

WODEN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

IMMUNISATION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

Woden Early Childhood Centre has a duty of care to protect the health and well being of children and staff who attend the Centre. This includes providing immunisation information and monitoring records for all who attend the Centre.

This policy supports inclusive practices at Woden Early Childhood Centre. Please refer to the Inclusion Policy.

RATIONALE:

Children and Carers spend time in close contact with each other. This increases the likelihood of transmission of illness and diseases, some of which are preventable through immunisation.

Please refer to :

National Health and medical Research Council. (2005) Staying healthy in child care : Preventing infectious disease in child care (4th ed) Canberra

Department of Health and Ageing. (2007). *Immunise Australia program*. Retrieved November 19 2008 from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/home>

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all families and staff including students and volunteers.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Occupational Health and Safety Act 1999
ACT Centre based Services Conditions August 2000 (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 b, 1.23)

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM:

Quality Practicsees Guide 2005. principles 5.5, 6.6, 7.2

LOCATION OF INFORMATION:

This information is shared with families and staff during orientation, through pamphlets and the Policy CD. Hard copies are also available to those families and staff who need it.

LINKING POLICIES

Inclusion Policy
Enrollment Policy
health illness and exclusion Policy

Source Documents:

National Health and medical Research Council. (2005) Staying healthy in child care : Preventing infectious disease in child care (4th ed) Canberra

Department of Health and Ageing. (2007). *Immunise Australia program*. Retrieved November 19 2008 from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/home>

Community Child care Co-operative Ltd Rattler. Issue 63 Spring 2002

ACT government department for health. Retrieved on November 19 2008 from www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sp&did=10054021

Key Resources:

The following are available to families and staff. Pamphlets to be given out and Vidoe's on loan.

Ausralian Government Department of health and Aging, Protecting your child: understanding childhood Immunisation (Pamphlet)

Ausralian Government Department of health and Aging, Protecting your child: understanding childhood Immunisation (Video)

POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed on a biannual basis both by the centres staff and then by families. Once the Policy has been reviewed and changes are made it goes to the management committee for ratification. Please refer to the Policy development and review policy

Date endorsed by Committee: 24.3.09

Date to be reviewed: 24.3.10

Vaccination programs in Australia

As anyone who has a child in care will tell, you it's almost impossible to avoid germs and sickness when you have a group of children together sharing just about everything. It might be useful to read [Keeping Your Child Healthy In Child Care](#) for some general tips on how to reduce the number of times your child gets sick while in Child Care.

Another well recognised way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in child care, and the wider community, is through vaccination. In Australia vaccination is optional; however, the Government encourages parents to vaccinate through providing a universal free vaccination program and by offering financial incentives to parents who complete the full program.

You can get detailed information on [current immunisation programs](#) and information on the [vaccines](#) from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing website.

Exclusion policies

Choosing not to vaccinate your child may mean he or she will be excluded from the Woden early Childhood Centre when a vaccine preventable disease breaks out. Excluding children who aren't vaccinated is for their own protection and also to avoid the possibility of them infecting other children.

To ensure exclusion policies are adhered to, we will ask parents to provide a copy of their child's vaccination history on enrolment and again after each immunisation.

Exclusion policies can be frustrating for working parents who rely on child care. Read [www.careforkids.com.au](#) article on [Sick Days and Emergency Care](#) for some ideas on how to find child care if your child is excluded from the child care Centre.

Woden Early Childhood Centre has follows recommendations from the department of health and has exclusion policies for illnesses which can't be vaccinated against as well. Remember that the policies are in place to protect your child and the rest of your family and you should make every effort to stick to these rules.

Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children immunised in accordance with the ACT recommended schedule.

The Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992 requires parents of all children enrolling in child care to provide documented evidence of the child's immunisation status.

Immunisation is not compulsory. However, in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unimmunised children will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak for their own protection.

Staff are encouraged to have recommended routine immunisations (tetanus, diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps, rubella) and are also recommended to have hepatitis B vaccination. We will ask staff to provide a copy of their vaccination history on commencement.

Responsibilities of the Director / Centre

Under the Public Health (Amendment Act) it is the Director's responsibility to:

- a) Request that parents provide documented evidence of the child's immunisation status.
- b) Maintain and regularly update the Immunisation Register of the immunisation status of each child.
- c) Update the Immunisation Register when each child reaches 6, 12 and 18 months of age. The ACT Health Department's Personal Health Record is the preferred form of documentation for the parent to use and show
- d) Permit the Medical Officer of Health of the local Public Health Unit to enter the centre and inspect the Immunisation Register.
- e) Notify the ACT Public Health Unit (Telephone 6205 -2300) as soon as she/he is aware that a child has contracted a notifiable disease.
- f) Comply with a directive from the Medical Officer of Health to exclude unimmunised contacts from the centre for the duration of the outbreak.
- g) Send a note home with the child who is to be excluded and ensure that the child is excluded for the specified period.

