

# School Based

# Vaccination Program

## Information for Principals

Schools play an invaluable role in looking after the health of their students. Immunisation against disease is one strategy which contributes to the wellbeing of both the individual and the community as a whole.

Queensland Health acknowledges the important role schools play in helping service providers to conduct a vaccination clinic.

This booklet outlines all you need to know to run a successful clinic, including what you need to do before, during and after the day. Sample letters to parents, a newsletter article and information for use with school staff are also included to help keep your school community updated.

Queensland Health is working with a range of vaccine service providers to deliver the program. Your school's vaccination program is provided by:

## What is the School Based Vaccination Program?

Coordinated by Queensland Health, the annual School Based Vaccination Program provides secondary school students in state and non state schools across Queensland, the opportunity to be protected from a range of diseases.

School programs are generally regarded as a highly efficient and cost-effective way to deliver vaccination services to an age group which can otherwise be difficult to reach.

Vaccinations offered include:

Year 8 students

- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) for female students

Year 10 students

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (whooping cough).

## Leading up to the vaccination clinic

- A vaccination team will contact you to arrange suitable dates for the School Based Vaccination Program (SBVP) to take place in your school. Please be aware that the vaccination team will be visiting many schools, and will need your assistance to set firm dates for clinics.
- Please nominate a staff member as the primary contact for the vaccination team and provide the contact details for this person to the vaccination team. The vaccination team will then liaise with this staff member about conducting the program including organising dates, avoiding schedule clashes, what time is required to vaccinate the students (particularly large numbers), distribution of consent forms, and requirements and procedures for vaccination sessions.

Ongoing communication between your school's primary contact and the vaccination team is important to minimise disruption to the school and to streamline the vaccination sessions.

### One month before vaccination - distribute consent forms

- You should receive consent forms for each student to give to his/her parent/legal guardian. The consent forms contain general information about the vaccines being administered, the diseases they prevent and a perforated consent section for return. There are different consent forms for each vaccine being offered.

*All Year 8 students will receive consent forms for hepatitis B and varicella (chickenpox) vaccinations. These will be included in one envelope. Female Year 8 students will also receive a consent form for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. Year 10 students will receive a consent form for diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination.*

- Please distribute the correct consent form/s to every student in the appropriate year level and relevant members of the teaching staff (for their information only). School staff are not eligible to receive vaccination as part of this program.
- Your school may wish to distribute information about the SBVP to the school community. For example, a parent email or text message, school newsletter article, or a note in the school diary or prospectus. Sample letters to parents to accompany the consent forms and a newsletter article are included in the appendices of this document and may be adapted for your school's use.

### Three weeks before vaccination – consent forms to be returned

- Consent forms should be returned within one week of distribution. All parents/guardians are asked to return the consent form irrespective of whether or not they wish their child to be vaccinated.
- Consent forms should be counted and collated into classes with a list of students for that class and return to the vaccination team.
- **Return all consent forms (whether completed or not) to the vaccination team.**

### One to two weeks before vaccination

- Include an article in your school newsletter outlining the vaccination clinic date and details, and instructions about the return of consent forms to the school (sample article included in Appendix 3).
- If the clinic date changes, inform parents.
- You will receive extra consent forms to distribute to students who have lost their original consent forms.
- Please inform the appropriate class teachers of the time, date and place of the vaccination clinic.
- The vaccination team will contact the school to confirm clinic arrangements and collect consent forms for checking prior to the vaccination session.
- Read the "At the vaccination clinic" section on page 3 so you can arrange relevant equipment and know what to expect on the day.

## At the vaccination clinic

The vaccination team will arrive at a pre-arranged time to conduct the clinic in your school. The team will bring all the equipment needed to vaccinate students, and will take all items and equipment with them when they leave.

**To ensure everything runs smoothly, the vaccination team will need the following items.**

### Equipment Checklist

- Class lists of student to be vaccinated so vaccinators can check off who has and has not been vaccinated.
- Staff member/s to bring students to the vaccinating area.
- **Staff member/s or school nurse to assist in keeping order among the students in the recovery area on the day.** Students will remain in the recovery area for 15 minutes after their vaccination.

Staff supervising students after vaccination will be made aware of the signs and symptoms of adverse reactions. However, it is not necessary that the staff member supervising students has any special training, and this staff member will not replace the vaccination team staff member who will be supervising recovery. The recovery area should be close enough to the clinic that the vaccination team can easily and quickly be sought.

