

Queensland Health

# **RSV Nirsevimab Immunisation Rollout**

Line manager toolkit – April 2024



**Queensland  
Government**

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## Introduction

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

The kit includes key messages and communication materials that may assist you in sharing messaging with your workforce.

## 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 from 15 April 2024. Other immunisation providers will be able to access nirsevimab via a special-order process.

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

## Target audience

### Primary audience:

- Healthcare staff across public and private Queensland birthing hospitals

### Secondary audience:

- Parents/carers of infants born on or after the 1 February 2024

## 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, and well as those at highest risk of severe disease in the first years of life.

## 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.

## Eligibility

- Only infants and young children who are residents of Queensland can receive free nirsevimab 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.

## Nirsevimab (RSV immunisation)

- Refer to the [Clinical Guidance for Immunisation Service Providers document](#) for product information, dosing recommendations, administration guidelines, precautions, adverse effects, storage, recording, ordering and other nirsevimab resources.

# Resources

Resources are available to support communication activities. The following assets are included in this toolkit:

- Clinical guidance for immunisation service providers
- Consent form
- Information for parents and carers
- Posters
- Staff newsletter/internal broadcast
- Web content
- Easy Read resources

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

## Clinical guidance for immunisation service providers

A clinical guidance document has been developed for immunisation service providers. Please refer to this detailed guide.

**Download here:** [Clinical Guidance for Immunisation Service Providers](#)



### Version 1.0 | April 2024

The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention (QPRSV) Program provides free Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) immunisation to eligible Queensland infants and young children.

In 2024, the QPRSV Program will use nirsevimab (brand name Beyfortus) which is a long-acting monoclonal antibody that provides infants and young children protection against severe RSV disease for at least 5 months.

### Program eligibility

Only infants and young children who are residents of Queensland can receive free nirsevimab under this program. A Queensland infant or young child is not required to be Medicare eligible to receive nirsevimab under this program.

Due to global constraints on the supply of nirsevimab, Queensland Health is taking a considered approach for the 2024 program to ensure infants and young children at highest risk of severe disease from RSV are protected at the right time.

Under this program, the following infants and young children are eligible for nirsevimab (note table continues over page):

<b>All newborn infants</b> (Born on or from the commencement date of the program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offered as a dose at time of birth or prior to discharge from hospital.</li><li>• Infants not immunised in hospital can access nirsevimab up to less than 8 months of age through select primary care providers.</li><li>• Once an infant reaches 8 months of age, they will no longer be eligible for this dose.</li><li>• Due to supply constraints there is no back dated catch up available for this cohort.</li><li>• For infants who are born to person who received RSV vaccination during their pregnancy, see section on RSV vaccination during pregnancy for advice.</li></ul>
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# Consent form

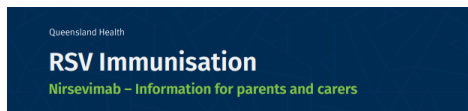
This consent form is available for immunisation providers to print and use when consenting parents or legal guardians for nirsevimab administration.

Download here: [RSV Immunisation \(Nirsevimab\) Consent Form](#)

# 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 \(Nirsevimab - Information for parents and carers\)](#)



### 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 the 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 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for non-urgent advice on managing side effects. In an emergency always call 000.



## Posters

Download and print these posters for easy reference in clinical areas.

Download here: [General RSV Immunisation](#)

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# RSV Immunisations



The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program has commenced across Queensland birthing hospitals.

This program will provide free Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) immunisations to newborns and eligible infants and young children.

Our staff play an important role in the roll out of this program and its ongoing success.


Scan the QR code to access clinical guidance documents, consent forms and parent/carer information sheets.

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Download here: [RSV Nirsevimab Dosing Recommendations](#)

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# RSV Nirsevimab Dosing Recommendations



The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program has commenced across Queensland birthing hospitals.

