

Queensland Health

RSV Nirsevimab Immunisation Rollout

Immunisation Service Providers Toolkit – April
2024



**Queensland
Government**

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Introduction

This stakeholder kit has been developed to assist in communicating important information about the Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) immunisation program.

The kit includes key messages and communication materials that may assist you in sharing messaging across your clinical network and to your patients.

By utilising your channels and networks, you are helping to increase and broaden the reach of audiences who will hear about the RSV immunisation program.

Background

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. RSV can cause severe respiratory illnesses, like bronchiolitis, bronchitis or pneumonia. RSV is the most common cause of hospitalisation in infants and young children, with almost all children experiencing at least one RSV infection within the first 2 years of life.

About the RSV immunisation program

Nirsevimab will be available at all Queensland birthing hospitals (public and private) for newborn babies starting from 15 April 2024. Other immunisation providers will be able to access nirsevimab via a special-order process from 22 April 2024.

Eligible infants and young children who are not immunised in hospital will be able to access nirsevimab through their routine immunisation provider.

Immunisation providers can access clinical guidance documents, consent forms and information for parents and carers on the [Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program website](#).

Immunisation providers can direct parents and carers to the [Vaccination Matters website](#) for more information about RSV immunisation and eligibility.

Target audience

Primary audience:

- Parents and carers who are pregnant
- Parents and carers with an infant born on or after 1 February 2024 (and is less than 8 months old)
- First Nations parents and carers with an infant less than 8 months old
- Parents and carers of infants and children who are medically at-risk less than 8 months old
- Parents and carers of infants and children who are medically at-risk aged 8 to 19 months old

Secondary audience:

- Immunisation providers administering the RSV immunisation

Key messages

General

- RSV is the most common cause of hospitalisation in infants and young children, with almost all children experiencing at least one RSV infection within the first 2 years of life.
- RSV can have a potentially significant impact on infants and young children, as well as their families. This program is focused on protecting infants from birth, as well as those at highest risk of severe disease in the first years of life.

Symptoms of RSV

Symptoms usually begin between 3 and 10 days after contact with RSV and can include:

- runny nose
- cough
- wheezing (noisy breathing)
- fever
- decreased appetite.

Symptoms in infants and young children can include:

- irritability or tiredness
- refusal to breast or bottle feed
- weight loss
- working hard to breathe or fast breathing.

Cough associated with RSV can last up to 4 weeks and worsen asthma symptoms.

Eligibility

- Only infants and young children who are residents of Queensland can receive free nirsevimab immunisation under this program.
- The following infants and young children are eligible:
 - Infants born on or after 1 February 2024, up until less than 8 months of age
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, up until less than 8 months of age

- Infants with certain complex medical conditions, up until less than 8 months of age
- Infants with certain complex medical conditions 8 months up to 19 months of age (inclusive), until 31 October 2024
- Refer to the [clinical guidance](#) for the full list of eligible medical conditions.

Benefits

- The free RSV immunisation provides almost immediate protection against severe RSV disease.
- The free RSV immunisation protects babies against a potentially serious illness during the early months of their lives when they are the most vulnerable.
- The free RSV immunisation is a single injection, offering 5 months of protection against RSV.
- Other immunisation programs to protect against RSV have been rolled out in Europe and the US. These have shown a large reduction in RSV-related hospitalisations among infants and high-risk young children.

Safety and efficacy

- Nirsevimab has been widely used in the Northern Hemisphere during their 2023-2024 winter season.
- RSV immunisation is safe for babies and young children with overseas programs showing most children experienced no side effects.
- RSV immunisation is a safe and effective way to help stop the spread of RSV and lower the risk of severe illness in our youngest Queenslanders.
- It is not a new technology. Palivizumab is a very similar product and has been used safely in Australia to prevent RSV in high young-risk children for many years.
- Queensland Health closely monitors and reports to the TGA, all adverse events following immunisation that are reported. Under the Public Health Act 2005, adverse events following immunisation are a notifiable condition. Immunisation providers must [report](#) all unexpected adverse events post immunisation to Queensland Health.

Side effects

- Although uncommon, the most likely side effects from the immunisation are redness, swelling or tenderness at the injection site, mild fever and rash.