- **A well-lit, well-ventilated room** with a separate entry and exit in which to vaccinate students, such as the school hall. It is preferable that the room is on the ground floor, so students do not have to walk up or down any stairs after the vaccination, and for ease of set-up for the vaccination team.
- **An undercover 'recovery' area** next to the vaccination clinic where students can sit for at least 15 minutes after the vaccination.
- A **'privacy' area** where a student and service provider or student and teacher may confidentially discuss any concerns. This area should be separated from the general area and screened for privacy.
- **Hand washing facilities** close by.
- The **exit route** from the recovery area should be located away from the waiting area where others may still be queuing for their vaccination.
- **One desk and two chairs per vaccinator**, and a separate desk and chair for the administrative assistant, if applicable.
- A few easy **chairs and gym mats** (for students who do not feel well as the vaccinator may want to observe a student for a short time).
- **An 'emergency' area** separate from the 'recovery' area which is easily accessible and relatively private (eg. first aid room or sick bay).
- **Screens** or some other method to keep students from directly viewing those being vaccinated.

## General procedure for the clinic

- Before the clinic, the vaccination team will:
  - report to the front office/reception for sign-in prior to being directed to the allocated area
  - give the signed consent forms to the nominated staff member/s for redistribution back to each class prior to the clinic, and
  - set up and prepare all equipment before they start vaccinating.
- All **'yes'** consent forms need to be returned to students immediately prior to the clinic by a school staff member.
- All **'no'** consent forms should be given to the vaccination team.
- The vaccination team will advise about follow-up for students who have not returned consent forms.

### At the start of the vaccination clinic

- The vaccination team will ask for students being vaccinated to be brought to the hall/room. The vaccination team will liaise with their nominated school contact.
- Only students with **'yes'** signed consent forms should come to the clinic. After they have been vaccinated, each will be given a Record of Vaccination.
- If a student with **'yes'** consent is not vaccinated, a letter will be given by the vaccination team to the student to return to parents.

### Following vaccination

- Students will be asked to stay seated in the adjacent 'recovery' area for at least 15 minutes after vaccination.
- Once the observation period is over, students may return to their scheduled activities. Sporting activities should not be scheduled directly after the vaccination clinic. Ideally, a staff member should accompany students away from the clinic area.

Staff in the vaccination team are specially trained to deal with all emergencies. The vaccination team will remain at your school for at least 30 minutes after the last student has been vaccinated and will ensure that all vaccinated students are well prior to departing. A contact phone number for the vaccination team will be left with the school.

### After the vaccination team departs

If a student feels faint or nauseous, lay them down flat in a cool area and give them a drink of cold water and advise the vaccination team.

If a student is experiencing some discomfort at the site of the injection, apply a cold cloth or ice pack to the injection site.

If necessary, seek medical attention (as per your school procedures) or call the Queensland Ambulance Service by dialing **000**.

## We want your feedback!

To assist Queensland Health to improve future school based vaccination programs and address any issues encountered during the program, the vaccination team will give you or the school contact a feedback form at the end of the clinic. Please take the time to fill this in and return it to Queensland Health.

## Appendix 1: Sample letter to parents of Year 8 students

This letter could accompany the consent form/s.

Dear Parent

### Immunisation Program for Year 8 students

Our school is participating in Queensland Health's annual School Based Vaccination Program. For Year 8 students, the program provides free hepatitis B and chickenpox vaccinations. Female students will also be offered vaccination for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) as protection against cervical cancer.

#### Chickenpox

our Year 8 student is eligible to receive one dose of chickenpox vaccine if they have not previously had chickenpox or been vaccinated against it. If you do not have a reliable history of your child having had chickenpox or you are unsure, then it is advisable to have the vaccination. If your child is aged 14 years and in Year 8, please read the consent form for further information.

#### Hepatitis B

*Year 8 students can receive hepatitis B vaccination if they have not already been vaccinated for hepatitis B or had the disease. This is given in two doses four to six months apart.*

#### Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Female students in Year 8 are being offered immunisation against HPV. This involves three doses of vaccine given over six months.

It is important that you read the information in the consent forms.

