



The Immune Response

October 2004

Please copy and distribute to all immunisation providers in your practice or health centre. Thank you.

Prevenar introduction means more injections

The introduction next year of Prevenar will see three injections required at each age related schedule at 2, 4, and 6 months of age. The preferred injection site for children under 12 months of age is the vastus lateralis muscle of the anterolateral thigh.

With three injectable vaccines to be given at the one visit, two can be administered in the same anterolateral thigh, but the injection sites should be separated by at least 25mm (2.5cm) so that local reactions will not overlap. The third injection should be administered in the opposite thigh.

Because Prevenar has a higher local reaction rate, it is the preferred vaccine to be used in the thigh that only receives one vaccine.

The location of each injection should be recorded so that the vaccine associated with a local reaction can be differentiated. Immunisation providers should strongly encourage parents to complete the age related schedule in the one visit. Delaying completion of the age related schedule leaves the child susceptible to vaccine related diseases and may affect child care payments and the practice's immunisation rate.

The division has a fact sheet designed for parents on pneumococcal disease. It covers what the disease is, the symptoms, risk factors and how to protect their child. For a copy of this fact sheet call Rachelle at the division or

it is available on the web at www.vaccination.org.au/directory/documents/23/Pneumococcal.pdf

With the addition of Prevenar (at the cost of around \$100 each vaccine), vaccines in your fridge will total a valuable amount! Please ensure that you monitor and record your fridge temperature daily (current, minimum and maximum temperatures) and change the batteries in your thermometer yearly.

* Do not overstock the fridge.

* Allow air to circulate in the fridge.

* Be familiar with the procedure in the event of a power failure, ie. power failure of four hours or less, the refrigerator door should be left closed. If the power fails for more than four hours, store vaccines in a pre-cooled, insulated container with ice packs (see page 60 of immunisation handbook).

* Keep your thermometer with your vaccines. Check your thermometer regularly and if the black out occurred through the night, check the maximum temperature recorded and then reset.

The Northern Rivers division offers data logging of your fridge to check temperatures and can monitor variations in temperature from the bottom to the top shelf. Please call Rachelle on 6622 4453 if you would like your fridge data logged or if you would like a temperature chart to record on.

Problems using HIC online for notifying ACIR

Problems have been occurring with practices using HIC online to submit immunisation data through to ACIR. The problem occurs when the immunisation is recorded by practice staff other than the GP. It appears the data is not picked up by the software when it is not submitted by the GP using the GP logon.

The following information is from the HIC e-business section. PracSoft advises that the problem as outlined is a known issue for Medical Director (MD), i.e. where an encounter is administered to a child by a nurse, the nurse cannot update the ACIR information into MD. The only work-around is for nurses to log onto MD as the provider and populate the database with the encounter records. However this will only work where the provider does not have the same child record open on his/her desktop and providing the provider has consented to this.

NB. this is only relevant for practices intending to notify encounters to ACIR via HIC online. PracSoft also advised it is anticipated a fix will be implemented with the November 2004 release.

WORKSHOPS

IMMUNISATION UPDATE

Wednesday 1 December at Mary Gilhoolys. Please mark this date on your calendar. Further information in next *Immune Response*.

ORIENTATION 4 PRACTICE NURSES

The division is running a workshop for nurses considering becoming practice nurses on Saturday 6 November. The course involves the various roles and duties performed by practice nurses. Cost is \$50 and includes lunch. It will be held at The NRDGP offices, 16 Carrington Street, Lismore. Acceptances to the division on 6622 4453

CPR COURSE 4 PRACTICE NURSES

Thursday 4 November 1-5pm. Contact Louise on 6622 4453 for more info.

BRIEFS

Practice rates

Only 31% of practices in the Northern Rivers division have an immunisation rate of more than 90% and hence receive PIP payments. A further 41% have rates between 80-90%. Free assistance is being offered to practices by the division and the Public Health Unit to help increase practice immunisation rates. Rachelle or Debra can assist in data cleaning and recalling children overdue for immunisation and thus increase your immunisation rate, which will hopefully enable you to receive PIP payments. For assistance call Rachelle on 6622 4453 or Debra on 6620 7220

Hep B

The hep B program is now returning to schools to administer the second dose of hep B. If for any reason, the child misses their second dose at the school (ie. absent, forgot to return their form), the parent will receive a letter asking them either to chase up another school or attend their GP. In attending the GP practice the child will require two more doses of the paediatric hep B vaccine to complete the schedule. This is because the paediatric formulation supplied to the GP is 5ug, whereas the school based program is supplied with a formulation of 10ug antigen. NB. The NSW Vaccine Centre will only allow you to order five hep B vaccines at a time.