



## THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PNEUMOCOCCAL & INFLUENZA IMMUNISATION (NIPII) PROGRAM

Dear Doctor/Practice Manager,

The materials contained in this package provide medical practitioners with information about the 2004 National Indigenous Pneumococcal and Influenza Immunisation Program. Would you please ensure all members of your practice see these important materials.

Copies of these materials can also be found on the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Health internet site at: [www.health.gov.au/oatsih/pubs/immune.htm](http://www.health.gov.au/oatsih/pubs/immune.htm)

If anyone would like more copies of the posters, they can contact the Immunisation Hotline on 1800 671 811.



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# GENERAL PRACTITIONER FACT SHEET

This is an Australian Government funded program which provides free pneumococcal (Pneumovax 23<sup>®</sup>) and influenza vaccines (Vaxigrip<sup>®</sup>) for all adult Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people who are at high risk.

You can help by:

- asking all patients at the beginning of the consultation whether they identify as an Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander person. This provides an opportunity to discuss their individual risks and inform them about vaccine availability;
- ensuring eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive their influenza vaccine every year and pneumococcal vaccine as required;
- displaying the NIPII Program poster in your practice.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE VACCINES?

- All Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 or over,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged between 15 & 49 who are at high risk because they:
  - have heart disease, kidney disease, lung disease, severe asthma or diabetes; or
  - have an immune-compromising condition such as HIV infection or cancer; or
  - are heavy drinkers

**Note** that tobacco smoking is now an indication for adult pneumococcal vaccination (as recommended in the 8th edition of the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*). Free pneumococcal vaccine can therefore now be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers who have no other risk factors.

**Note** also that pregnant women who will be in their 2nd or 3rd trimester in the influenza season should be given **influenza** vaccine **only**.

### WHEN SHOULD ELIGIBLE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE BE VACCINATED ?

**Influenza:** Repeat vaccinations are due every year, before winter.

**Pneumococcal polysaccharide (Pneumovax 23<sup>®</sup>):**

- can be given at any time of the year;
- *15-49 years of age:* revaccination 5 years after 1st dose, then again at 50 years of age or 10 years after second dose, whichever comes later;
- *50 years and older:* a single revaccination 5 years after 1st dose.

Both vaccines can be given at the same time, in different arms.

For the latest information on vaccine recommendations and contraindications, see the current *Australian Immunisation Handbook*, available from the immunisation infoline -1800 671 811, or visit the Immunise Australia website at <http://immunise.health.gov.au/>

Your State or Territory Health Department supplies vaccines for this program to providers through the same mechanism as for childhood vaccines.

*Information supplied by the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. March 2004.*