Availability

- From 15 April 2024, free RSV immunisations will be available in Queensland birthing hospitals for newborn infants.

- Eligible infants and young children who are not immunised in hospital will be able to access nirsevimab through their routine immunisation provider.
- Parents and carers wishing to access this immunisation are encouraged to contact their routine immunisation provider to book an appointment ahead of time if they are unable to access nirsevimab through routine hospital care.

RSV immunisation explained

- The program will use the monoclonal antibody product nirsevimab (brand name Beyfortus), which was approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in November 2023 for use in infants and young children up to 2 years of age.
- Nirsevimab is a passive immunisation product that delivers antibodies that provide almost immediate protection against severe RSV disease.
- Nirsevimab has been shown to be 80 per cent effective at decreasing infant hospitalisations due to RSV.
- One dose of nirsevimab protects infants for at least 5 months, the length of an average RSV season.
- Nirsevimab can be safely administered at the same time as other routine childhood vaccines.

Calls to action

- Contact your routine immunisation provider to book an appointment ahead of time
- For more information, visit <https://www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/what-to-vaccinate-against/rsv-immunisation>

Communication materials

Communication materials are available for download from the **Queensland Health Asset Library** to support communication activities.

The following assets are included in this stakeholder kit:

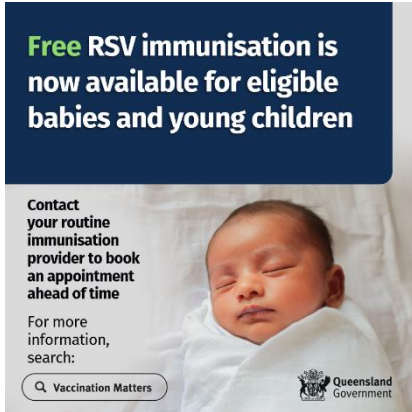
- Social media content
- Posters
- Email banner
- Digital screen/screensaver
- Long form content
- Short form content
- Information for parents and carers
- Web content
- Easy Read resources

[**Download RSV resources from the Queensland Health Asset Library collection**](#)

Social media content

Note: The social media tiles are editable and can be customised to suit your audience.

Download here: [Social tile](#)



Download here: [Social tile](#)



Suggested caption:

Free RSV immunisation is now available for eligible Queensland infants and young children.

RSV is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. It can cause a range of respiratory illnesses – from mild colds to severe conditions like bronchiolitis (inflammation of the airways) or pneumonia (infection of the lungs).

Immunisation is the best way to protect your baby from RSV and gives them antibodies to protect them from the virus straight away.

Book an appointment for a free RSV immunisation with your routine immunisation provider ahead of time.

Visit the [Vaccination Matters website](#) for more information.

Posters

Download and print these posters to display in patient areas.

Download here: [RSV immunisation eligibility poster](#)



Queensland Health

Free RSV immunisation is now available for eligible babies and young children

Eligibility includes:

- Infants born on or after 1 February 2024, up until less than 8 months of age
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, up until less than 8 months of age
- Infants with certain complex medical conditions, up until less than 8 months of age
- Infants with certain complex medical conditions 8 months up to 19 months of age (inclusive), until 31 October 2024

Search: Vaccination Matters

Queensland Government

This poster features a dark blue header with white text. Below the header is a photograph of a sleeping baby wrapped in a white blanket. To the left of the baby, there is a list of eligibility criteria. At the bottom, there is a search bar with the text 'Vaccination Matters' and the Queensland Government logo.

Download here: [RSV immunisation editable poster](#)

Note: This poster is editable and the can be customised to suit your audience.



Queensland Health

Was your child born on or after 1 February 2024?

Babies born on or after 1 February 2024, up until less than 8 months of age, can get a free RSV immunisation.

Ask reception about booking an appointment ahead of time.

Search: Vaccination Matters

Queensland Government

This poster features a dark blue header with white text. Below the header is a photograph of a sleeping baby wrapped in a white blanket. To the left of the baby, there is a short paragraph of text. At the bottom, there is a search bar with the text 'Vaccination Matters' and the Queensland Government logo.

Email banner

This email banner is compatible with Vision 6 software and can be used when sending out information via newsletters or emails.

