

Advice to Vaccine Service Providers

Influenza Vaccine Update

● **Modified suspension of seasonal influenza vaccination for children under 5 years**

On 1 June 2010 the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer (CMO) advised that the suspension of seasonal influenza vaccination should continue for healthy children under 5 years of age.

Note: This is a change in ages from 5 years and under (as per previous CMO advice) and means that healthy children 5 years old can now be vaccinated.

Seasonal influenza vaccine for those aged 5 years and over can continue to be recommended as safe and effective, especially those in high risk populations such as people with underlying medical conditions, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, pregnant women and individuals 65 years and over.

The other major change in the latest CMO advice is the recommendation for children with medical risk factors. **The CMO has advised that children under 5 years of age with predisposing medical conditions should be vaccinated with Panvax[®], or for broader protection, vaccination with one of the 2010 seasonal vaccines. The preference is for use of Influvac[®] or Vaxigrip for vaccination of these at risk children.**

Queensland Health has supplies of both Influvac[®] and Vaxigrip. If you need to order vaccine for medical at risk children, please place the order in the usual way and advise QHIP staff why the vaccine is required.

● **Vaccinating medical at risk children**

Immunisation providers should use clinical judgement to evaluate the risks and benefits for the individual child and agree the best clinical management with parents/carers.

Parents/carers should be made aware of the possibility of febrile convulsions and the child should be monitored for fever. Paracetamol can be used to reduce fever and the parent advised to seek urgent medical advice if they have any concerns following vaccination.

Parents should also be encouraged to report any unexpected event occurring after the administration of vaccine.

● **Reporting of Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI)**

Providers are reminded of the importance of reporting adverse events according to Appendix 6 of the *Australian Immunisation Handbook* (9th Edition). Reporting of AEFIs in Queensland is mandatory under the *Public Health Act* (2005).

AUTHORISED AND SIGNED

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