



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PHARMACIST UPDATE

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OFFICIAL

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Pharmacy access to influenza vaccine for the National Immunisation Program

In South Australia, from 2022 approved pharmacy vaccination services can apply to register as NIP vaccination provider for the 2022 influenza season.

The [National Immunisation Program](#) (NIP) is a joint initiative between the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments to increase national immunisation coverage and reduce the number of vaccine preventable diseases in Australia.

Vaccines listed in the NIP are provided by the Commonwealth Government for free to specific patient cohorts through a range of vaccination providers. Supply of funded vaccines is provided via the Commonwealth and quantities are allocated directly to States and Territories based on population.

In South Australia the Immunisation Section of the Communicable Diseases Control Branch is responsible for coordination and distribution of government funded vaccination programs.

Which patient groups are eligible for funded influenza vaccine through the pharmacy NIP providers?

In South Australia approved pharmacies will be able to administer funded influenza vaccinations to the following eligible patient groups:

- People aged 65 years and older
- Pregnant women
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons aged 10 years and older

Pharmacies are not permitted to charge eligible patients for NIP funded influenza vaccine however they may charge a patient service fee for the vaccination administration and related vaccine service requirements. Pharmacies that choose to charge a patient service fee are required to advise the consumer about the availability of alternate free vaccination services prior to administering the vaccination.

Applications for the 2022 influenza season

There has been a wonderful response to this initiative from the pharmacy sector, it is anticipated that patients will be able to receive funded influenza vaccines from more than 200 pharmacy locations once the evaluation process is completed

Applications are now closed for the 2022 funded influenza program; the Immunisation Section will be accepting applications for the 2023 funded influenza program from June 2022.

For more information regarding the pharmacy NIP influenza program and the application process please see the attached fact sheet.

Conditions for participating in the NIP Schedule vaccination program

To participate in the NIP Schedule vaccination program, vaccination services must meet certain conditions, including cold chain and program reporting requirements as outlined below. For more information on the conditions of participation please see the attached fact sheet.

Mandatory cold chain requirements

- Vaccines must be stored in a purpose-built vaccine refrigerator between +2°C and +8°C.
- Vaccine refrigerators must have twice daily manual recording of minimum, maximum and current fridge temperatures.
- Vaccine refrigerators must have a data logger which samples the fridge temperature at 5-minute intervals and is reviewed at least once per week.
- Receive and store vaccines according to the National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'.
- Data loggers and refrigerators must be checked/serviced by a qualified technician at least every 12 months.

Mandatory reporting requirements

In South Australia, approved NIP Schedule vaccination providers must comply with the certain reporting requirements, including:

- All vaccine fridge temperatures recorded below +2°C or above +8°C must be reported to the Immunisation Section, and vaccines must not be used or discarded until advice is received.
Note: Temperature deviations or excursions in which the temperature reaches a maximum of up to +12°C for 15 minutes or less (such as when restocking or frequent door openings) do not need to be reported. The fridge console should be reset after these excursions have occurred.
- Report all Adverse Events Following Immunisation to Immunisation Section, CDCB by submitting the online SA Health Vaccine Reaction Reporting Form.
- Report all government funded influenza vaccine disposed due to expiry via the Provider Vaccine Ordering System.

Resources

- SA Health [Immunisation Section](#)
- [Strive for 5 Guidelines](#)

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