

Health & Safety: Immunisation and Infectious Disease

Policy/Procedure Number: B 5

Policy/Procedure Requirement: National Quality Standards 2; Regulations 88, 162 & 168

Policy Statement

The Educators provide education and care in their home and it is important to ensure good hygiene practices at all times as children can often be infectious before symptoms appear. It is also important that Educators and Staff act appropriately and with sensitivity when dealing with an infectious child and their family. Educators, Coordination Unit staff and families need to be informed about infectious diseases that are common in early childhood settings.

Rationale

To ensure Educators, Coordination Unit staff and families are familiar with the procedures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in FDC.

Strategies and Practices

The Coordination Unit Staff will:

- Monitor the immunisation status of each child, which is recorded on the Enrolment Form, and flag non-immunised children in the system to be able to respond to any advice by the ACT Health of the spread of communicable diseases
- Provide information and resources to Educators on how to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases
- Model safe hygienic practices to Educators and children where possible - e.g. hand washing
- **Notify the ACT Health Communicable Diseases Section** when a child is suffering from a vaccine preventable disease (VPD)
- If a child is diagnosed with a communicable disease refer to the **2015 Parent Guide - ACT Immunisation Requirements** for entry into primary school and childcare for exclusion periods

Educators will:

- Familiarise themselves with the recommendations outlined in *Staying Healthy in Childcare* (NHMRC) to minimise risk of cross infection of an infectious disease; and the *2015 Parent Guide - ACT Immunisation Requirements for entry into primary school and childcare* with regard to immunisation requirements and exclusion periods for infectious diseases
- Provide a safe and healthy environment for children, including maintaining a clean FDC residence
- Be aware of each child's immunisation status as recorded on their Enrolment Form
- Maintain hygiene practices including washing hands before and after handling food, changing nappies and administering first aid; and after outdoor play, and handling blood and bodily fluids

- **Notify the Coordination Unit of any outbreak of an infectious disease**
- Advise parents/guardians on enrolment that the Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table in the *ACT Immunisation Requirements for entry into primary school and childcare* will be applied to any infectious disease event, and when necessary, exclude a child or other person with an infectious disease in line with the recommended exclusion period
- **Notify all parents/guardians of any outbreak of an infectious disease.** Information is to be displayed in a prominent position. This should be done in a manner that ensures the confidentiality of any child, family, Educator and their family and Coordination Unit staff
- Minimise the risk of infection to others by following strict personal and environmental hygiene practices
- Respond to the needs of children if a child becomes ill while in care
- Provide up-to-date information for families and Educators on immunisation and the protection of all children from infectious diseases

Parents/Guardians will:

- Notify the Service and Educator of their child's immunisation status. This will include if they choose not to immunise their child (conscientious objector)
- **Notify the Service if their child has an infectious disease**
- Keep infectious or sick children away from the care environment
- Promptly pick up a sick or infectious child that becomes ill whilst in care
- Provide accurate and current information regarding the immunisation status of their child/children when they enrol and any subsequent changes to this whilst they are attending FDC
- Comply with the exclusion table in the Parent Guide *ACT Immunisation Requirements for entry into primary school and childcare*
- Communicate with the Educator about the child's health and wellbeing
- Notify the Educator if the child is being tested for an infectious disease

Immunisation for Children:

When a child is enrolled at the Early Childhood Service parents are required to indicate if their child has been immunised on the Enrolment Form. Coordination Unit staff member will site the Immunisation record of the child on enrolment. It is a requirement of the Commonwealth Government that children's immunisation records are kept up to date. Notices and relevant information regarding immunisation is provided to Educators and parents.

Staff Immunisation:

Educators who are required to undertake tasks which have been identified as having a risk of exposure to blood borne and other diseases are encouraged to have vaccinations for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Tetanus, Whooping Cough and Influenza as required.

Day-to-Day Service Management of Health and Safety Policies

- Reviewed quarterly and as required

Resources and Further Readings

- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- ACECQA National; Quality Framework Resource Kit www.acecqa.gov.au
- Childcare Service Handbook 2013-2014
- Staying Healthy in Childcare (NHMRC)
- ACT Immunisation Requirements for entry into primary school and childcare 2015

Related FDC Policies, Procedures & Documents

- Child Enrolment and Parent Agreement Form
- Home Safety Checklist
- National Immunisation Program Schedule

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