



**Pharmacy Programs
Administrator**

PROGRAM RULES

National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy Program

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Australian Government
Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing

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NATIONAL IMMUNISATION PROGRAM VACCINATIONS IN PHARMACY PROGRAM

1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Program Rules governing the National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy (NIPVIP) Program (the Program).

This document must be read in conjunction with the:

- Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) General Terms and Conditions (General Terms)
- [Pharmaceutical Society of Australia \(PSA\) Professional Practice Standards](#) (particularly Standard 11: Administration of a medicine)
- [PSA Practice Guidelines for Pharmacists Providing Immunisation Services](#) (collectively the Professional Standards and Guidelines)
- [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#)
- [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'](#).

Definitions in the General Terms apply to these Program Rules.

2 BACKGROUND

The Program increases patient access and affordability of vaccinations to help protect our community from vaccine preventable diseases.

The NIPVIP Program commenced on 1 January 2024. Under the Program, the Australian Government provides funding to community pharmacies to administer free National Immunisation Program (NIP) vaccines to eligible consumers with no out-of-pocket expense.

Participating pharmacies can receive a payment of \$20.05 per vaccination for the administration of NIP vaccines for individuals aged 5 years and over, in a pharmacy setting. From Monday 29 April 2024, this payment also applies to off-site vaccinations in residential aged care and disability homes.

NIPVIP payments will be indexed in line with MBS indexation.

The Program is voluntary, and pharmacies can choose whether or not to participate. Pharmacies who participate in the Program cannot charge eligible patients any additional fees for the administration of all eligible NIP vaccines. Selective participation is not permitted, for example a pharmacy cannot choose to claim under the Program for some eligible NIP vaccines while charging patients an administration fee for other eligible NIP vaccines.

3 DEFINITIONS

Appropriately Qualified Person means a person that holds an active Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registration and who is authorised to administer NIP vaccinations in a pharmacy setting, residential aged care or disability home in accordance with the applicable state or territory requirements/legislation.

Approved Service Provider means the entity providing services (e.g., a community pharmacy) nominated in the PPA Portal, which at all times meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the NIPVIP Program Rules.

Main Authorised Person (MAP) means the authorised person who can update business details, bank details, register for Programs and submit claims in the PPA Portal.

NIP means the National Immunisation Program, offering free vaccines to eligible people to help reduce diseases that can be prevented by vaccination.

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NIPVIP Service means the administration of a NIP vaccination to an eligible patient in a pharmacy setting, residential aged care or disability home by an Appropriately Qualified Person comprising:

- Determining patient eligibility and checking the patient's immunisation history on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)
- Obtaining appropriate patient consent
- Administering the NIP vaccination
- Appropriate aftercare and /or referral, and
- Entry of the vaccination episode on the AIR.

Off-site means the off-site administration of NIP vaccinations in residential aged care and disability homes. For more information, see section 4.2 Off-Site Vaccinations.

4 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Pharmacy Eligibility

To be eligible to become an Approved Service Provider under the Program, a pharmacy must:

- be approved to dispense pharmaceutical benefits as part of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) defined in Section 90 of the *National Health Act 1953* (Cwlth) (Section 90 Pharmacy)
- agree to deliver NIPVIP Services in accordance with the General Terms, the NIPVIP Program Rules and the NIP, including those related to patient eligibility
- hold current and relevant accreditation to administer NIP vaccinations, in accordance with the applicable state or territory requirements/legislation
- ensure that NIPVIP Services are administered:
 - at the registered pharmacy location, either in a dedicated room or area, or an existing consulting room, or
 - in a residential aged care or disability home, in accordance with state or territory requirements/legislation
- provide NIPVIP Services in accordance with the following:
 - PSA Standards and Guidelines
 - Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) Guidelines
 - Australian Immunisation Handbook recommendations, and
 - Applicable state or territory requirements/legislation
- stay updated about state or territory legislation governing vaccine types and age requirements, specifying authorised vaccines for administration by pharmacists and non-pharmacist vaccinators in a pharmacy setting or a residential aged care or disability home
- be registered with the AIR and report all NIPVIP Services to the AIR in accordance with the reporting requirements under the *Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015*
- maintain a secure facility for the appropriate storage, including cold storage, of vaccines, in accordance with the approved product information
- obtain appropriate patient consent (from the patient or the patient's authorised representative) for the provision of a NIPVIP Service prior to providing the service. A consent form is available online on the [PPA website](#)

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- ensure the Appropriately Qualified Person conducting the services under the Program is not concurrently responsible for dispensing or engaging in other professional duties during the consultation
- register via the PPA Portal and consistently meet the above eligibility criteria throughout participation in the Program.

An Approved Service Provider must promptly notify the PPA if aware of any circumstance, event or fact that may affect the Service Provider's eligibility to participate in the Program.

4.2 Off-Site Vaccinations

From Monday 29 April 2024, pharmacies can claim a payment for the off-site administration of NIP vaccinations in residential aged care and disability homes. Details as follows:

- To be eligible, vaccination(s) must be delivered to residents in a residential aged care or disability home
- From 1 July 2025, pharmacies will receive a payment of \$20.05 per vaccination.

