



## Safe practice – vaccines are prescription medicines

Registered nurses place their nursing practice at risk each time they administer a vaccine without a prescription or standing order unless the registered nurse is an authorised vaccinator and is administering a specifically stated vaccine or vaccines for the purpose of an approved immunisation programme, for example the National Immunisation Schedule or a local immunisation programme approved by the Medical Officer of Health.

Registered nurses are required to administer medications within legislation, codes and scope of practice; and according to authorised prescription, established policy and guidelines.

- When a registered nurse **IS NOT** an authorised vaccinator
  - Every vaccine dose must be prescribed individually or with a standing order from a registered medical practitioner, nurse practitioner with prescribing rights or registered midwife
- When a registered nurse **IS** an authorised vaccinator
  - An authorised vaccinator can administer the specific vaccines covered by their authority without a prescription or standing order
  - Any other vaccine has to be prescribed individually or with standing order

A patient's doctor may write "Needs hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccines for travel" in the clinical notes. A registered nurse cannot use this clinical note to administer either a course of Twinrix® or a course of Havrix® and Engerix-B® vaccines, without a prescription. A prescription in the clinical notes needs to include the vaccine name, strength (where appropriate), dose, and frequency of dose administration.

Standing Order Guidelines have been developed by the Ministry of Health to assist issuers comply with regulatory requirements when developing and/or reviewing a standing order, and to assist people administering and/or supplying under standing orders. A copy of the Guidelines can be downloaded from the [Ministry of Health](#) website.

Non-Schedule vaccines that may be covered by a local immunisation programme approved by the Medical Officer of Health include influenza vaccine for healthy individuals aged under 65 years, vaccines to reduce occupational risk of acquiring disease, vaccines to protect travellers, and tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine for household contacts of new babies.

### References

- Medicines Amendment Regulations (No 2) 2015 [NZ]. Pub. (July 27, 2015) [cited 2016 Jan 14]. Available from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2015/0180/latest/DLM6513961.html>.
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- Ministry of Health. Immunisation handbook 2014 [Internet]. Wellington: Ministry of Health; 2014 (updated Jun 6, 2014) [cited 2016 Jan 14]. Available from: <http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/immunisation-handbook-2014>.
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## Special report: Mortality and morbidity of pertussis in children and young people in New Zealand 2002–2014

Prepared by the Health Quality & Safety Commission for the Child and Youth Mortality Review Committee, the report emphasises the need for existing immunisation programmes to reduce the risk of pertussis in infants, especially those who are Māori, Pacific or under 3 months of age.

The report also establishes the need for strategies to raise awareness of the maternal Tdap immunisation in the third trimester and to improve access to and timely administration of the first three infant immunisation events, particularly for Māori and Pacific infants for whom significant equity issues were identified.

The full report can be downloaded from the [Health Quality & Safety Commission](#) website and our [Resources/Written Resources](#) webpage.



## Immunisation Week 2–8 May 2016

The World Health Organization celebrates Immunisation Week annually to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease.

The theme for Immunisation Week in New Zealand is 'Protecting baby begins at pregnancy' with the key messages:

- Immunisation during pregnancy protects baby and you.
- You can protect your baby when they are most vulnerable to whooping cough and influenza.
- Immunise on time, every time.
- Enrolling your baby with a general practice as soon as they are born helps them get the care they need.

Resource packs will be distributed to practices by their regional Immunisation Week contact person in March.



## ●●● from the phones

Addressing some of the questions we receive on the 0800 IMMUNE phone line

### Influenza website for health professionals

A key resource for the 2016 Influenza Immunisation Programme is the *Health Professionals* website, [www.influenza.org.nz](http://www.influenza.org.nz).

Influenza Immunisation Programme resources can only be ordered online through the website this year.

The website also provides information about claiming funded vaccine, recording influenza immunisation on the NIR, use of antivirals for influenza treatment and/or prevention, and related diseases (pneumococcal, meningococcal, and pertussis). You can also access the *Influvac*<sup>®</sup> and *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> data sheets, funded vaccine order form, and the Influenza Kit references.

### 2016 Influenza Kit

#### When will I receive my 2016 Influenza Kit?

Influenza Kits have been posted to general practices, DHB/healthcare workers, private vaccinators, pharmacists, and midwives/LMCs.

If you have not received an Influenza Kit please contact Erin by email [influenza@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:influenza@auckland.ac.nz) or telephone 09 923 2075.

The 2016 Influenza Kit is also available online at [www.influenza.org.nz](http://www.influenza.org.nz).

### Influenza vaccines 2016

#### What influenza vaccine brands are funded for eligible patients?

*Influvac*<sup>®</sup> and *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> are the only vaccines funded for individuals who are eligible to receive free influenza vaccine.

Claims submitted for any other influenza vaccine brand will not be accepted.

#### How do I order funded influenza vaccines?

*Influvac*<sup>®</sup> and *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> can be ordered online or by fax. The 2016 order form can be photocopied from the Influenza Kit or downloaded from [www.influenza.org.nz](http://www.influenza.org.nz).

#### When will the funded influenza vaccines be available?

Distribution of influenza vaccines is expected to begin in late March. Please do not book clinics before you receive your vaccines.

#### When can we start giving funded influenza vaccines?

Administration and claiming of funded influenza vaccines can begin as soon as your clinic receive the vaccines.

#### How often can I order funded influenza vaccines?

Depending on your fridge capacity, please try to order every two weeks (the same weeks as you order funded Schedule vaccines).

Due to demand, please allow up to 48 hours for dispatch of your order. Please do not book clinics before you receive your vaccines.

#### Are influenza vaccinations being recorded on the NIR?

All influenza vaccinations given at general practices will be recorded on the NIR unless an adult does not want their vaccination recorded on the Register. Information about recording influenza vaccinations on the NIR is available on [www.influenza.org.nz](http://www.influenza.org.nz).

Pharmacists and workplace vaccinators are not yet able to send influenza vaccination messages to the NIR.

### Egg and latex vaccine questions

#### Can *Influvac*<sup>®</sup> and *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> be given to people with egg allergies?

In most cases the vaccine can be safely administered to people with a history of allergy to egg.

If a patient has a high-risk of complications from influenza and has a history of egg anaphylaxis, it is important to seek specialist advice. The risk of anaphylaxis needs to be considered against the benefits of being protected from influenza or its complications. As the vaccine virus is grown in hens' eggs it may contain minute amounts of egg protein. Other allergies to eggs that are non-anaphylactic are not a contraindication.

### GET THE FACTS ON IMMUNISATION



## COLD CHAIN MATTERS ...



We would like to introduce our new regular ImmNuZ column *Cold chain matters*. The column will highlight cold chain best practice using key messages, case studies, and tips to help your practice maintain the vaccine cold chain and deliver effective vaccines to your patients.

### How old is your fridge?

If you haven't had a new pharmaceutical fridge in recent years, chances are your practice is still using the fridge that was purchased in 2004–2005. These fridges are at the end of their working life.

We recommend that you proactively look at fridge replacement, rather than wait for something to go wrong, e.g. coming in and finding the temperature at -15.6°C (this happened for a practice on Christmas Eve, it wasn't the start to that day they wanted).

Immunisation/Cold Chain Coordinators are encouraging this too, particularly in association with Cold Chain Accreditation, which all immunisation providers are required to achieve.

Contact your Immunisation/Cold Chain Coordinator to discuss refrigerator options before you purchase a new fridge.

### Reporting cold chain failures

If you have a cold chain excursion (temperatures below +2°C or above +8°C) you must contact your Immunisation/Cold Chain Coordinator for advice. Their contact details are in your Cold Chain Management Policy and on our [Health Professionals/Regional Advisors and Local Coordinators](#) webpage.

### Interim Guidelines for Purchase of Chilly Bins for Off-Site Immunisations 2015

The Guidelines have been produced on behalf of the Ministry of Health and serve as an interim measure for District Health Boards and other immunisation providers to help with the purchase of chilly bins for off-site immunisation services.

They were developed following a limited literature review and should be used in conjunction with the National Guidelines for Vaccine Storage and Distribution 2012 (Ministry of Health).

The Guidelines can be downloaded from our [Resources/Written Resources](#) or [Health Professional/Cold Chain](#) webpages.

#### Are *Influvac*<sup>®</sup> and *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> latex free?

*Influvac*<sup>®</sup> syringes do not contain any latex components. However, the manufacturer (Mylan) is unable to confirm that the product did not come in contact with any latex materials during the manufacturing and packaging process. Patients highly sensitive to latex, who have a history of severe hypersensitivity reaction to this material, are advised that they should consult their doctor.

With regard to *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> some prefilled syringe models have a pre-attached needle and a typical skirted needle shield. This needle shield contains approximately 43% of dry natural rubber (DNR). These prefilled syringes with pre-attached needles are not considered latex-free.

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