Staff Immunisation:

STAFF VACCINATION POLICY.

AIM

To ensure all staff are up-to-date with all the vaccinations that are recommended for adults, as well as those special vaccinations which are recommended because of increased risk of exposure in the workplace.

EXPLANATION

There is a lot of evidence that children who attend childcare centres are at an increased risk of catching and transmitting infectious diseases and therefore staff are also at increased risk. The most important ways to minimise the spread of infectious diseases are hand washing, good environmental hygiene and appropriate vaccination of children and staff.

ACTION

- Staff should regularly go over the centre's Hygiene Policy and revise procedures for infection control.
- Information on vaccine preventable diseases should be made available to staff.
- Information on non-vaccine preventable diseases which are prevalent in childcare should be made available to staff.
- All staff members should complete a Staff Immunisation Record card. This card should be kept up-to-date by the staff member in association with the Director. See a copy of the relevant card attached. Such record cards should be filed away and treated as confidential, sensitive information.
- Arrangements for re-imburement of staff for the cost of immunisation for Hepatitis A and B, influenza, Whooping Cough and Chicken Pox are negotiated by the staff and management in the centre's EBA.

Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd. **Rattler**. Issue 63 Spring 2002.

Sources – Health Protection Services. ACT Health and

Immunisation Policy

1. Introduction

The Woden Early Childhood Centre committed to providing employees, with a safe and healthy environment for them to work in.

The Centre recognises that employees, may, as part of their work, be at a potential risk of exposure to infectious diseases.

This policy provides details and outlines responsibilities related to immunisation requirements at the Centre.

The Centre recognises its responsibility to make available appropriate immunisation to employees potentially at risk of exposure to vaccine preventable diseases.

For the purposes of this policy, infectious diseases include those that are caused by the exposure to blood or body fluid products. Some infectious diseases are preventable via appropriate immunisation.

The areas in which there is an increased risk include:

- Child care staff
- First aiders

The Centre promotes continual assessment of the risk of exposure to infectious diseases, prompt identification of employees, potentially at risk and provision of relevant information and training.

2. Responsibilities

The Centre

The Centre will provide, as appropriate, education and information on infection control for employees, particularly in areas where a risk has been identified.

The Director is responsible for enforcing the policy and ensuring that:

- All, employees, are aware of and act upon their responsibilities in accordance with this policy, associated Centre's policies and legislative requirements
- Non immune persons are encouraged to be vaccinated
- Those who decline to be vaccinated are advised of any health risks related to their work or course of study. Employees who decline vaccination must sign an acknowledgement form. There are separate forms for employees (required)
- Risk assessments are conducted of persons who decline vaccination to determine if any alteration to their work is required to reduce the risk of infection
- Providing financial assistance for employees for an immunisation course
- Maintaining confidential records of immunisations of the employee's personnel file.

The Director has responsibility for ensuring:

- All individuals follow this policy, associated Centre's policies and legislative requirements
- Appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision of persons under their control
- Principles of Standard Precaution (in accordance with NHMRC 'Infection Control in the Health Care Setting. Guidelines for the Prevention of Transmission of Infectious Diseases') and safe work instructions are adopted by themselves, employees, students and others into work practices

3. Occupation-based Recommendations / Testing

The Management Committee recommends that all employees, at risk of exposure or at risk of exposing others to infectious diseases are aware of their immune status.

Immunisation Schedule

Designation	Immunisation Recommended
Child Care Staff	Hepatitis A, MMR (Measles-Mumps-Rubella), Pertussis and Varicella (Chickenpox)
First Aiders	Hepatitis B
Staff who handle human blood and body tissue	Hepatitis B

Vaccination against the following infectious agents

Diphtheria / Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, MMR (Measles-Mumps-Rubella), Meningococcal Type C, Pertussis, Polio, Typhoid and Varicella (Chickenpox).

Immunisations can also be arranged or provided by general practitioners.

Where immunisation is necessary due to the risk of exposure or exposing others to infectious diseases, the cost of immunisation of employees shall be met by the Centre as long as the immunisation is undertaken.

The Centre recognises that employees, have a right to:

- a) choose whether or not to be vaccinated
- b) choose whether or not to disclose their immune status

Neither employees, are required to disclose information relating to their health status except as required under *Health Act* ??????.

4. Records

The immunisation provider is legally required to maintain confidential records of all immunisations and should be advised immediately of any adverse reactions from such immunisations.

Evidence of immunisation should be provided by the employee, to the Director of the centre.

The Centre is required to maintain confidential information on those employees, who have had immunisations as part of their work.

