



# The Hon SUSSAN LEY MP

Minister for Health  
Minister for Aged Care  
Minister for Sport

24 January 2016

## Media Release

### New measures to encourage childhood vaccinations

As a new school year gets underway, Minister for Health Sussan Ley is reminding parents on new measures to encourage families to keep their children's vaccinations up to date.

From this year, to continue receiving family assistance payments from the Commonwealth (Child Care Benefit, Child Care Rebate and Family Tax Benefit Part A Supplement), children and young people up to 20 years of age must be fully immunised, on a catch-up schedule, or have an approved medical exemption.

"Many might be surprised to learn Australia's vaccination rate, which averages 92 per cent, still sits under World Health Organization recommendations of 95 per cent", Minister Ley said.

"The National Immunisation Program provides free vaccines which are essential to protect our children and the community from diseases which can have serious health effects. The more people vaccinated, the less chance of a disease circulating."

Parents can seek free catch-up vaccinations for children under the age of 10, under the current arrangements of the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#).

For 10 to 19 year olds, from now until the end of next year, the Australian Government will provide free vaccines to families who currently receive family assistance payments, who do not have a valid medical exemption, and now wish to immunise their children in order to continue receiving these payments.

"My Department has contacted doctors and vaccination providers to ensure the medical community is fully aware of their vital role in delivering any catch-up vaccinations. We're also working closely with the Departments of Social Services (DSS) and Human Services (DHS) to monitor and assess implementation of these measures," Minister Ley said.

For more information go to the [Department of Human Services Immunisation website](#) or the [Department of Health Immunisation](#)

#### Background/further details

In December, the Department of Human Services wrote to approximately 430,000 families to inform them they may be affected by 'No Jab, No Pay'. A second letter was sent this month, providing details on the new arrangements. It advised families to speak to their GP or vaccination provider for catch up vaccinations in order to continue to be eligible to receive family assistance payments, and how long they have before family payments are impacted.

Parents can check their child's immunisation history at any time by using your Medicare online account through myGov. If you don't have a myGov account, you can create one and then link it to your Medicare online account. Alternately the Express Plus Medicare mobile app. If you don't have the app, you can download it to your mobile device from the App Store or Google Play™

\*For further information on the current National Immunisation Program please go to the [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#).

**ENDS**

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