



Immunisation Program Update


Issue No. 22 | June 2021

From the Manager

While COVID-19 vaccination dominates the daily news, the Immunisation Program's focus on the National Immunisation Program continues. Important news items from us, include:

 Orders for influenza vaccine continue. To date this year, Queensland Health has distributed more than one million doses of influenza vaccine to immunisation providers across Queensland. Don't forget influenza vaccination is funded for children from 6 months to under 5 years. Data from the Australian Immunisation Register shows there has been a decrease in influenza vaccination uptake in children this year.

 On 31 October 2021, the catch-up program for Zostavax (shingles vaccine) will end. Up until this date, all people 70 to 79 years can receive a funded Zostavax. After this date, only those aged 70 years will be eligible for a free Zostavax.

 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are recommended to receive additional funded vaccines that offer extra protection against pneumococcal disease and meningococcal B disease. For this reason, it is important to give all patients the opportunity to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and record this in the patients' medical history. Page 3 of this issue has more details.

Your feedback and suggestions are welcome. Email us at: immunisation@health.qld.gov.au

Kind regards

Sonia Harmen

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Influenza vaccination and COVID-19 vaccination – frequently asked questions

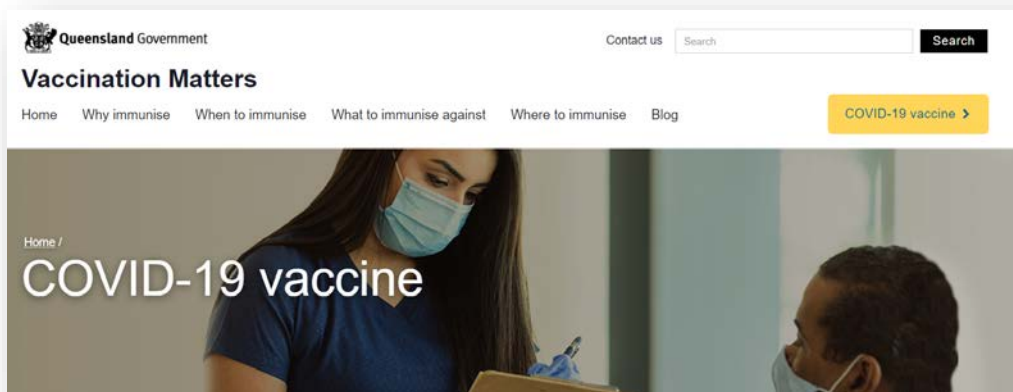
A series of questions and answers has been compiled by Queensland Health to assist immunisation providers in discussions with their patients. Questions like:

- ❓ *If I have the choice between the COVID-19 vaccine and the flu vaccine, which one should I have first?*
- ❓ *Will I be able to be vaccinated for influenza and COVID-19 if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?*

The FAQs can be accessed from the Queensland Health website at: [COVID-19 Advice for vaccine service providers | Queensland Health](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/COVID-19-Advice-for-vaccine-service-providers)

Queensland Health's **Vaccination Matters** website has recently been updated and now includes information on COVID-19 vaccines.

<https://vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/covid-19-vaccine/>



