

IMMUNISATION POLICY

When groups of children are together, illness and disease can spread rapidly. Preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough can have serious health consequences for children, and especially young children. Staff members who work in an early childhood education and care service are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses. Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
88	Infectious diseases
90	Medical conditions policy
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
172(2)(g)	a notice stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW	
174(2)(a)	Notification to the Regulatory Authority- (a) any serious incident at the approved education and care service

RELATED POLICIES

Control of Infectious Disease Policy Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Orientation of Families Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy Sick Children Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to manage and prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and diseases. Our Service has a duty of care to ensure that all children, families, and educators are protected from infectious diseases whilst at the Service. Along with maintaining a clean and hygienic environment, this also includes notifying families and educators when an excludable illness or disease is present in the Service, maintaining a record of children's and educators' immunisation status, complying with relevant health department exclusion guidelines, and increasing educators' awareness of cross-infection.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Immunisation is a reliable way to prevent many childhood diseases. Immunisation works by giving the person a vaccine (weakened or killed disease-causing bacteria or virus), against a particular disease. This makes the person's immune system respond in a similar way to how it would respond if they actually had the disease, but with less severe, or possibly no symptoms. The vaccine therefore leads to the creation of antibodies that provide future protection if the person comes into contact with the disease.

Immunisation also protects other people who are not immunised, such as children who are too young to be immunised, or people whose immune systems did not respond to the vaccine. This is because the more people who are immunised against a disease, the lower the chance that a person will ever come into contact with someone who has the disease. The chance of an infection spreading in a community therefore decreases if a large proportion of people are immunised, because the immune people will not become infected and can protect the vulnerable people; this is known as 'herd immunity'.

Children must meet the immunisation requirements to be eligible for Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A and Child Care Subsidy (CCS). As of January 2018, unvaccinated children due to their parent's conscientious objection are no longer able to be enrolled in childcare. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on an approved catch-up schedule may still be enrolled upon presentation of the appropriate form signed by a medical practitioner.

MANAGEMENT / NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure information about immunisation, infectious diseases and exclusion periods is available to families at time of enrolment/orientation and is included in Family Handbook
- advise parents and families about the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#)
- ensure that evidence is provided for each child prior to enrolment that confirms the child is fully immunised for their age or has a medical reason not be immunised (Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) as evidence.
- provide staff and families with information about vaccine-preventable diseases
- display wall charts about childhood immunisation schedules in each room
- review children's immunisation regularly, updating the child's records kept at the service, and send reminder letters and emails to families as required.
- develop a staff immunisation record that documents each staff member's previous infection or immunisations (including dates)
- require all new and current staff to complete the staff immunisation record
- update staff immunisation records as staff become vaccinated
- take all reasonable steps to encourage non-immune staff to be vaccinated
- document advice given to educators and other staff, and any refusal to comply with vaccination requests
- notify the Public Health Unit (PHU) of any outbreak of vaccine preventable diseases (1300 066 055)
- notify families when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs through various channels of communication:
 - verbally
 - through a letter from the educator or Approved Provider
 - posting a note or sign at the entry of the residence
 - via electronic message- text message or email

- notify the Regulatory Authority of any incidence of a notifiable infectious illness or disease [acecqa contact regulatory authority](#)
- exclude any child who is not immunised from the Service if and when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs to protect that child and to prevent further spread of infection. In the instance of the child being immunised but the immunisation record has not been sighted by the Service, the child is to be considered as not being immunised.
- advise any staff members who fall pregnant to visit their GP immediately and have a test for Cytomegalovirus (CMV) to check their immunity. Any pregnant staff member who is at a heightened risk will not change nappies and will double glove when coming into contact with any body fluids, including saliva.

