

2022 Influenza Immunisation Program

Pharmacy access to influenza vaccine for the National Immunisation Program

In 2022, approved pharmacy immunisation providers have the opportunity to participate in the delivery of influenza vaccinations as part of the National Immunisation Program (NIP) Schedule in South Australia.

This means that community pharmacies will be able to provide Commonwealth funded influenza vaccinations to some eligible patient cohorts, in addition to the privately funded influenza vaccinations they currently provide.

The NIP Schedule

The NIP Schedule is a series of immunisations given at specific times throughout life. A joint initiative of the Commonwealth and state and territory governments, it aims to increase national immunisation coverage and reduce vaccine preventable disease in the community.

Vaccines listed in the NIP Schedule are free to eligible people. In 2022 the NIP Schedule influenza vaccines will be available to **specific** cohorts via pharmacy immunisation services in South Australia

Government funded vaccines are managed and distributed by the SA Health Vaccine Distribution Centre. Pharmacies will order NIP influenza vaccine supplies via the Vaccine Distribution Centre.

Government funded vaccines are **not** able to be ordered through usual commercial wholesalers.

Eligible cohorts for pharmacy administered NIP influenza vaccines

There are a number of patient cohorts who can receive their influenza vaccination free from a health service.

Approved South Australian pharmacies are only permitted to administer NIP funded influenza vaccines to:

- > **Pregnant women** - All pregnant women are eligible to receive the age appropriate funded influenza vaccine at any stage of the pregnancy.
- > **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 10 years and over** - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 6 months of age are eligible to receive the funded age appropriate influenza vaccine. Pharmacies are currently only able to provide influenza vaccines to those aged 10 years and over.
- > **People aged 65 years and older** - All people aged 65 years and older are eligible to receive the preferred funded quadrivalent influenza vaccine. This vaccine has been specifically designed to boost the immune response and provide better protection for this age group.

- > People in these groups may receive their NIP funded influenza vaccination from another health care service or may choose to pay to receive their influenza vaccination from a pharmacy.

In South Australia pharmacies **must not** administer NIP funded influenza vaccines to the following eligible cohorts:

- > Children 6 months to less than 10 years
- > Medically at-risk patients (not listed above).

Funded NIP vaccine stock available in pharmacies must not be used for these patients and pharmacies must inform patients of the alternate fee services available.

Participating in the program

To participate in the 2022 NIP Influenza Immunisation Program, pharmacies must be [approved immunisation services](#) under the Vaccine Administration Code.

Approved pharmacies that would like to participate in the NIP Influenza Immunisation Program must apply for a [vaccine ordering account](#) with the SA Health Vaccine Distribution Centre.

Applications for the 2022 program close on **28 January 2022**.

The application requires the following information:

1. Registration form submitted online at sa.tollhealthcare.com/register.asp
2. Email healthvaccinedistributioncentre@sa.gov.au with the following attachments:
 - New provider application form
 - A minimum of 48 hours of Vaccine Fridge Temperature Chart recordings
 - A minimum of 48 hours of Vaccine Fridge Data Logger recordings

Please note that applications with incomplete or incorrect information may not be processed in time for the 2022 influenza program.

Conditions for participating in the program

To access government funded influenza vaccines from the SA Health Vaccine Distribution Centre, your pharmacy must be sufficiently equipped to:

- > Receive and store vaccines according to the [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'](#)
- > Administer vaccines according to [State and National Immunisation Programs](#)
- > Transmit each individual encounter record to the [Australian Immunisation Register \(AIR\)](#)
- > Ensure government funded and private influenza vaccines are separated in the vaccine fridge and clearly labelled
- > Report all cold chain breach events to Immunisation Section, Communicable Disease Control Branch (CDCB) on 1300 232 272. Vaccine must be immediately quarantined, and disposal of vaccine must not occur until advised by Immunisation Section.

- > 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.

In addition to best practice guidelines for the handling of all vaccines, it is a priority to minimise both vaccine wastage and leakage of funded NIP vaccines.

- > Vaccine wastage means: any event, such as a cold chain temperature breach or vaccine expiry, which results in vaccines being discarded.
- > Vaccine leakage means: the administration of NIP funded vaccines to patients who do not meet the eligibility criteria.

Additional information regarding vaccine availability, ordering and storage will be provided separately as pharmacies are onboarded to the program.

Pharmacy vaccine service fees

Pharmacies are not permitted to charge eligible patients for the NIP funded vaccine however 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.

Program resources

Program resources will continue to be updated as the program develops and recommendations from ATAGI are made available.

[SA Health Influenza webpage](#) www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/flu

[NCIRS Influenza resources](#)

[ATAGI updated advice on influenza and COVID vaccines](#)

For more information

Immunisation Section
Communicable Disease Control Branch
Health Regulation and Protection
Department for Health and Wellbeing
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisationprovider

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