

Immunisation Program Update

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From the manager

Queensland immunisation providers have worked diligently in recent years to not only meet the challenges of a regularly changing National Immunisation Program Schedule but also significant changes in recording and reporting vaccinations.

The move from paper records to reporting and recording vaccinations directly to the Australian Immunisation Register has delivered greater efficiencies across systems and services. It has also led to improved outcomes for Queenslanders especially families relying on accurate up-to-date records to ensure family payments and tax benefits are received on time.

In this issue, there's advice for providers about avoiding some of the common errors that lead to incorrect recording of antigens and dose numbers. There's also advice about what to do when a family presents for a childhood vaccination prior to the due date.

I trust the information provided about the 2019 influenza immunisation program will assist immunisation providers in their preparations for the 2019 flu season.

With best wishes!

Karen Peterson

Manager, Immunisation Program

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Time to Vaccinate



Influenza immunisation program 2019

What's new

- **All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and older are now eligible** to receive funded influenza vaccine.
- **Only Flud®** will be supplied under the National Immunisation Program for people aged 65 years and older.
- **Flud® will be supplied without a needle.** The recommended needle size for intramuscular injections is 22 to 25 gauge, 25mm long.
- **Afluria Quad®** is registered for use in individuals aged 5 years and older.

Deliveries

Initial deliveries

- Vaccine supply will commence **early April**.
- Initial delivery will contain
 - **Flud®** for people aged 65 years and older.
 - **Afluria Quad®** for people aged 5 years to 64 years with medical conditions predisposing them to severe influenza.

Ongoing deliveries

- Your **first order** for influenza vaccines **can be placed in mid-April** when the full range of influenza vaccines will be available.
- Orders for influenza vaccine can be placed **weekly** until the end of May, 2019.

Timetable for vaccine deliveries

When and which vaccines will be delivered in 2019	
Initial supply will be provided early April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flud® (for 65+ years)• Afluria Quad® (5 to 64 years)
First orders to commence mid-April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FluQuadri® Junior• FluQuadri®• Fluarix Tetra®• Afluria Quad®• Flud®

Remember

- **Discard any expired influenza vaccine** and last year's posters/information.
- **Ensure you have sufficient supply** of 22 to 25 gauge, 25mm needles.
- **Do not book clinics until you have influenza vaccine** in your vaccine refrigerator.
- **Prepare labels** for each influenza vaccine indicating the respective age group.
- **All children from 6 months to <5 years** are eligible to receive funded influenza vaccine

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Resources for 2019 influenza immunisation program

- Posters, fact sheets, a safety card, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fact sheet and clinical advice will be sent directly to you by the Australian Government, Department of Health.
- Queensland Health will provide an A3 poster and A4 information sheets for the 2019 Influenza Immunisation Program.

Vaccine brands, antigens, dose numbers and immunisation status

- The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) uses the disease antigens in a vaccine, rather than a vaccine brand to determine immunisation status. For example, if a child does not receive the **Infanrix® Hexa** vaccine due at two months of age, their AIR record will display their immunisation status as overdue for dose 1 (antigens) of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, Hib and hepatitis B, i.e. all the antigens contained in the **Infanrix® Hexa** vaccine.
- AIR assesses immunisation status based on the number of antigens already reported and the antigens considered 'due' or 'overdue'.
- Dose numbers must be reported sequentially. For example, if a child has received all vaccines at two, four and six months of age, they would have received three doses of the Hib antigen (contained in each dose of **Infanrix Hexa®**). Therefore, the **Act-HIB®** vaccine given at 18 months of age should be reported as dose 4, not dose 1 as it is the fourth dose of a Hib antigen. If the **Act-HIB®** is reported as dose 1, AIR will not be able to process it as it will be considered a 'duplicate dose number' since dose 1 of the Hib antigen was reported when the child was vaccinated at two months of age with **Infanrix Hexa®**. Importantly, until the **Act-HIB®** dose number error is rectified on AIR, the child will show as due/overdue for this dose. An example is shown below. The solution is to telephone AIR on **1800 653 809** and ask them to change the dose number.