Mandatory reporting to AIR



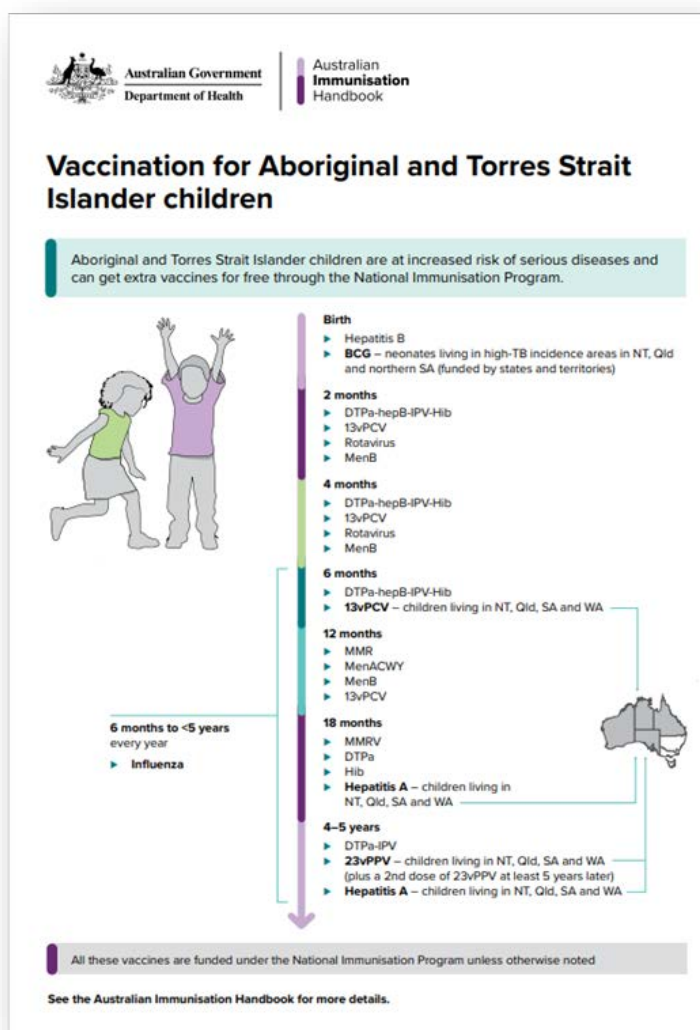
Reminder

- It is mandatory to report COVID-19 vaccinations and influenza vaccinations to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).
- From 1 July 2021, **ALL** National Immunisation Program vaccinations are required to be reported to AIR.

Vaccination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Australian Immunisation Register data extracted by Queensland's Health Contact Centre for the *Bubba Jabs on Time* intervention reveal that each month, there are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are not receiving all the vaccines recommended on the Immunisation Schedule.

Immunisation providers are reminded that the Australian Immunisation Handbook recommends additional vaccines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Additional vaccines are recommended in recognition that there are higher rates of some vaccine preventable diseases in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population compared with the non-Indigenous population. These childhood vaccinations are available through the National Immunisation Program (NIP). The immunisation schedule for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is displayed in an easy-to-follow infographic (below) which is available for download on the [Australian Immunisation Handbook website](#):



When do I get bubba jabbed?

Fridge

Birth

 2 needles

2 months (can be given from 6 weeks) Smiles & lifts head

 3 needles, 1 medicine

4 months Can roll over

 3 needles, 1 medicine

6 months Can sit

 2 needles

Free Flu Jab
From 6 months of age onwards
 *The first influenza jab is a 2 dose course, 4 weeks apart. Bubba will then need one dose each year.

 1 needle*

12 months Can stand & walk

 4 needles

18 months Can run

 4 needles

4 years Before school

 3 needles

It's important to have all bubba's jabs on time
 Schedule correct as at 1 July 2020
 Queensland Government

Bubba Jabs resources

Queensland Health has developed print resources to help parents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children understand the childhood immunisation schedule and the importance of immunisation.

Additional vaccines are recommended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. They are:

- 🕒 **At 2 months, 4 months & 12 months** – Bexsero® (three doses in total)
 - 🕒 **At 6 months** – Prevenar 13® (third dose)
- NB: A fourth dose of Prevenar 13® is still required at 12 months
- 🕒 **At 18 months & 4-5 years** – Vaqta paediatric® (2 doses in total)

Are all your bubba's jabs up to date?

Ask your healthworker, nurse or doctor **today!**

It's important to have all bubba's jabs on time

Promotional

For more information contact your local health centre or public health unit.

NURSE

Queensland Government

When to give bubba jabs:

Schedule (for parents)

Age	Protect against	How many needles	Vaccine
Birth	Hepatitis B TB (Tuberculosis) Influenza and high risk children only	2 needles	Hep B BCG
2 months	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) Hepatitis B Polio Haemophilus influenzae type B Pneumococcal Meningococcal B	3 needles, 1 medicine	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 Bexsero Rotarix
4 months	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) Hepatitis B Polio Haemophilus influenzae type B Pneumococcal Meningococcal B	3 needles, 1 medicine	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 Bexsero Rotarix
6 months	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) Hepatitis B Polio Haemophilus influenzae type B Pneumococcal	2 needles	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13
Free Flu Jab From 6 months of age onwards	Influenza	1 needle*	Influenza
12 months	Measles-mumps-rubella Haemophilus influenzae type B Pneumococcal Meningococcal B	4 needles	Priorix OR Priorix Act-HIS Prevenar 13 Bexsero
18 months	Measles-mumps-rubella Haemophilus influenzae type B Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) Hepatitis A	4 needles	Priorix Hexa OR Proquad Act-HIS Infanrix Hexa Topical Vaqta paediatric
4 years	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis Hepatitis A Pneumococcal	3 needles	Infanrix IPV Vaqta paediatric Prevenar 13

For more information contact your health worker, nurse or doctor.

Queensland Government

Do your patients know how to access an Immunisation History Statement?

