

Queensland Health

RSV Nirsevimab Immunisation Rollout

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medical
Services 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 and consent forms 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:

- First Nations parents and carers who are pregnant
- First Nations parents and carers with an infant less than 8 months old
- First Nations parents and carers of infants and children who are medically at-risk aged 8 to 19 months old (refer to clinical guidance for eligible conditions)

Secondary audience:

- Aboriginal medical service providers administering the RSV immunisation

Key messages

General

- RSV is a common virus that can infect people of all ages. RSV stands for Respiratory Syncytial Virus, but most people just call it RSV.
- Most people with RSV will recover within a week but some people, including babies and young children, can become very sick and will need to go to hospital.
- 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)
- high temperature
- not hungry
- fussy baby or more sleepy than usual
- fast breathing or working hard to breathe.

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 best way to prevent serious illness caused by RSV is to get your baby immunised.

- 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

- Side effects are uncommon but can include a rash or redness, swelling, and pain where the injection is given, and fever. Almost all reactions are minor and usually go away within a few days.
- The RSV immunisation medicine does not contain respiratory syncytial virus and it cannot make you sick. This is a prevention medicine.

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 RSV immunisation contains a medicine called Nirsevimab (Beyfortus®), which contains antibodies that can prevent severe RSV disease in babies and young children.
- The medicine is given as a needle, usually into the baby's thigh. The antibodies help the body to fight off harmful germs and provide protection against RSV straight away. This will help to keep babies and children healthy and at home in community.
- 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

- Talk to your health worker or doctor and book an appointment for RSV immunisation today.
- 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
- Digital screen/screensaver
- Long form content
- Short form content
- Information for parents and carers
- Web content

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

Social media content

Download here: [Social tile](#)



Download here: [Social tile](#)



Suggested social media caption:

Protect your bub from RSV.

RSV can infect everyone but bubs and young children can get really sick if they get RSV.

They might need to go to hospital and the effects from RSV can last a long time.

The best way to prevent serious illness caused by RSV is to get your bub immunised.

If you have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander baby who is under 8 months old, talk to your health worker or doctor about RSV immunisation today.

For more information on RSV, visit [Vaccination Matters website](#).

Posters

Download and print these posters to display in patient areas.

Download here: [Poster](#)



Queensland Health

Protect your bub from RSV

RSV can infect everyone but can cause bubs and young children to go to hospital.

What are the signs of RSV?
Understanding the signs will help keep your bub safe. Look out for these signs in your bub:

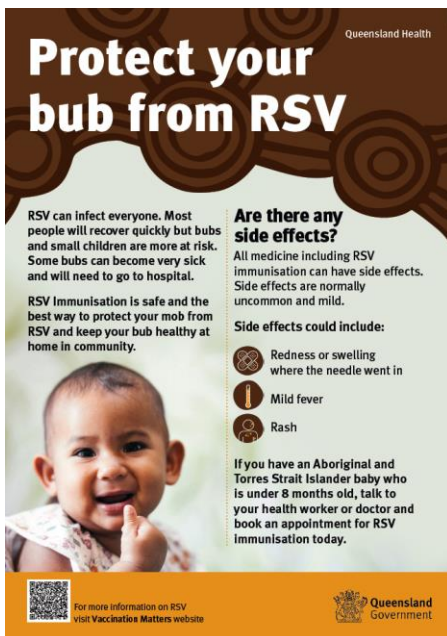
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Wheezing (noisy breathing)
- High temperature
- Not hungry
- Fussy baby or more sleepy than usual
- Fast breathing or working hard to breathe

If you have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander baby who is under 8 months old, talk to your health worker or doctor and book an appointment for RSV immunisation today.

For more information on RSV visit Vaccination Matters website

Queensland Government

Download here: [Poster](#)



Queensland Health

Protect your bub from RSV

RSV can infect everyone. Most people will recover quickly but bubs and small children are more at risk. Some bubs can become very sick and will need to go to hospital.

RSV immunisation is safe and the best way to protect your mob from RSV and keep your bub healthy at home in community.

