



Community pharmacy expansion of immunisation services

Information for community pharmacies

13 December 2023

Key messages

- The Commonwealth government is implementing the National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy (NIPVIP) program from 1st January 2024
- Under this program, community pharmacists will be able to order and provide National Immunisation Program (NIP) vaccines to individuals aged five years and above
- Pharmacists will need to adhere to all conditions in the relevant Structured Administration Supply Arrangement (SASA)
- Government-funded vaccines are available to order through the Onelink online ordering system
- All vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)
- The AIR should be checked prior to vaccine administration to avoid duplicate dosing

Pharmacy expansion of government-funded vaccines

- From 1 January 2024, Commonwealth government will implement the [National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy \(NIPVIP\)](#) program
- Community pharmacies participating in the program will be able to administer National Immunisation Program (NIP) vaccines at no cost to consumers. This program will not cover the costs of state-funded or private vaccines. Pharmacists cannot charge for the cost of a state-funded vaccine but may choose to charge an administration fee.
- It is important to note that government-funded vaccines are only to be administered to eligible cohorts and at scheduled timepoints as listed in the [WA Immunisation Schedule](#).
- Vaccine ordering limits will apply to vaccines that can be ordered under this program and limits may change from time to time to ensure equitable access for all providers in the state.
- [Community pharmacists](#) will now be able to support the wider immunisation program in Western Australia (WA) by providing vaccinations to eligible cohorts, thus increasing access to vaccination for the WA community
- Immunisation providers must [report](#) all vaccinations administered to the AIR, including NIP, COVID-19, influenza, and private vaccines.
- As vaccines may be administered by a variety of immunisation providers, e.g., general practice or Aboriginal Medical Services, it is imperative that community pharmacists check the AIR prior to administering any vaccine. This is to ensure that the individual has not already received the vaccine through another immunisation provider and avoids duplicate vaccinations.

Authority to administer vaccinations

The Structured Administration Supply Arrangements (SASA) provide details outlining the authority to vaccinate. All community pharmacists administering government-funded vaccines need to be familiar with and adhere to the conditions within the SASA – ‘Administration of vaccines by Pharmacists’, available [on the Department of Health website](#) under the CEO of Health SASA accordions.

Pharmacists administering vaccines are required under their SASA to report adverse events following immunisation to the [WA Vaccine Safety Surveillance \(WAVSS\)](#) system.

The 1st Jan 2024 updated version of the “Pharmacists- Administration of vaccines by pharmacists” SASA requires all pharmacists to complete an annual update within the next 12 months to meet the competencies as listed in the SASA. These updates can be accessed via the [WA Health immunisation education website](#) or via your training provider.

As per the SASA, please ensure that you have completed training relevant to the vaccines you will be administering. Contact your training provider to access the relevant training if needed.

Ordering and storing government-funded vaccines

- To order any government-funded vaccines, including those in this program, community pharmacists must comply with all [Strive for 5](#) and [WA Health cold chain management](#) requirements. These requirements supersede any other cold chain guidelines used by community pharmacies.
- Log in at [Onelink \(external site\)](#)
- Initially up to five doses of Shingrix vaccines can be ordered and order limits will apply to all vaccines after the initial order. These will be clearly noted on the ordering form.
- If you need more doses than what is permitted, please email vaccineorders@health.wa.gov.au specifying the need for the additional doses. Note that while all reasonable requests are considered, not all will be approved.
- For subsequent orders, plan vaccine stock for one fortnight of use.
- Orders are delivered Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm. Any delivery instructions should be entered in the ‘Delivery instructions’ field on the online ordering page.
- You must read and accept the terms and conditions before confirming your order.
- Once your order is accepted, confirmation is sent to the email registered to the account. Tracking updates will also be sent when they are available.
- Orders can take up to three business days for processing and delivery. Deliveries to country areas are not made on Mondays or Fridays and may be delayed after long weekends or public holidays.
- All vaccines (government funded and private) are to be stored between + 2°C and + 8°C and in their original packaging to protect them from light and temperature changes, in accordance with the [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'](#).

Reporting cold chain breaches and vaccine wastage

- As a condition of receiving government-funded vaccines, all excursions outside of 2° and 8°C must be reported to the Department of Health [Cold Chain Management](#) protocol.
- Providers must advise their [Public Health Unit](#) when a cold chain breach occurs.
- Data loggers must be kept with all vaccines, be set to record every five minutes and be downloadable in table format to provide to your Public Health unit in the event of a cold chain breach
- Never discard vaccines that have been involved in a breach until they have been assessed and you are given instructions by Public Health Unit staff.
- [Public Health Unit](#) also provide thermal stability advice in the event of other incidents where government-funded vaccines are involved.
- Please follow the instructions provided on the WA Department of Health [Vaccine Ordering web page](#) (see 'Report cold chain breaches or expiry').
- All vaccine providers, including community pharmacists, must complete a Department of Health vaccine storage audit annually. Details on how and when to complete this audit will be emailed to the Onelink account holder email address with detailed instructions.

Keep up to date with current information

- [National Immunisation Program Vaccination in Pharmacy FAQs](#)
- [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#)
- [WA Immunisation Schedule](#)
- [Immunisation Provider Information and Resources](#)
- [Pharmacist immunisers](#)
- Subscribe to [Vaccine Updates](#) to receive updates straight to your inbox.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to protecting Western Australians against vaccine-preventable diseases.

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