19 Feb 2019	ActHIB [P3F181V]	1	Partially processed	102
19 Feb 2019	Infanrix [AC14B240AK]	4	Accepted	

Due Details		
Disease	Dose	Due Date -
HIB Schedule A	4	30 Nov 2018
Diphtheria	5	30 May 2021
Pertussis	5	
Polio	4	
Tetanus	5	

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- Did you know that the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) uses a set of rules called the National Due and Overdue Rules for Immunisation, to determine immunisation status? Depending on information reported by immunisation providers to AIR these rules determine whether an individual's immunisation status is assessed as 'due', 'not due' or 'overdue' at any point in time.

AIR national *due* and *overdue* rules for immunisation

- Based on the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*
- Applies to individuals under 20 years. However, there are also *due* and *overdue* rules for pneumococcal vaccine and herpes zoster vaccine for older people
- Help to understand how AIR works and explain an individual's immunisation record
- The rules are amended each time a new vaccine is added to the National Immunisation Program (NIP) or there is a change to the NIP Schedule
- For a copy go to: www.humanservices.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/enablers/national-due-and-overdue-rules-immunisation/33421

Changes to NIP April 2019

Meningococcal ACWY vaccine will be funded by the Australian Government for adolescents in Year 10 and for catch-up for those aged 15-19 years through their immunisation provider.

Meeting the needs of clients from CALD backgrounds

The Queensland Health Immunisation Strategy 2017–2022 identifies people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, especially those in refugee resettlement programs, as a priority population. Whilst ethnicity, cultural or linguistic markers are not collected as part of routine immunisation data there is evidence that immunisation problems exist for some groups.

The Immunisation Program seeks to better understand the needs of Queenslanders from CALD backgrounds and the issues that impact on immunisation especially for migrants and refugees. From this basis, better programs and services can be planned and delivered.

In November 2017, the Immunisation Program surveyed over 190 targeted service providers through a questionnaire seeking their perspectives on the immunisation needs and issues for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Targeted service providers included immunisation providers with large numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse clients and related organisations supporting immunisation programs for culturally and linguistically diverse population groups. The survey was well supported. Ninety-three questionnaires were completed and returned (47 hardcopy and 46 electronic via Survey Monkey) representing a 49 per cent response rate.

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The key issues for CALD clients identified by providers were:

- More information and resources in languages other than English (LOTE) are required (68%). Many providers (41%) were aware of interstate immunisation resources in LOTE. Providers identified 54 languages spoken by their CALD clients.
- Patient uncertainty about vaccination history (68%)
- Time required to develop catch-up schedules (56%)
- Common barriers mentioned were: patient recall, transport, organising interpreters.

These issues were similar to those recently raised by CALD community members in consultations on health issues undertaken with refugee communities by the Queensland University of Technology together with Mater Refugee Health.

The next phase in this project will be two-pronged. A project plan has been developed to guide the development of Queensland Health immunisation resources in languages other than English. Resources will initially target parents, the elderly and adolescents based on survey responses. Two levels of resources will be developed to target individuals with low literacy skills as well as those who are literate in their own language.

In addition to these resources, Queensland Health will contract TAFE Queensland to develop teaching/learning resources using immunisation as a content area for use in their Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). The topic of immunisation fits well with the context of settlement and the sub-context of health services available in Australia and can be linked to, and used as, a vehicle to teach a range of core skills at each AMEP course level.

The AMEP is an Australian Government initiative which provides up to 510 hours of English language tuition to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to help them learn foundation English language and settlement skills to enable them to participate socially and economically in Australian society. TAFE Queensland are the sole provider of the AMEP in Queensland.

ADOLESCENT IMMUNISATION REMINDERS

From mid-April 2019, reminder letters from the Australian Immunisation Register will be sent to adolescents aged 14 years 6 months, 17 years and 18 years who are overdue for any childhood or adolescent vaccine.

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