Are there any side effects?
All medicine including RSV immunisation can have side effects. Side effects are normally uncommon and mild.

Side effects could include:

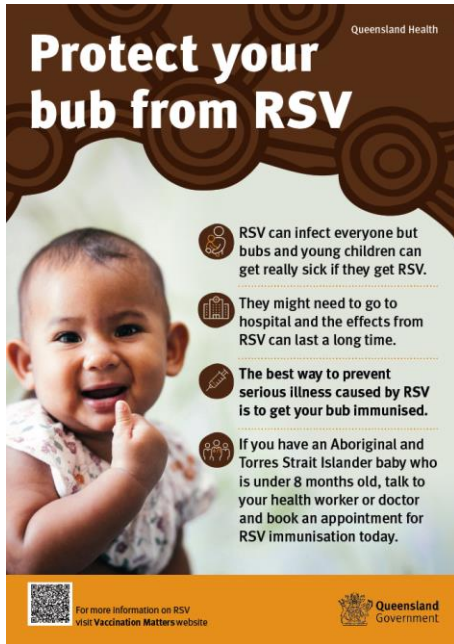
- Redness or swelling where the needle went in
- Mild fever
- Rash

If you have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander baby who is under 8 months old, talk to your health worker or doctor and book an appointment for RSV immunisation today.

For more information on RSV visit Vaccination Matters website

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Download here: [Poster](#)



Digital screen/ screensaver

Download here: [Screensaver](#)



Long form content

Protect your bub from RSV

RSV can infect everyone but can cause bubs and young children to go to hospital.

Understanding the signs of RSV will help keep your bub safe.

Look out for these signs in your bub:

- Runny nose
- Cough
- Wheezing (noisy breathing)
- High temperature
- Not hungry
- Fussy baby or more sleepy than usual
- Fast breathing or working hard to breathe

All medicine including RSV immunisation can have side effects. Side effects are normally uncommon and mild. Side effects could include:

- Redness or swelling where the needle went in
- Mild fever
- Rash

If you have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander baby who is under 8 months old, talk to your health worker or doctor about RSV immunisation today.

For more information on RSV, visit [Vaccination Matters website](#).

Short form content

Protect your bub from RSV

RSV can infect everyone but bubs and young children can get really sick if they get RSV.

They might need to go to hospital and the effects from RSV can last a long time.

The best way to prevent serious illness caused by RSV is to get your bub immunised.

If you have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander baby who is under 8 months old, talk to your health worker or doctor about RSV immunisation today.

For more information on RSV, visit [Vaccination Matters website](#).

Information for parents and carers

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

Download here: [RSV Immunisation – Information for First Nations parents and carers](#)

Web content

For clinicians

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

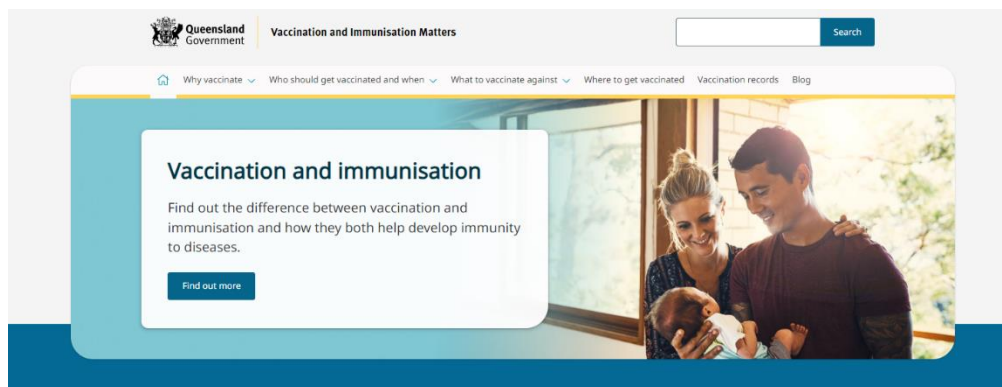
Visit the page here: [Queensland Paediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus Prevention Program](#)



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](#)



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](#)