



Immunisation Policy Children & Staff

Aim:

Health professionals strongly advocate the vaccination of individuals to protect themselves and the wider community from many serious & sometimes fatal diseases. In a childcare setting, children are more likely to be exposed to a larger amount of germs than in their home setting. Staff are at greater risk of infection than some other groups due to their work environment & occupation.

The aim of this policy is:

- To ensure parents provide documented evidence of their child's immunisation status when enrolling at our service & provide follow up documentation as vaccination updates occur.
- To recognise that immunisation is a parents right of choice for their child.
- To accept parents and caregivers right to choose not to immunise children & as a service, to provide guidelines for families with non- immunised children or homoeopathically immunised children with exclusion periods in the event of a vaccine preventable disease at our service.
- To highlight the roles of staff, families and Hunter New England Population Health in the implementation of this policy.

Legislative requirements / Sources:

Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2011) Regulation- 88 Infectious diseases. Regulation 162- Health information to be kept in enrolment record.

Keep them Safe (www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au)

www.hsnet.nsw.gov.au

Implementation:

Maryland Care & Early Education Centre recognises the importance of immunisation programmes and the benefit they provide in the control of disease within the wider community. Our service also acknowledges that the choice of parents and caregivers to immunise their child is a personal decision & we respect their right to make this choice.

This policy outlines the responsibilities of parents & staff in relation to immunisation.

The policy reflects the Department of Health Guidelines for Immunisation & communicable diseases as well as the NCAC criteria for quality practise.

Responsibilities of the Nominated Supervisor:

- All families that are enrolled at our service receive the details of the immunisation policy & a copy of the guidelines from the N.S.W Department of Health in relation to immunisation & communicable diseases.
- Ensure families provide the service with immunisation records & ensure a copy is retained in the child/ children's file.
- Parents or caregivers that have non-immunised or homoeopathically immunised child/ children will be requested to provide a written declaration of their child's immunisation status.
- Ensure the immunisation register is maintained & updated for each child at 6, 12, 18 months and 4 years. A courtesy note reminding parents & caregivers of the need for our service to re-sight immunisation documentation to update register will be provided.
- It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor to contact parents & caregivers whose child shows signs or symptoms of a communicable disease. The parents or caregivers will need to be informed that a doctor's certificate will be required before returning to the centre. The certificate needs to state that the child is no longer infectious.
- The Nominated Supervisor must notify the Population Health Unit (Hunter New England Health) if a child has been confirmed with a case of a vaccine preventable disease.
- If directed by the Population Health Unit to exclude children, siblings or staff that are not appropriately immunised, non-immunised or homoeopathically immunised, for the duration of any vaccine preventable infection, including relevant incubation periods. The Nominated Supervisor must follow the instructions of the population health unit.
- A note must be provided to the family to explain the reasons for exclusion, the period of exclusion & the conditions of re-entry into care (e.g doctor's certificate, no rash etc). Families of excluded children are required to pay fees as outlined in our Fee Policy.
- Other families must be notified when a confirmed vaccine preventable disease occurs at our centre. Details will be placed in foyer on Health Alert board & information provided as to the signs & symptoms of the illness.

- Confidentiality will be maintained.
- Information will be provided to families in regard to immunisation & preventable diseases to families on request.
- Maintain health resource list & immunisation information for the centre & for families to reference.

Responsibilities of Staff:

- Communicate any concerns regarding the health of a child to the Nominated Supervisor.
- Refer families to the Department of Health (Hunter New England Health) Population Health for guidelines in relation to immunisation & communicable diseases as required.
- Staff that are non-immunised or homoeopathically immunised will be excluded from the centre if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.
- The National Health & Medical Research Council suggests immunisation against Hepatitis A as well as current Tetanus & diphtheria for all child care workers especially those working with children under 2 years.
- Staff are encouraged to seek their doctor's opinion regarding immunisation for Hepatitis A & B.
- Immunisation is the personal choice of every staff member.
- Costs associated with immunisation will be the staff's responsibility, unless the management committee decides to provide immunisation for staff.
- It is recommended that female staff of child bearing age have a screening test to check their level of immunity against rubella at the commencement of employment. Staff should also seek their doctor's advice regarding a CMV screening if planning a pregnancy.
- Staff are to provide up to date immunisation records for their staff file

Responsibilities of Families:

- Families are required to provide our service with the relevant documentation regarding their child/ children's immunisation.
- Families are required to provide updated immunisation information to our service in regard to their child/ children.

- Families are required to notify our service as soon as they are able if their child has a confirmed case of a vaccine preventable disease.
- Families are required to be accepting of the Department of Health guidelines (HNEH Population Health Unit) exclusion periods & conditions of re-entry to the service in relation to vaccine preventable diseases or communicable diseases.
- Families are required to collect their child promptly from our service if they show signs or symptoms of a communicable disease.
- Our service understands that this can be an awkward situation for parents particularly in a work situation. Our service suggests families have a backup plan to ensure their child is able to be collected if required to do so.

Review:

This policy is the intellectual property of Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy is available in other languages upon request.

Reviewed: August 2015

Next Review: August 2016