- The recommended dose for infants and young children is weight and age dependant.
- Nirsevimab is given as a single dose.
- Note the dosing weight refers to an infant's or young child's weight at the time of administration, not their birth weight.
- Immunisation providers should weigh all infants or young children prior to administration if they do not have a recent weight recorded.

Age and weight	Dose	Number of syringes to administer	Note
Infant <5kg and <6 months of age	50mg	Give 1 x 50mg pre-filled syringe via intramuscular injection. Volume for IM injection = 0.5mL	Refer to eligibility criteria prior to administration to ensure that the infant or young child is eligible to receive nirsevimab.
Infant >5kg and <6 months of age	100mg	Give 2 x 50mg pre-filled syringes via separate intramuscular injections. (Administer both syringes at the same appointment/during the same encounter) Volume for IM injection = 2 x 0.5mL	
Infants and young children 8 to <20 months, regardless of weight	200mg	Give 2 x 100mg pre-filled syringes via separate intramuscular injections. (Administer both syringes at the same appointment/during the same encounter) Volume for IM injection = 2 x 1mL	

Scan QR code for full clinical guidance

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## Staff newsletter/internal broadcast content

The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program commences from today, 15 April 2024, across our birthing hospitals. This program will provide free Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) immunisations to newborns and eligible infants and young children. Eligibility criteria is outlined on the [Queensland Health Paediatric RSV Prevention Program page](#) and in the clinical documents for providers.

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

The program will use nirsevimab (brand name Beyfortus), a long-acting monoclonal antibody that provides infants and young children protection against RSV for at least 5 months.

Immunisation is shown to be 80 per cent effective in reducing infant hospitalisation due to RSV.

Similar to the paediatric hepatitis B vaccine, this product is administered by intramuscular injection and can be co-administered with other products.

Our midwives will play an extremely important role in the roll out of this program and are key in ensuring its ongoing success.

Information is available online to support the successful implementation of this program. The following resources are available for download:

- Clinical Guidance for Immunisation Service Providers
- RSV nirsevimab immunisation consent form
- Information for parents and carers

In the first instance, please download and print the consent forms while we make these available to order the same way as the birth-dose hepatitis B consent forms.

There will be additional resources added to the [QPRSVP Program webpage](#) over the coming weeks and I encourage all of you to familiarise yourselves with these resources. Online training will also be made available for staff. Further information will be shared when available.



I am excited about this program and the positive impact it will have to protect newborn infants in Queensland and to alleviate pressure on hospitals during the winter season.

Thank you for your patience and support as we work together to successfully implement this important disease prevention program.

## Web content

The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention 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. At the top, there is a blue header with the URL 'www.health.qld.gov.au' and a 'Contact us' link. Below the header is the Queensland Government logo and the text 'Queensland Health'. A search bar is located to the right of the logo. A navigation menu is visible below the search bar, with options for 'Public health & wellbeing', 'Clinical practice', 'Health system & governance', 'Careers', 'Research & reports', and 'Newsroom'. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Clinical practice > Clinical guidelines and procedures > Diseases and infection prevention > Immunisation > Paediatric RSV Prevention Program'. On the left, there is a sidebar menu with links for 'Immunisation', 'Immunisation Schedule Queensland', 'Registration and qualifications', 'Vaccine service provider information', 'School Immunisation Program', 'Healthcare worker vaccinations', 'Immunisation contacts', and 'Age of consent for vaccinations'. The main heading is 'Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program'. The text below the heading states: 'The Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention (QPRSV) Program will provide free Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) immunisation to eligible Queensland infants and young children. Commencing from 15 April 2024, the program will be available in all Queensland birthing hospitals for newborn infants. From 29 April 2024 parents and carers of eligible infants and young children can access nirsevimab from their routine immunisation provider. As there is limited supply of nirsevimab, parents and carers wishing to access this immunisation are encouraged to contact their routine immunisation provider to book an appointment ahead of time.'

## Easy Read resources

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

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

## Contact us

If you have any questions about the contents of this toolkit, please contact Queensland Health via email at: [strategiccommunications@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:strategiccommunications@health.qld.gov.au)