Acknowledgement of Declined Vaccination forms should be completed and retained for those who decline to be immunised.

5. References

The Australian Immunisation Handbook, 8th Edition. NHMRC 2003:

<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/handbook.htm>

Infection control guidelines for the prevention of transmission of infectious diseases in the health care setting. Department of Health and Ageing 2004: <http://www.icg.health.gov.au>

Immunisations for children

In an effort to improve childhood immunisation rates, the New South Wales Government has amended the Public Health Act 1991. The Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992 requires parents to provide documented evidence of the Immunisation status of all children enrolling in schools, Pre-Schools and Child Care Centres.

Proof of immunisation (Blue Book or equivalent) is required by the Centre upon enrolment (or as your child is immunised).

Immunisation Course Entails

8 weeks of age Triple antigen and sabin

12 weeks of age Triple antigen and sabin

16 weeks of age Triple antigen and sabin/HIB Meningitis

15 months of age Measles/Mumps/Rubella (combined)

18 months of age Triple antigen/HIB meningitis

4.5-5 years of age 5 years CDT and sabin

Hep B. & Other

If your child has not had the complete course of immunisation for his/her age then the immunisation for his/her age should be brought up to date. This does not mean that he/she needs to have the ones he/she missed out on.

All children who attend the Centre should be immunised to ensure their own health as well as those of other children.

Unimmunised Children

Parents will be notified when there is a current outbreak of an infectious disease at the Centre. It is strongly recommended that if a child is not immunised against the illness that the child be kept home for the protection of other children attending the Centre and his/her own protection

Immunisation

Immunisation not only protects individuals but also others in the community, by increasing the general level of immunity and minimizing the spread of infection. Immunisation uses the body's natural defence mechanism - the immune response - to build resistance to infectious diseases. Twelve diseases can be prevented by routine childhood immunisation - diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), poliomyelitis (polio), measles, mumps, rubella (german measles), haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), hepatitis B, meningococcal C, pneumococcal and varicella (chickenpox).

The ACT Health Department offers a comprehensive community immunisation program for children. All vaccinations, which are in accordance with the National Immunisation Program Schedule, are offered **free of charge**.

Chickenpox Vaccine Program

From 01 November 2005, all children born on or after 01 May 2004 will be eligible to receive free Chickenpox vaccine (Varilrix). Refer to the Immunisation Program Schedule below for session times and locations. For parents of children born before 01 May 2004, the vaccine is available at cost price.

Changes to the National Immunisation Program

Children born from 1 May 2007 are now able to be vaccinated for the prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis. This oral vaccine is administered at 2, 4, and 6 months of age.

Overseas Immunisations

If your child has had vaccines overseas you will need to:

- Transfer the overseas vaccine records into the Australian Schedule

If you are returning overseas without completing the Australian Schedule it is important to notify the Health Department either by email or fax. Please take the time to do this as it allows your history to be put on hold with the Australian Childhood Immunisation Registrar and prevent mail being sent out to your old address.

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)

The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) is a national database that keeps a record of your child's immunisations up to the age of 7 years.

Immunisation providers (G.P. or baby/child centre) report your child's immunisations to the ACIR. A history statement of all your child's immunisations is automatically posted out to you.

The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register now supplies a history statement that acts as a School Entry Immunisation Certificate. It is automatically posted out to you once your child has completed the 4-year-old immunisations and has completed all required childhood immunisations.

You may track your child's immunisation history online from Medicare's Online Health information pages at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/yourhealth/our_services/index.shtml

You may also contact ACIR direct to query your child's immunisation history on 1800 653 809.

- It is natural that in group care and despite high standards of hygiene, children may be exposed to contagious illnesses. Parents are encouraged to have their child immunised

according to the recommended Health Department schedule and to make sure that vaccinations are kept up to date.

- Original immunisation records need to be sighted by the Director or a senior staff member who will take two photocopies one to be kept on file and the other to the ACIR.
- A letter from the parent is required if your child (ren) is not immunised stating that it is your decision and take responsibility for such action. Non-immunised children will be excluded from the Centre during an outbreak of infectious disease.
- Under Health Department direction, a child not immunised against measles (MMR vaccination at 12 months) must be excluded from a child care centre for two weeks once any case of measles is diagnosed. A case of measles must be notified to the local medical authority.
- Children who are not immunised will be excluded from care during outbreaks of some infectious diseases in accordance with the National Health & Medical Research Council guidelines, even if their child is well. Fees are still payable during this time.
- Children and staff with infectious diseases will be excluded from the centre in accordance with the National Health & Medical Research Council guidelines.
- If a child or staff member is unwell they should stay at home.
- In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation, the child or staff member will require a medical certificate verifying that their recover is sufficient to enable their return to the centre, from their Doctor