

Immunisation Services - Authority for Registered Nurses

Document Number PD2006_057

Publication date 28-Jul-2006

Functional Sub group Clinical/ Patient Services - Infectious diseases
Clinical/ Patient Services - Nursing
Population Health - Communicable Diseases

Summary Details the authority that applies to registered nurses with specialist training to carry out vaccination programs, which are complementary to those provided by medical practitioners. This policy directive applies to a class of registered nurses who have completed defined training in immunisation. It is not applicable to registered nurses who have not completed such defined training but who may administer vaccines under the direction and authorisation of a medical officer. The policy lists specific vaccines and definitive conditions, to which specially trained registered nurses must conform.

Replaces Doc. No. Immunisation Services - Authority for registered nurses [PD2005_229]

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Applies to Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations, Community Health Centres, Divisions of General Practice, Environmental Health Officers of Local Councils, NSW Dept of Health, Private Hospitals and Day Procedure Centres, Private Nursing Homes, Public Health Units, Public Hospitals

Audience All staff

Distributed to Public Health System, Community Health Centres, Divisions of General Practice, Environmental Health Officers of Local Councils, Health Associations Unions, Health Professional Associations and Related Organisations, NSW Ambulance Service, NSW Department of Health, Public Health Units, Public Hospitals, Private Hospitals and Day Procedure Centres, Private Nursing Homes

Review date 28-Jul-2011

File No. 00/1513

Director-General Status Active

Compliance with this policy directive is mandatory.

A 57	B 24	C 54	D 20	E
F 23	G 18	H 45	I	J44
K 2	L 20	M 7	N 13	P

AUTHORITY FOR REGISTERED NURSES TO PROVIDE IMMUNISATION SERVICES

This Policy Directive supersedes:

- Policy Directive PD2005_229 (Circular 2002/7) - Authority for Registered Nurses to Provide Immunisation Services

NSW Health is fully committed to improving immunisation coverage rates and achieving national goals and targets. The immunisation status of members of the community is seen to be greatly improved if registered nurses, who have specialised training, are able to carry out vaccination programs that are complementary to those performed by medical practitioners.

This policy directive applies to a class of registered nurses who have completed defined training in immunisation.

It is not applicable to registered nurses who have not completed such defined training but who may administer vaccines under the direction and authorisation of a medical officer.

Authority for certain registered nurses to provide immunisation services without direct medical authorisation has been issued under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 and was published in the New South Wales Government Gazette No. 94, on 29 July 2005.

This Authority applies to the following medications:

adrenaline	pertussis vaccine
diphtheria vaccine	pneumococcal vaccine
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b (Hib) vaccine	poliomyelitis vaccine
hepatitis A vaccine	rubella vaccine
hepatitis B vaccine	tetanus vaccine
influenza vaccine	tuberculin purified protein derivative
measles-mumps-rubella vaccine	tuberculosis vaccine
meningococcal vaccine	varicella vaccine

and is subject to all of the following conditions:

1. the nurse is employed in connection with a vaccination program in a health service or a place of work; and
2. the nurse administers a vaccine only in connection with that vaccination program; and
3. the nurse has successfully completed:
 - i. The New South Wales Health Department Immunisation Accreditation Program for Registered Nurses (prior to 2001); and/or
 - ii. The Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses administered by the New South Wales College of Nursing (from 2001); and/or

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- iii. An interstate or overseas immunisation education program that conforms to the National Guidelines for Immunisation Education for Registered Nurses and as approved by the New South Wales Health Department; and
4. the storage, pre-vaccination assessment and administration of each vaccine is at all times undertaken in accordance with the procedures specified in the National Health and Medical Research Council's *current edition* of the Australian Immunisation Handbook; and
5. an emergency kit containing adrenaline injection 1:1000, and, a written protocol for the treatment of anaphylaxis, including adrenaline use is available for each vaccination occasion of service. Administration of adrenaline is at all times undertaken in accordance with the procedures specified in the National Health and Medical Research Council's *current edition* of the Australian Immunisation Handbook; and
6. the nurse administers tuberculin purified protein derivative for tuberculosis skin testing and tuberculosis vaccine only if they have completed additional education in the use of these substances and only if the nurse's record of education states that this additional education has been completed; and
7. as required, under the *NSW Public Health Act 1991*, the nurse reports an Adverse Event Following Immunisation (AEFI) to the local Public Health Unit. The AEFIs to be notified are listed in the current edition of *The Australian Immunisation Handbook*; and
8. the nurse ensures that a medical practitioner is contactable for medical advice at all times during the vaccination program; and
9. to maintain authority to immunise, the nurse annually reviews best practice policy for immunisation by attending a seminar or update on current practices and obtains a statement of proficiency in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. Area Health Service Immunisation Coordinators are required to facilitate annual immunisation updates for nurse immunisers working within their Area.

The following conditions also apply to immunisation services provided by registered nurses:

- (a) Employers are responsible for ensuring that before a registered nurse is authorised to administer vaccines without medical supervision that the nurse:
 - i. is currently registered in NSW; and
 - ii. fulfills the above conditions 1 – 9; and
 - iii. has completed a cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course or update course in the previous 12 months.

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- (b) Registered nurses, who completed the NSW Health Department Immunisation Accreditation Course for Registered Nurses prior to 2001 and, who undertook additional specialist training in the administration of Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) or Bacille Calmette-Guèrin (BCG), may continue to administer these vaccines, if they are employed by an Area Health Service.

Registered nurses, who completed the NSW Health Department Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses prior to 2001 and who now wish to undertake additional specialist training in the administration of TST or BCG, and who are employed by an Area Health Service, must undertake the **complete** Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses administered by NSW College of Nursing, that is Sections 1, 2 and 3 as described below in (c). (See additional conditions for Section 3 below.)

- (c) The Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses administered by the NSW College of Nursing contains three sections.

Section 1: Theoretical Foundations of Immunisation

Section 2: Clinical Foundations of Immunisation

Section 3: Tuberculosis, tuberculin skin test and Bacille Calmette-Guèrin vaccination

- Topic 1 – TB & TST
- Topic 2 – BCG

Registered nurses, who wish to be authorised to provide immunisation services, must complete Sections 1 & 2 of the Course.

ONLY registered nurses employed by an Area Health Service can undertake Section 3.

Section 3: Topic 1 – TB and TST

To undertake **Section 3, Topic 1**, the registered nurse must:

- be employed by an Area Health Service.
- have written approval from the Area TB Coordinator and be approved by NSW Health.
- have completed Sections 1 & 2 of the Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses administered by the NSW College of Nursing.

Section 3: Topic 2 – BCG

To undertake **Section 3, Topic 2**, the registered nurse must:

- be employed by an Area Health Service and work in a Chest Clinic.

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- have written approval from the Area TB Coordinator and be approved by NSW Health.
 - have completed Sections 1 & 2 of the Immunisation Course for Registered Nurses administered by the NSW College of Nursing since 2001.
 - have completed Topic 1 – TB and TST
- (d) Registered nurses who work under the direction of a medical practitioner.
- i. registered nurses, in the normal course of their work who work under the written direction of a medical practitioner, can administer all vaccines including TST. However, BCG vaccine is excluded from this list due to its restricted distribution to Area Health Service Chest Clinics
 - ii. registered nurses, can undertake 'competency based' training in the administration and interpretation of TST, as coordinated by Area Health Service Chest Clinic staff, however are not authorised to administer TST without a doctor's written order.

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Acting Director-General