The vaccinations will be conducted by a team of specially trained registered nurses and/or a medical practitioner. The vaccination team will be visiting the school to give the free vaccinations on the following date/s:

[insert date] [insert location]

*Only students who have a completed and signed consent form/s (ticked **yes**) will be vaccinated. If you would like your child to be vaccinated, please fill in the consent form/s and return the form/s to the school within one week.*

If you do not wish your child to be vaccinated, or your child has already been vaccinated with the offered vaccines, it is still important that you complete the form/s (ticking **no**) and return them. This helps Queensland Health to ensure that all students have been given the opportunity to participate in this program.

Yours sincerely,

[Principal's Name]

Principal

## Appendix 2: Sample letter to parents of Year 10 students

This letter could accompany the consent form/s.

Dear Parent

### Immunisation program for Year 10 students

Our school is participating in Queensland Health's annual School Based Vaccination Program. The program provides a free booster dose of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine for Year 10 students.

The vaccination will be conducted by a team of specially trained registered nurses and/or a medical practitioner. The vaccination team will be visiting the school to give the free vaccination on the following date:

[insert date] [insert location]

It is important that you read the information in the consent form..

*Only students who have a completed and signed consent form (ticked **yes**) will be vaccinated. If you would like your child to be vaccinated, please fill in the consent form/s and return the form/s to the school within one week.*

If you do not wish your child to be vaccinated, or your child has already been vaccinated with the offered vaccine, it is still important that you complete the form/s (ticking **no**) and return them. This helps Queensland Health to ensure that all students have been given the opportunity to participate in this program.

Yours sincerely,

[Principal's Name]  
Principal

## Appendix 3: Sample school newsletter article

You may like to use or amend this sample newsletter article to suit your needs.

### Immunisation Program comes to school

This year [Insert clinic provider eg: name of council] is providing free vaccinations for all Year 8 and Year 10 students, on [insert date/s], as part of Queensland Health's annual School Based Vaccination Program.

Year 8 students are being offered vaccination to protect against hepatitis B and chickenpox while Year 10 students are being offered protection against diphtheria- tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough).

Female students in Year 8 are also being offered Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination to protect against cervical cancer.

The vaccinations will be conducted by a team of specially trained registered nurses and/or a medical practitioner.

A consent form for each vaccination offered will be given to your child to bring home. Please read the information carefully, sign the consent form irrespective of whether you wish your child to be vaccinated or not and return the consent form to the school by [insert date].

Parents are encouraged to ensure their children have breakfast on the morning of vaccination.

For more information about diseases, vaccines or the School Based Vaccination Program, visit [www.health.qld.gov.au/school\\_vaccination/](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/school_vaccination/) or call 13 Health on 13 43 25 84.

## Appendix 4: School staff flyer

### Information to keep school staff informed

This year [Insert clinic provider eg: name of council] is providing free vaccinations for all Year 8 and Year 10 students, on [insert date/s], as part of Queensland Health's annual School Based Vaccination Program.

Year 8 students are being offered vaccination to protect against hepatitis B and chickenpox while Year 10 students are being offered protection against diphtheria- tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough).

Female students in Year 8 are also being offered Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination to protect against cervical cancer.

The vaccinations will be conducted by a team of specially trained registered nurses and/or a medical practitioner.

We encourage the school community to support the immunisation program in our school. If you would like further information about the diseases, vaccines or the School Based Vaccination Program please contact your School Based Vaccination Program Coordinator or your local Population Health Unit.

School Based Vaccination Program Coordinator (please check area description below for your coordinator).

Northern area	4753 9034
Central area	3142 1801
Southern area	5509 7241

## For more information

All queries regarding clinic dates or consent forms for your school should be directed to your vaccination team. Any other queries should be directed to your Area School Based Vaccination Coordinator.

### **Northern Queensland – ph: 4753 9034**

(includes communities from south of St Lawrence, in the Mackay district, north to the Torres Strait and west to the Northern Territory border)

### **Central Queensland – ph: 3142 1801**

(includes communities from the Brisbane River to Rockhampton and west to the Northern Territory border)

### **Southern Queensland – ph: 5509 7241**

(includes communities from the southern banks of the Brisbane River down to the east coast of the southern border of Queensland and out to the western border of the state)

For more information about diseases, vaccines or the School Based Vaccination Program, visit [www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)