



WA Pertussis Vaccination Program for New Parents

Information for General Practitioners

Why is the WA Department of Health providing pertussis vaccine for parents of newborns in Western Australia?

Infants are the most vulnerable to severe pertussis illness which can be complicated by pneumonia, hypoxic encephalopathy and occasionally result in death. In order to prevent newborns from acquiring pertussis infection, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisations (ATAGI) recommends that adult carers should be vaccinated as soon as possible after delivery of an infant. WA DOH is supporting this recommendation by making the pertussis vaccine (dTpa) free to new parents, grandparents and other household carers who spend substantial time with a newborn.

Who is eligible for free dTpa vaccine under the WA Pertussis Vaccination Program for Carers of Newborns?

Principally mothers and fathers of children less than 6 months of age. While this program is mainly focussed on parents, the program is also flexible enough to allow for the vaccination of grandparents or other household carers who will spend substantial time with the newborn.

When are parents eligible for free dTpa vaccine under the WA Pertussis Vaccination Program for Carers of Newborns?

The parents will be eligible for the free dTpa vaccine for up to six months after the date

of birth of their newborn. After the child is older than six months they should be directly protected from pertussis infection through receipt of three-doses of pertussis containing vaccine (Infanrix-Hexa).

How long will the WA Pertussis Vaccination Program for New Parents last?

At present, this is a time limited program that will run until 1 January 2012 - with the possibility of extension pending an assessment of uptake and ongoing need.

Where will new parents be able to get the free dTpa vaccine?

As of 1 July 2011, the state government-funded dTpa vaccine will be available through participating GP surgeries. CDCD is also asking that all maternity hospitals continue to offer dTpa to new mothers prior to hospital discharge. The maternity hospitals may also vaccinate fathers, grandparents, or other adult carers who reside in the household, or refer them back to their GP or local community health centre to receive their free dTpa vaccine.

Can new mothers also receive free dTpa vaccine at their GP or a local community health centre?

Yes. While it is preferable that new mothers be vaccinated before hospital discharge, new mothers who were not vaccinated with dTpa while in the hospital may also present



to GP practices or community health centres for vaccination.

Can adults other than new parents, grandparents, and household carers of a newborn also receive free dTpa vaccine at a GP office?

No, the state government-funded dTpa is only available to new parents, grandparents, and household carers of a newborn. The sustained affordability of these arrangements is dependant on GPs ensuring that the vaccines are used only in the eligible cohorts. In addition, Year 7 students who have not received a dose of dTpa vaccine through the school program can also receive the vaccine through their GP.

Non-eligible adults may still be vaccinated against pertussis if they purchase the vaccine. The cost of the vaccine at different pharmacies may vary but is approximately \$30 per dose.

What paperwork will GP offices need to complete when using state-procured vaccine for new parents, grandparents, and household carers of a newborn?

After administering vaccines obtained for use in either the New Parent Pertussis Vaccination Program or the Year 7 School Vaccination Program, GPs must fax a completed "Report of Government-Procured Vaccines used in General Practice for Adolescents and Adults" to CDCD on 08 9388 4877. All practices ordering vaccines will be mailed copies of the form and a pdf of the form is available on our website.

How can I get a stock of dTpa vaccine so it can be used in the WA New Parent Pertussis Vaccination Program?

Perth Metropolitan Area GPs:

From 1 July 2011, GPs located within the Perth metropolitan area can order government-funded vaccines on-line for use in the New Parent Pertussis Vaccination Program or the Year 7 School Vaccination Program. These vaccines are an extension to the government-funded vaccines already available to GPs via the on-line ordering system, or via fax to those without internet access.

To enter the on-line system, type <http://colors.csldirect.com.au/> into your web browser. Log on using your username and password and proceed to the 'place order' screen. From 1 July 2011, you will have the option of choosing between two product categories of vaccines: 'standard' and 'GP time-limited programs'. Previously only the standard option was available.

To order government-funded vaccines for use in either Year 7 students or in Parents/Grandparents/Household Carers of Newborns choose the 'GP time-limited programs' button. For all other government-funded vaccines available through the National Immunisation Program, including influenza vaccines, select the 'standard' button.

Please read and agree to the acknowledgement statement which indicates that you:

- agree to use the vaccines in the cohort for which they were funded
- that you will comply with cold chain standards



- that you will complete and fax to CDCD a "Report of Government-Procured Vaccines used in General Practice for Adolescents and Adults" form for each individual vaccinated.

The order page has the option of ordering dTpa, HPV, Hep B and Varicella under the Year 7 program, and dTpa under the Parent/Grandparent/Household Carer of a Newborn program. Please select which vaccines you require and list your current stock on hand. Note that a maximum of 10 doses of each vaccine under the Year 7 program and up to 50 doses of vaccine under the newborn pertussis program can be ordered at any one time. If you are a large practice and anticipate a greater demand than can be met with this cap, please email vaccineorders@health.wa.gov.au, or phone 9388 4843 to discuss your requirements.

Regional based General Practice Immunisation Service Providers

GPs located within the regional areas of Western Australia are asked to order all Government funded vaccines through their usual channels (e.g. Regional Pharmacies). Note that a maximum of 10 doses of each vaccine under the Year 7 program and up to 50 doses of vaccine under the newborn pertussis program can be ordered at any one time. If you are a large practice and anticipate a greater demand than can be met with this cap, please email vaccineorders@health.wa.gov.au, or phone 9388 4843 to discuss your requirements.

Is the dTpa vaccine safe for breastfeeding mothers?

The Australian Immunisation Handbook 9th Edition states there is no evidence of risk to

the breastfeeding baby if the mother is vaccinated with any vaccine, with the exception of the rubella vaccine.

Where can I learn more about the dTpa vaccine used in the new pertussis vaccination program?

Providers can learn more about the dTpa vaccine for adults by reviewing educational material posted on the WA DOH website http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/473/3/provider_information__immunisation.pm

Providers can also review the official "Provider Information" and "Consumer Information" documents for any vaccine, including dTpa, posted on line by the Therapeutics Goods Administration at <http://www.tga.gov.au/meds/picmi.htm>

Who can I contact if I have questions about the WA Pertussis Vaccination Program for Carers of Newborns?

For questions regarding overall program operations please contact the Prevention and Control Program, CDCD at 08 9388 4863.

Information about Community health clinics can be obtained from http://www.health.wa.gov.au/services/category.cfm?Topic_ID=6

Information about immunisation clinics can also be obtained from Regional Immunisation Coordinators working in your local Public Health Unit http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/373/2/where_to_get_vaccinated.pm or the Central Immunisation Clinic telephone 08 9321 1312.

