

Immunisation, Infectious Disease & Hygiene

Policy/Procedure Number: **QA2 - 6**

Policy/Procedure Requirement: National Quality Standards 2; Regulations 88, 109, 62 & 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, Coordinators and families need to be informed about infectious diseases that are common in early childhood settings, and are aware of policies and procedures in place.

COVID Pandemic Policy: The policy for managing COVID Pandemic is provided at the end of this Policy. The Pandemic Policy provides only a framework for COVID prevention and management in FDC setting and not details of specific steps given the evolving nature of the Health and regulatory settings at the Commonwealth and Territory levels.

Rationale

To ensure Educators, Coordinators and families are familiar with the procedures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in FDC and as part of our approach to prioritising health and safety, we implement effective hygiene practices and work to prevent and effectively deal with any infectious disease in line with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and the advice of health experts.

Strategies and Practices

The Service will:

- Ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of the infectious disease
- Ensure that parents, or an authorised emergency contact, of children at the FDC residence are notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable.
- Ensure that a notice is displayed stating that there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the FDC residence
- Ensure that notification requirements to the regulatory authority are met in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children
- Ensure that all children, educators and coordinators have current relevant vaccinations
- Ensure that educators are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to deal with infectious diseases and to role model hygiene practices.

Responsibilities of the Coordinators:

The Coordinators 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

Responsibilities of the Educators:

The 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, and support children to take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.
- Model health and personal hygiene practices with children and reinforce these messages with families.
- Complete regular training in Infection Control procedures
- 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 Coordinators 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.**
- **A Notice on the occurrence of an infectious disease is to be displayed in a prominent position.** The notice **should not include** any names of child/ren and should be done in a manner that ensures the confidentiality of any child, family, Educator and their family and Coordinators
- Minimise the risk of infection to others by following strict personal and environmental hygiene practices
 - Educators are to wear disposable gloves when dealing with urine, faeces and blood. It is recommended that urine, faeces and blood should be cleaned up with neutral detergent and water. Any significant cuts to the Educator or child's skin should be covered
 - Bathing shall only occur during standard hours of a service where necessary for the comfort or personal hygiene of a child. Parent / Guardians must be informed if this does occur. A child may also be bathed if a child is to stay for extended hours of care.
- Respond to the needs of children if a child becomes ill while in care
- Have knowledge of illnesses and infections prevalent in the local area.

- Provide up-to-date information for families and Educators on immunisation and the protection of all children from infectious diseases

Responsibilities of Parents:

The Parents 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. The Coordinators 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.

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Next Review: