



New Immunisation Guidelines Strengthen Recommendations for Australians

New recommendations for the use of vaccines in Australia will give healthcare providers the ability to better deliver important vaccinations to help improve the health of all Australians.

New immunisation information, including updated recommendations on who should receive vaccines and when, as well as the use of new vaccines available in Australia, are outlined in The 10th edition of The Australian Immunisation Handbook, which was launched in April by the Minister for Health, The Honourable Tanya Plibersek.

Within the Handbook are new recommendations for protecting against pertussis in very young babies and the elderly, immunising pregnant women against influenza and pertussis, providing HPV vaccines to males and females, as well as new guidelines on the management of exposures to rabies and bat lyssaviruses.

The handbook also introduces the new MMRV vaccines that will protect children against four major diseases with one injection. From July 1st, 2013, Australian children will only require one needle at 18 months to be fully protected from measles, mumps, rubella and chickenpox.

More than 20 staff from the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS), located at the Children's Hospital Westmead, actively worked with the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) on developing the new guidelines over the past 3 years.

"The new handbook is an excellent guide for all healthcare professionals who are involved in delivering important vaccines to protect the health of all Australians," NCIRS Deputy Director and Senior Handbook Editor, Kristine Macartney said.

The latest National Immunisation Program schedules, listing the vaccines provided free of charge to eligible Australians under the National Immunisation Program, has also been included.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) endorsed Handbook enables doctors, nurses and other health care providers to give parents the most up-to date and accurate information about immunisation.



“The new Handbook is over 500 pages long and is the pre-eminent guideline on the use of immunisation in Australia,” Professor Macartney said.

The Handbook is now available online at <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/Handbook10-home> and will also soon be sent to all healthcare professionals.

To help providers navigate through the new Handbook, the NCIRS has launched a valuable “What’s new in the 10th Edition Handbook” educational slide set on its website (www.ncirs.edu.au/index.php). In coming days, a video highlighting what’s new on the Handbook, and other resources, will also be freely available on the website.

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