Factsheet 11 – How to lodge a medical exemption on AIR

Prefer to watch a video on this topic?
Visit Queensland Health's website at www.health.qld.gov.au/usingAIR

There are only **two valid medical exemptions** that can be notified to AIR:

1. Medical contraindication
2. Natural immunity

It is important to notify AIR if an individual under 20 years has a medical exemption to immunisation. These notifications are only required for individuals under 20 years of age as they can affect the immunisation status of a child or adolescent. For example, a child's record may state they are overdue for varicella vaccination; however, a notification of past varicella disease, i.e. natural immunity will remove this overdue status.

> **NOTE** Only GPs, paediatricians, clinical immunologists, public health physicians or infectious disease physicians are authorised to lodge a medical exemption for immunisation.

There are **two methods** for reporting a medical exemption to AIR. These are:

1. Using the AIR encounter screen to lodge the exemption directly onto the individual's record

   OR

2. Completing the immunisation medical exemption form (IM011.1807) and forwarding it to AIR.

> **NOTE**
> - AIR will return or reject incorrectly completed forms or medical exemption forms with invalid medical reasons to the provider who submitted them.
> - Information about medical exemptions and/or natural immunity can be found in the online version of The *Australian Immunisation Handbook*.
> - Natural immunity can only be granted against the following diseases: hepatitis B, mumps, measles, rubella and/or varicella.
> - Natural immunity can only be reported for all antigens in a vaccine. For example, for a child to be considered exempt from measles-mumps-rubella vaccine based on natural immunity, they would need to be immune to all three diseases.
> - A medical contraindication be recorded as either 'permanent' or 'temporary'.

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Using the AIR encounter screen to record a medical contraindication

1. Follow the steps at Appendix 4 to locate an individual's record on AIR. Once the correct individual's record is found, click on **'Medical contraindication'** on the left-hand menu (Figure 1).

Figure 1

2. Complete all fields marked with a red asterisk (Figure 2). For **'Type'**, i.e. permanent or temporary, if **'Temporary'** has been selected, enter a **'End Date'**. The start date will be automatically populated with the current date and it cannot be changed. The choices in the drop-down box for **'Reason'** are limited to only those considered valid reasons as per the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*.

3. Click on **'Add'** to submit the medical contraindication.

Figure 2

4. The following screen will show details of the medical exemption (Figure 3). If you wish to amend any of the details or delete the entry, in the **'Action'** column (highlighted by a red circle in Figure 3) click on the pencil symbol to edit or the rubbish bin symbol to delete the entry.

5. If all the details are correct, click on the **'Submit'** button.

Factsheet adapted from 'Immunisation records and data explained: a guide for providers' July 2018

6. After submitting the record, the next screen will confirm the notification (Figure 4).
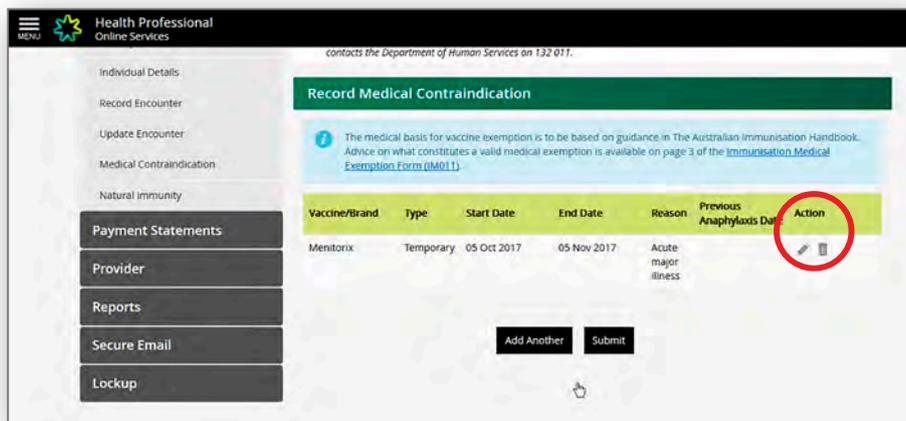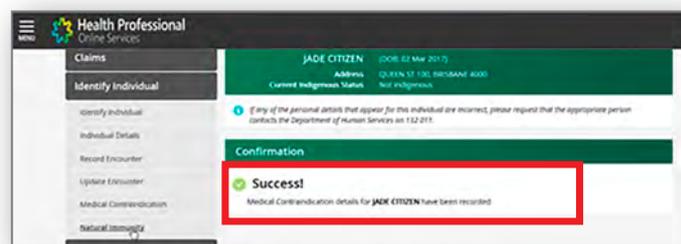

Figure 3

Figure 4

Using the AIR encounter screen to record natural immunity

1. Follow the steps at Appendix 4 to locate an individual's record on AIR. Once the correct individual's record is found, click on **'Natural immunity'** on the left-hand menu (Figure 1).
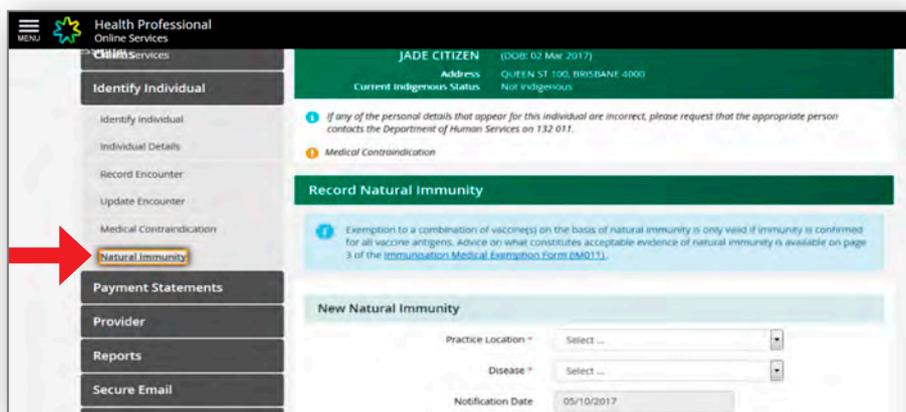

Figure 1

2. Complete all fields marked with a red asterisk (Figure 2). In the drop-down box for **'Disease'** only hepatitis B, varicella, or measles, mumps and rubella can be selected. These are the only diseases for which natural immunity can be recorded against. For measles, mumps and rubella, immunity must be against all three diseases (due to combination vaccine given.) The **'Notification date'** will be automatically populated with the current date and cannot be changed. Insert either a **'Laboratory Testing Date'** or **'Physician Based Clinical Diagnosis Date'**.

Figure 2

3. Click on **'Add'**.

4. The following screen will show details of the submission (Figure 3). If you wish to amend any of the details or delete the entry, in the **'Action'** column (highlighted red in Figure 3) click on the pencil symbol to edit or the rubbish bin symbol to delete the entry.

Figure 3

5. If all the details are correct, click on the **'Submit'** button.

6. After submitting the record, the next screen will confirm the notification (Figure 4).

Figure 4

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Using the medical exemption form to report medical contraindication or natural immunity

1. Download the form (IM011.1807) at www.humanservices.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/forms/im011.

2. **Read page three** (3) of the form which outlines valid medical contraindications to immunisation and information about assessing natural immunity.

3. Complete medical contraindication section as required, indicate if exemption is permanent or temporary (highlighted in red at Figure 5) and indicate the vaccines exempted (highlighted in yellow at Figure 5).

4. If the form is used to report **natural immunity**, complete the section on page two of the form (highlighted in green in Figure 6). Ensure natural immunity is confirmed for all antigens in a combination vaccine.

5. Before submitting to AIR, a copy should be kept on the person's medical record.

6. Send the form to AIR by posting or faxing to the address or fax number listed on the first page of the form. The form cannot be submitted online using HPOS.

Figure 5

> 🏳 **NOTE** AIR will return incorrectly completed forms or medical exemption forms with invalid medical reasons to the provider who submitted them.

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