

Immunisation Policy

National Quality Standard (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

Adelaide University Childcare Services Incorporated (AUCS) will aim to minimise risks, complications, and the spread of vaccine preventable diseases to ensure children and Centre educators and staff have up to date immunisation in accordance with the *National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule* and keep an up-to-date register of children and staff immunisations.

Immunisation of children and adults significantly reduces the mortality associated with vaccine preventable diseases, it is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting the community against harmful diseases and controlling the spread of infectious diseases in the Centre.

Implementation

The National Immunisation Program Schedule for South Australia can be found here:

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/resources/national+immunisation+program+south+australia+schedule>

Note: homeopathic immunisation is not recognised.

Immunisation Records

Following changes to the South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (the Act), from 7 August 2020, children will not be able to enrol in or attend early childhood services unless all immunisation requirements are met.

Parents who wish to enrol their child at the Centre must provide a copy of their child's Australian Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) at the time of enrolment showing the child's immunisations are up to date in line with the National Immunisation Program (includes any approved exemptions).

If the AIR statement shows the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule, the child can enrol and attend if the end date for the catch-up schedule has not been passed. **No child can attend the service if their immunisations are not up to date or they do not meet the exemption requirements that follow:**

- all children aged less than seven months of age are exempt
- all Aboriginal children have a six-week temporary exemption to enable services to request and collect records
- a temporary exemption for all children under, or coming under, the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection, or who are transferring from the custody or guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection to another guardian or their parent.

In a few special circumstances a certificate from the Chief Public Health Officer or a document approved by the Officer may be accepted. A letter from a GP, or the SA Child Health and Development Record ('Blue Book') are not acceptable.

Records (e.g., AIR Statements) must be dated no more than one month prior to enrolment.

Immunisation records must also be provided after a child turns:

- 7 months of age but before they turn 9 months old
- 13 months of age but before they turn 15 months old
- 19 months of age but before they turn 21 months old
- 4 years and 2 months of age but before they turn 4 years and 8 months old

These records must be provided while the child is in the relevant age range. AUCS will regularly remind parents to do this via newsletters, and/or emails.

Immunisation Register

Our service will keep an Immunisation Register which records the immunisation status of each child enrolled at the Service including the immunisations each child has received. Immunisation certificates will be placed in the child's file.

Catering for Children with Overseas Immunisation Records

Overseas immunisation records will 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. A recognised vaccination provider may transcribe overseas immunisation records.

Exclusion Periods

Information about children's immunisations allows children at risk of catching a vaccine preventable disease to be identified and protected where possible from catching the disease if there's a case of the disease at the service. This information also assists in protecting other children who may still be vulnerable to the disease despite being vaccinated.

Any child who has not been immunised against a vaccine preventable disease will be excluded if there is a case of the disease at the service, or the child has been in contact with someone outside the Service with the disease. Note: it is the responsibility of families to inform the Service that their unvaccinated child has come into contact with someone with a vaccine preventable disease.

Exclusion periods will be based on those recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and any advice by doctors or public health officials. However, the Nominated Supervisor has ultimate discretion about exclusions and the length of the Exclusion Period unless following directions from public health officials with which they must comply.

During any outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, the Chief Public Health Officer may request information about the names and dates of birth of enrolled children, immunisation records for each child and parent/guardian contact details. These must be provided to the Officer within 24 hours of the request. He or she may direct the exclusion of any child at risk of contracting the disease.

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

Immunisation 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 NHMRC recommends that educators should be immunised against:

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

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

The Nominated Supervisor will:

- Regularly provide educators and staff with information about diseases that can be prevented by immunisation through fact sheets and the Staying Healthy in Childcare publication
- Regularly advise educators and staff pregnant through fact sheets and the Staying Healthy in Childcare publication that some infectious diseases may injure an unborn child if the mother is infected while pregnant. These infections include chickenpox, cytomegalovirus and rubella (German measles)
- 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

The service will provide financial support to staff wishing to have a Hep A and B vaccination up to a maximum of \$150.

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 cannot receive one or more vaccine(s) for medical reasons or the child has a natural immunity, but do not include conscientious objection.

Further information is available at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/what-are-immunisation-requirements?context=41186>

Sources

Department of Health and Ageing, National Immunisation Program Schedule Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Department of Health - Communicable Disease Control Branch- Immunisation Section (including Early Childhood services and Immunisation requirements FAQ)

Department of Health and Ageing, National Immunisation Program Schedule

Medicare Australia

National Quality Standard (NQS)

NHMRC. Staying Healthy Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, 5th edition South Australian Public Health Act 2011 (includes No Jab No Play)

No Jab No Pay Legislation Federal Government

Review

The policy will be reviewed regularly by:

- Management/Staff
- Employees
- Families

Version History

Version	Date	Policy approval	Description of changes	Effective date	Review date
1.0	27/03/2023				03/2024