Anyone with a Medicare number can access their immunisation history statement using either:

[Medicare online account](#) through [myGov](#) or [Express Plus Medicare mobile app](#)

People without a Medicare number can apply for an Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI) and My Health Record. Visit www.digitalhealth.gov.au/mhr-without-medicare details for information.

Children over the age of 14 years can access their own immunisation history statements.

An immunisation provider can print the person's immunisation history statement. Alternatively, anyone can call the [Australian Immunisation Register](#) on 1800 653 809 and ask for their immunisation history statement to be posted. This can take up to 14 days to be delivered.



Immunisation history statements from AIR now show COVID-19 vaccination status. The status will not show as 'up to date' until all COVID-19 vaccinations have been given and reported.



Vaccinations for pregnant women

COVID-19 may be top of mind but don't forget whooping cough and influenza vaccinations

It's understandable, pregnant women may be focused on COVID-19 at this time and how it could affect them and/or their unborn baby. They are probably also concerned about whether they should have a COVID-19 vaccine*. However, it is vital women don't lose sight of the importance of their whooping cough and influenza vaccinations. Vaccination during pregnancy is the best way to protect the mother and baby from life-threatening diseases. Thousands of pregnant women have been safely vaccinated and potentially avoided illness as a result.

Influenza (the flu) and whooping cough vaccinations can be given at the same time or separately. Whooping cough vaccinations can be given between 20 – 32 weeks of pregnancy and influenza vaccinations can be given at any stage of pregnancy.


The Queensland Health website has a range of questions and answers which pregnant and breastfeeding women may find useful. To find out more, click [HERE](#)


Where can I get more information?

Ask your immunisation provider about the free vaccine today.

Get in touch with your state or territory health department:

ACT	02 6205 2300
SA	1300 232 272
NSW	1300 066 055
TAS	1800 671 738
NT	08 8922 8044
VIC	1300 882 008
WA	08 9321 1312
QLD	13 HEALTH (13 432 584)

 health.gov.au/immunisation



All information in this publication is correct as at March 2019.



Ask about the free vaccine today.
health.gov.au/immunisation

Remind your patients to have their flu and whooping cough vaccinations.

* **RANZCOG and ATAGI recommend that pregnant women are routinely offered [Pfizer mRNA vaccine \(Cominarty\)](#) at any stage of pregnancy. To find out more click [HERE](#)**

Zostavax[®] safety alert

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has issued a **safety alert** for Zostavax[®] (shingles vaccine). The vaccine should not be used in people with compromised immune function as it is associated with a risk of mild to serious complications (including death) from infection with the vaccine virus.

Consumers and health professionals are advised that the TGA has received reports of cases involving adverse events in people on low doses of immunosuppressive medicine. Immunisation providers should be aware of the potential for this very rare adverse event.

A [Pre-vaccination checklist specific for Zostavax[®]](#) is available on the Australian Government Department of Health clinical news website.

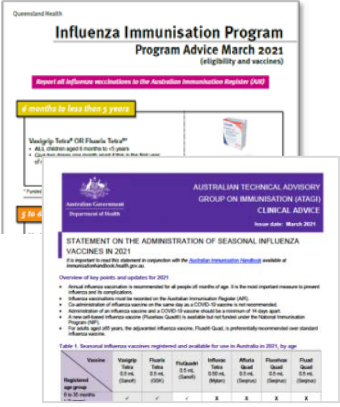

Further details about the Zostavax[®] vaccine safety alert can be found on the [TGA website](#).

REMINDER:

On 31 October 2021, the catch-up program for Zostavax[®] will end. Up until this date, people up to 79 years of age can receive a funded Zostavax. After this date, only 70-year-olds will be eligible for a free Zostavax[®].



Resources

Subject	Where to find	Example/s
<p>Influenza vaccination program 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources from Queensland Health Guidelines from Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) 	<p>Queensland Health 2021 influenza vaccination guidelines</p> <p>Or contact your local Public Health Unit for copies</p> <p>ATAGI advice on seasonal influenza vaccines in 2021</p>	
<p>Queensland Health immunisation fact sheets & videos in various languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Immunisation saves lives</i> fact sheets in nine languages <i>About Immunisation</i> fact sheets, suitable for people with low literacy skills and in 32 languages. <i>How to access immunisation records</i> in 11 languages. Short videos about immunisation in English with subtitles in various languages. 	<p>Immunisation fact sheets and videos in English and other languages</p>	
<p>Whooping cough and Influenza vaccines for pregnant women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brochure 'Protect your baby from whooping cough'* <p>* This resource is also available in 10 languages: Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Arabic, Tagalog, Greek, Punjabi, Italian, Hindi, Korean and Vietnamese.</p>	<p>Australian Government Department of Health website: Click HERE</p>	