720

Immunisation Records

New enrolments

1) Full immunisation – refuse enrolment if immunisations not up to date

Parents who wish to enrol their child are required to provide:

- a copy of a current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is fully immunised for their age in line with the National Immunisation Schedule
or
- a signed letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg a GP or immunisation nurse) stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations) in line with the QLD Immunisation Schedule using the template available at www.health.qld.gov.au

Children who are not fully vaccinated may only be enrolled if they can also provide at least one of:

- 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 National Immunisation Schedule. The Immunisation Provider must provide information about the catch up schedule to finalise enrolment
- 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. (Families must then obtain an updated AIR Immunisation History Statement to finalise enrolment.)

Please note the Personal Health Book (Red Book) from Qld Health cannot be accepted.

2) Conditionally accept enrolment/attendance of children with incomplete immunisation records

We may enrol children who have incomplete immunisation records, and allow them to attend the service, if parents provide a copy of:

- 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 QLD Immunisation Schedule within four weeks of enrolment
or
- a signed letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg a GP or immunisation nurse) stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations) in line with the QLD

Immunisation Schedule using the template available at www.health.qld.gov.au within four weeks of enrolment

If relevant, the Statement/letter may need to be supported by:

- 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. (Families must then obtain an updated AIR Immunisation History Statement to finalise enrolment.)
- an AIR Immunisation History Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule. The Immunisation Provider must provide information about the catch up schedule to finalise enrolment

Please note the Personal Health Book (Red Book) from Qld Health cannot be accepted.

If these documents are not provided within four weeks the child's enrolment and attendance at the service will be cancelled.

AIR Immunisation History and Exemption forms are available on the Department of Human Services website <http://www.humanservices.gov.au>/ The AIR can be contacted on 1800 653 809 or email air@humanservices.gov.au

3) Accept enrolment of children with incomplete immunisation records but refuse attendance until proof provided

We may enrol children who have incomplete immunisation records but they will be unable to attend the service until parents provide a copy of:

- 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 QLD Immunisation Schedule within four weeks of enrolment
or
- a signed letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg a GP or immunisation nurse) stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations) in line with the QLD Immunisation Schedule using the template available at www.health.qld.gov.au within four weeks of enrolment

If relevant, the Statement/letter may need to be supported by:

- 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. (Families must then obtain an updated AIR Immunisation History Statement to finalise enrolment.)
- an AIR Immunisation History Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule. The Immunisation Provider must provide information about the catch up schedule to finalise enrolment

Please note the Personal Health Book (Red Book) from Qld Health cannot be accepted.

If these documents are not provided within four weeks of enrolment, the child's enrolment at the service will be cancelled.

AIR Immunisation History and Exemption forms are available on the Department of Human Services website <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/> The AIR can be contacted on 1800 653 809 or email air@humanservices.gov.au

Existing enrolments

Families with children already enrolled at the service as at 1 January 2016 must provide an updated copy of their child's immunisation record within four weeks of their child receiving a vaccine which is on the Qld Immunisation Schedule (ie after the child passes the 2, 4, 6, 12, 18 months and 4 years milestones). We will regularly remind parents to do this via newsletters, emails or letters.

Unless a family has already provided the updated information, the Nominated Supervisor will request the current record in writing (Attachment A), and families will have four weeks from the date of the letter to provide a copy of:

- 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 QLD Immunisation Schedule
or
- a signed letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg a GP or immunisation nurse) stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations) in line with the QLD Immunisation Schedule using the template available at www.health.qld.gov.au

If relevant, the Statement/letter may need to be supported by:

- 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. (Families must then obtain an updated AIR Immunisation History Statement)
- an AIR Immunisation History Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule. The Provider must provide information about the catch up schedule.
- If this information is not provided within four weeks, the child's enrolment at the service may be cancelled or they may be unable to attend until the information is provided

Records

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure there is a record (eg register) of the immunisation status of each child and that supporting evidence (eg AIR statements) are maintained.

If requested, our Service will provide a copy of the record and certificates kept for a child 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.

Families 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.

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.

Note the Nominated Supervisor may 'direct' a parent/guardian to remove their unvaccinated child from the service (and not send them to any other service) during the relevant Exclusion Period if they're not vaccinated against a 'prescribed' condition and they do not voluntarily remove the child. Currently measles is a prescribed condition. Before doing this the Nominated Supervisor will seek advice and approval from a doctor or Qld Health public health medical officer, including about the required Exclusion Period. The Nominated Supervisor will advise parents/guardians of the Exclusion Period for the illness and the process for their child to return to the service.

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, 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
- 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 Subsidy

Families are eligible for Child care Subsidy if their child is fully immunised, on an approved catch-up schedule or has an approved exemption from immunisation. Approved exemptions include a general practitioner has certified the child can't receive one or more vaccine(s) for medical reasons or the child has a natural immunity, but do not include conscientious objection.

This initiative reminds parents about the importance of immunising their children at each of the milestones. Further information is available at <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/>

Sources

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

National Quality Standard

National Immunisation Program Schedule

Staying Healthy 5th edition NHMRC

Medicare Australia

Queensland Health: Queensland Vaccination Legislation - A Handbook for Early Childhood

Public Health Act 2005 (eg Chapter 5)

Public Health Regulation 2018 (eg Schedule 4)

A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999 (includes No Jab No Pay)

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 14/01/2020

Date for next review: 13/01/2021

<INSERT FAMILY NAME AND ADDRESS>

Dear <Insert names>

As outlined in our Immunisation and Disease Prevention Policy, families must provide an updated copy of their child's immunisation record within four weeks of their child receiving a vaccine which is on the Queensland Immunisation Schedule (ie after the child passes the 2, 4, 6, 12, 18 months and 4 years milestones). As your child has recently passed a vaccination milestone, please provide a copy of:

- 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 QLD Immunisation Schedule

or

- a signed letter from a recognised immunisation provider (eg a GP or immunisation nurse) stating that the child is up to date with their scheduled immunisations) in line with the QLD Immunisation Schedule using the template available at www.health.qld.gov.au

If relevant, the Statement/letter may need to be supported by:

- 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. (Families must then obtain an updated AIR Immunisation History Statement)
- an AIR Immunisation History Form which has been certified by an immunisation provider that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule. The Provider must provide information about the catch up schedule.

If this information is not provided within four weeks, your child's enrolment at the service may be cancelled or your child may be unable to attend until the information is provided.

You may also be aware that under the Australian Government's 'No Jab No Pay' law, your family assistance payments may be affected if your child is not fully immunised.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Nominated Supervisor

<Insert Date>