Download here: [RSV immunisation email banner](#)



Digital screen/screensaver

Download here: [RSV immunisation screensaver](#)



Long form content

Free RSV immunisation is now available for eligible Queensland infants and young children

RSV is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. It can cause a range of respiratory illnesses – from mild colds to severe conditions like bronchiolitis (inflammation of the airways) or pneumonia (infection of the lungs).

RSV is the most common cause of hospitalisation in infants and young children in Queensland. Almost all children experience at least one RSV infection within the first 2 years of life.

Immunisation is the best way to protect your newborn baby from RSV.

Free RSV immunisation is now available for the following infants and young children:

- Infants born on or after 1 February 2024, up until less than 8 months of age
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander infants, up until less than 8 months of age

- Infants with certain complex medical conditions, up until less than 8 months of age
- Infants with certain complex medical conditions 8 months up to 19 months of age (inclusive), until 31 October 2024

You can ask your child's routine immunisation provider for more information, including what medical conditions are included, when booking an appointment (*or edit call-of-action to suit local needs*).

Visit the [Vaccination Matters website](#) for more information.

Short form content

Free RSV immunisation is now available for eligible Queensland infants and young children

RSV is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. It can cause a range of respiratory illnesses – from mild colds to severe conditions like bronchiolitis (inflammation of the airways) or pneumonia (infection of the lungs).

Immunisation is the best way to protect your baby from RSV. Free RSV immunisation is now available for eligible infants and young children.

Book an appointment with your routine immunisation provider ahead of time.

Visit the [Vaccination Matters website](#) for more information.

Information for parents and carers

This fact sheet provides information for parents and carers to make an informed decision and consent for nirsevimab administration.

Download here: [RSV Immunisation \(Nirsevimab - Information for parents and carers\)](#)

Queensland Health
RSV Immunisation
 Nirsevimab - Information for parents and carers

What is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)?
 RSV is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. It can cause a range of respiratory illnesses – from mild colds to severe conditions like bronchiolitis (inflammation of the airways) or pneumonia (infection of the lungs).
 RSV is the most common cause of hospitalisation in infants and young children in Queensland. Almost all children experience at least one RSV infection within the first two years of life.
 RSV is highly infectious. While most people with RSV will recover within about a week, some people, particularly infants and young children, can become very unwell and require hospitalisation.

What is the Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention (QPRSV) Program?
 The QPRSV Program provides free RSV immunisation with the medicine nirsevimab to eligible Queensland infants and young children.

What is nirsevimab?
 Nirsevimab (brand name Beyfortus®) is a medicine containing antibodies that prevents severe RSV disease in infants and young children. Antibodies play an important role in helping the body to fight off infection. These antibodies provide RSV protection almost immediately after they are given.

Is nirsevimab effective?
 Yes. Nirsevimab is a highly effective medicine that has been used safely in several RSV prevention programs, including the in United States and Europe.
 Nirsevimab is 80% effective in preventing infants from being admitted to hospital with RSV and up to 90% effective in preventing infants being admitted to an intensive care unit with RSV.
 Nirsevimab is not a new immunisation technology. Palivizumab is also an RSV antibody medicine and has been used to protect high-risk infants in Australia for many years.

Is nirsevimab safe?
 Yes. Side effects from nirsevimab are uncommon. Most infants have no side effects. The most common reported side effects are soreness, redness or swelling at the immunisation site, like other routine immunisations. Other mild side effects include fever and rash. These reactions are almost always minor and temporary.
 Nirsevimab has been determined by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) to be safe and effective. It was approved for use in Australia in November 2023.
 As with all medicines, very rare side effects such as severe allergic reactions can occur. Services that provide immunisation are equipped to manage rare but potentially serious allergic reactions, should one occur. Parents and carers can call TREATHEALTH (13 43 25 64) for non-urgent advice on managing side effects, in an emergency always call 000.