FAMILIES WILL:

- adhere to the Service's policies regarding *Control of Infectious Diseases, Immunisation, Sick Children* and exclusion requirements
- provide the Service with a copy of one or more of the following documents:
 - An Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is 'up to date' with their scheduled vaccinations; or
 - An AIR Immunisation History Form on which the immunisation provider has certified that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule; or
 - An AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form which has been certified by a GP
- provide the service with an updated copy of their child's current immunisation record every 6 months, or when the next scheduled immunisation has been completed. A current AIR Immunisation History Statement can be accessed at any time by the parent/guardian through logging in to their Medicare online account: [myGov website](#).
- support their child's exclusion from the Service if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease at the Service or if they come into contact with a person with a vaccine preventable disease, even if there is no outbreak at the Service.

INFORMATION TO BE DISPLAYED IN SERVICE

INFORMATION	WEBSITE/INFORMATION	PHONE NUMBER
The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Service	https://beta.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program	1800 020 103
Notification of an occurrence of an infectious disease/vaccine preventable disease	Notify local Public Health Unit Provide information to families about the infectious disease- Children unimmunised against vaccine preventable diseases must be excluded from care	1300 066 055
Australian Government Department of Health	In the event of a community spread virus- (COVID-19) publications from Government agencies will be displayed https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources	1800 020 080

Australian Government Department of Health- Immunisation saves lives

Currently there are different immunisation requirements for early childhood education and care services across states and territories. Information on immunisation requirements are listed below.

Queensland (QLD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule TO BE DISPLAYED IN THE SERVICE can be accessed and downloaded from: https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-schedule-portrait Queensland legislation does not make immunisation mandatory for children to be enrolled in approved ECEC services. Enrolment and/or attendance of children is at the discretion of the service. Each Queensland ECEC service must adjust their policy to provide clear information to families. https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation/childcare Queensland immunisation schedule: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/immunisation/schedule Local QLD Public Health information can be found at: https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation/ Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811 Australian Government, Department of Human Services: https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account

RESOURCES

AIR General Enquiries line 1800 653 809

Australian Government Department of Health [Get the facts on childhood immunisation-help protect your community](#)

Australian Government Services Australia *Australian Immunisation Register*

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>

[NSW Government Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit](#)

Sharing Knowledge About Immunisation. (2020). <http://talkingaboutimmunisation.org.au/>

[Time Out Keeping your child and other kids healthy!](#) (Queensland Government)

Time Out Brochure [Why do I need to keep my child at home?](#)

[Victoria State Government Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood services](#)

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australia Childhood Immunisation Register: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register>

Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, (2020) *Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements*
<https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/immunisation>

Australian Government – Department of Human Services: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account>

Australian Government Department Of Health National Immunise Program: <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/national-immunisation-program>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).

Federal Register of Legislation *Privacy Act 1988*.

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Framework. (2017). (amended 2020).

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2012). *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*.

NSW Public Health Act- NSW Government October 2017:

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_qa.aspx#15

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Sharing Knowledge About Immunisation. (2020). <http://talkingaboutimmunisation.org.au/>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addition related to CCS requirements for immunisation • updates to reflect 'no jab no play' in each state/territory • links to each state/territory immunisation schedules checked and edited as required • further resources added 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
MARCH 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additions to introduction statement • Additional information added to content • Resources section added • Jurisdiction specifications checked for currency 		MARCH 2021
MARCH 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction, purpose, & implementation revised • New immunisation requirements changed to past tense. • Additional information added to points. • Irrelevant information deleted. • Sources checked for currency. <p>Sources/references corrected and alphabetised.</p>		MARCH 2020
MARCH 2018	<p>Amendments made to comply with changes to Immunisation requirements</p> <p>As of January 2016, new immunisation requirements came into force affecting childcare benefits and family assistance payments (the Commonwealth) and the enrolment of children in child care (in NSW). The Commonwealth has made changes under the 'No Jab, No Pay' measure to increase childhood vaccination rates causing families to no longer be eligible for child care benefits and family assistance payments with exceptions for children recorded with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases and those on a recognised catch-up schedule.</p>		MARCH 2019
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to comply with new vaccination regulations in NSW. Effective January 1, 2018 		MARCH 2018
SEPTEMBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standards 		MARCH 2018
MARCH 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy has been researched and reviewed; no changes made. 		MARCH 2018