

# Immunisation

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 a childcare setting are also at increased risk of contracting certain infectious illnesses.

## 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

## RELATED POLICIES

Enrolment Policy Family Communication Policy Incident, Illness, Accident and Trauma Policy Orientation of New Families Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy Infectious Disease 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'.

As of January 2016, unvaccinated children due to their parent's conscientious objection are no longer able to be enrolled in childcare in Victoria. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to a medical condition or who are on a recognised catch-up schedule may still be enrolled upon presentation of the appropriate form signed by a medical practitioner.

### Management / Nominated Supervisor will:

- Display wall charts about immunisation in the foyer.
- Review children’s immunisation regularly, updating the child’s records kept at the service, and sending reminder letters and emails to families at least every six months.
- 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.
- Develop a staff immunisation record that documents each staff member’s previous infection or immunisation.
- Require all new and current staff to complete the staff immunisation record.
- Update staff immunisation records as staff become vaccinated.
- Provide staff with information about vaccine-preventable diseases.
- 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 families when an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease occurs.
- 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:

- 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.
- Ensure they provide the Service with the Medicare immunisation record which can be downloaded through the myGov website. Please note that the ‘blue book’ is no longer an acceptable form of evidence.



The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) used to be the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. It now records vaccines for people of all ages in Australia.

Victoria (VIC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule can be accessed and downloaded from: <a href="http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Home">http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Home</a></li> <li>• Department of Health, Victoria Immunisation Program- children <a href="https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children">https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children</a> Telephone - 1300 882 008</li> <li>• Immunise Australia National Hotline: 1800 671 811</li> <li>• Australian Government, Department of Human Services: <a href="https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account">https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/online-help/medicare/getting-your-immunisation-history-statement-using-your-medicare-online-account</a></li> </ul>

## Source

Australia Childhood Immunisation Register:

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

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>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

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

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

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

Immunise Australia Program: [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

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

*Privacy Act 1988*.

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	May 2019	NEXT REVIEW DATE	May 2020
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, purpose, &amp; implementation revised</li> <li>• New immunisation requirements changed to past tense.</li> <li>• Additional information added to points.</li> <li>• Irrelevant information deleted.</li> <li>• Sources checked for currency.</li> <li>• Sources/references corrected and alphabetised.</li> </ul>		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
March 2018	<p>Amendments made to comply with changes to Immunisation requirements DELETED FROM PAGE 2 – Implementation paragraph 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	March 2019	
September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated the references to comply with the revised National Quality Standards</li> </ul>	Match 2018	
March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy has been researched and reviewed, no changes made.</li> </ul>	Match 2018	