Nirsevimab - Information for parents and carers

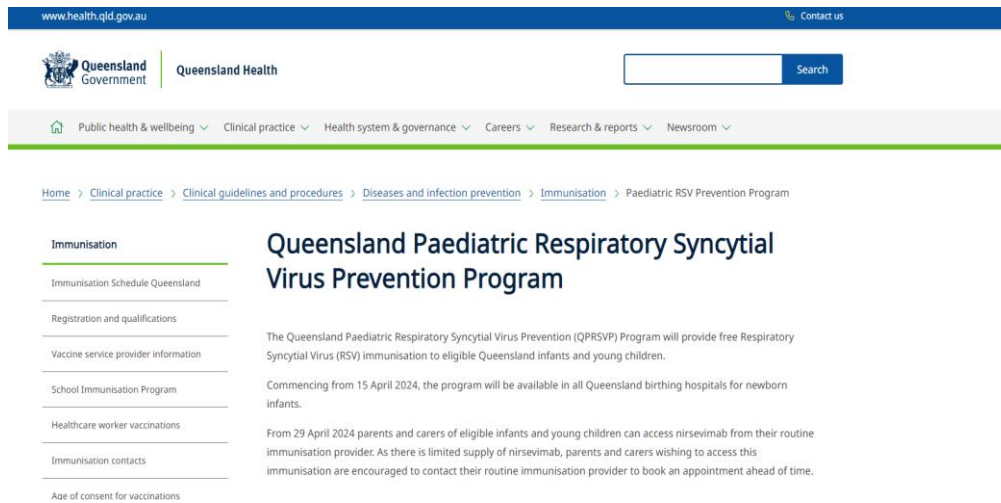
Queensland Government

Web content

For clinicians

The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention (QPRSVP) Program website page includes important information about the program, eligibility, clinical guidelines, parent and carer information and ordering.

Visit the page here: [Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program](#)

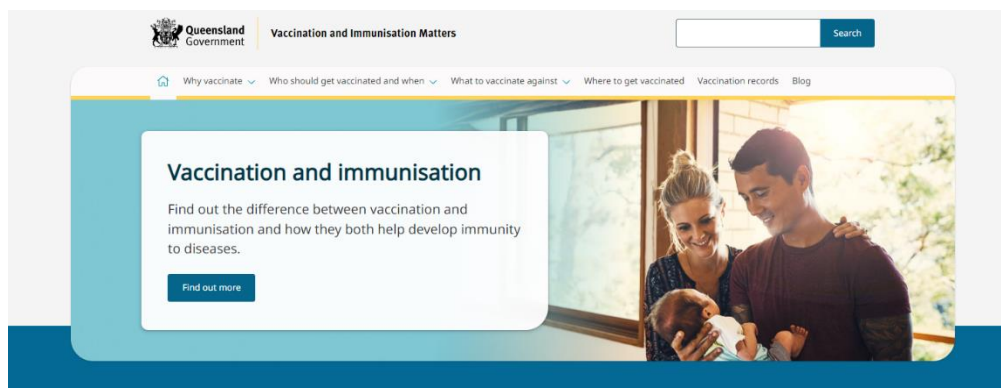


The screenshot shows the Queensland Health website page for the Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program. The page header includes the Queensland Government logo and a search bar. The main content area features a navigation menu with categories like 'Public health & wellbeing', 'Clinical practice', and 'Immunisation'. The main heading is 'Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program'. Below the heading, there is a brief description of the program, its start date (15 April 2024), and information about the limited supply of nirsevimab. A sidebar on the left lists related topics such as 'Immunisation Schedule Queensland', 'Registration and qualifications', and 'Vaccine service provider information'.

For parents and carers

The Vaccination Matters website contains important information for parents and carers about the RSV immunisation and eligibility.

Visit the page here: [Vaccination Matters](#)



The screenshot shows the Vaccination Matters website page. The page header includes the Queensland Government logo and a search bar. The main content area features a navigation menu with categories like 'Why vaccinate', 'Who should get vaccinated and when', and 'Where to get vaccinated'. The main heading is 'Vaccination and immunisation'. Below the heading, there is a brief description of the difference between vaccination and immunisation and how they both help develop immunity to diseases. A 'Find out more' button is visible below the text. The background image shows a family (a woman, a man, and a baby) smiling together.

Easy Read resources

The following Easy Read fact sheets explain the importance of immunisation and are also available in other languages. There are fact sheets for:

- [parents](#)
- [young adults](#)
- [older people](#)