Pharmacies can only claim the off-site administration of NIP vaccines given on or after 29 April 2024.

Funding for the off-site expansion of the Program will be available until June 2026, with continuation subject to review.

Requirements for Off-Site Vaccinations

- Pharmacies may conduct off-site vaccinations if both the pharmacy and the off-site vaccination location are in a state or territory that has appropriate regulatory arrangements that allow pharmacists to vaccinate in residential aged care and disability homes. Pharmacies must ensure they are aware of and adhere to the relevant requirements of the relevant state or territory. It is the pharmacy's responsibility to check these requirements are met
- Where the service is delivered off-site, the pharmacy must ensure that any state or territory legislation/requirements are met, taking into consideration the [National Immunisation Program Vaccinations in Pharmacy \(NIPVIP\) Program Program Rules](#)
- Pharmacies should ensure they have read and follow the [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'](#) for packing and monitoring vaccinations while off-site.

4.3 Patient Consent

The Service Provider must obtain appropriate written or verbal consent from the patient or their authorised representative before providing the NIPVIP Service. This consent relates to the provision of the service and for the patient's details to be provided to the PPA.

For detailed guidance on valid consent, including special populations (i.e. children or people with impaired decision making ability), refer to the section '[Preparing for vaccination: Valid consent](#)' in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).

Consent forms are available on the [PPA website](#).

4.4 Patient Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for vaccination under this program, the patient must be:

- aged 5 years and over at the time of vaccination and

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- eligible to receive the NIP vaccine in a pharmacy setting, residential aged care or disability home as per the NIP Schedule and in accordance with state or territory requirements/legislation.

Please note:

- The NIP vaccines that pharmacies can administer are determined by state and territory legislation, including by vaccine, age cohort and location (i.e. off-site setting)
- Where a patient does not meet the eligibility criteria or does not consent to their details being provided to the PPA for claiming purposes, the NIPVIP Service Provider may offer the service at a patient's cost, ensuring compliance with state and territory requirements/legislation
- Where a pharmacy is administering a NIP vaccine to a patient less than 5 years of age at the time of vaccination, the pharmacy must not charge for the NIP vaccine itself. They may however choose to charge the patient a fee to administer the vaccine, so long as they are authorised to administer the vaccine for the age group in a pharmacy setting as per state/territory legislation.

5 REGISTRATION AND CLAIMING

5.1 Registration into the NIPVIP Program

To participate in the Program, a community pharmacy must register via the PPA Portal. An AIR provider number is required at the time of program registration.

Refer to the PPA [NIPVIP Program User Guide](#), available from the [NIPVIP Program downloads page](#) for information on registration assistance.

Please note: NIPVIP Service Provider registration is separate from any state or territory specific registration that may be required by pharmacies to administer NIP vaccines. Pharmacies must ensure they are approved to administer NIP vaccines by their State or Territory Health Department **prior** to registering for the Program.

5.2 Change of Circumstances

It is the responsibility of the Main Authorised Person of the Approved Service Provider to ensure that the pharmacy's registration is up to date at all times. Approved Service Providers must notify the PPA within 14 days of the following changes:

- (a) Change of ownership
- (b) Change of Section 90 approval number.

5.3 Vaccine Administration Claims

Service Providers must submit vaccine administration claims online via the PPA Portal.

Claims for NIPVIP Services delivered under the Program must be submitted by the end of the calendar month following the service provision (e.g., services provided in May should be claimed by 30 June). Claims falling outside this timeframe, incomplete entries, or those not aligning with the Program Rules cannot be submitted by the pharmacy and may not be paid.

Accuracy is crucial in claim entries, as any inconsistencies may prevent successful claim submission.

5.4 Vaccine Administration Claim Lodgement

To lodge a claim for a NIPVIP Service, the following information must be provided to the PPA:

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- AIR provider number
- Patient’s full name
- Patient’s date of birth
- Patient’s Medicare/DVA Card number
- Date of vaccination
- Vaccine brand name
- Vaccine batch number
- Full name and AHPRA number of the person administering the vaccination
- Agreement to the claim declaration, confirming that the vaccination has been reported to the AIR.

5.5 Vaccine Administration Supporting Documentation

Service Providers must retain the following information for seven years to support any payment claims made under these Program Rules:

- Section 90 number at the time of the provision of the NIPVIP Service
- Details of the Appropriately Qualified Person administering the vaccination, including their AHPRA registration number
- Patient’s name and address
- Patient’s Medicare/Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) Card number (if applicable)
- Vaccine brand name and batch number of the vaccine administered
- Whether the vaccination was administered in an off-site setting (residential aged care or disability home) and if so, the location of the vaccination.

6 FEES

NIPVIP payments are not subject to GST.

For the provision of a NIPVIP Service, the following fees are payable by the PPA:

NIP Vaccination Payments from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 inclusive	NIP Vaccination Payments on and from 1 July 2025
\$19.60	\$20.05

Please note:

- NIPVIP Services can only be claimed if the administration of the NIP vaccine was on or after:
 - 1 January 2024 in a pharmacy setting
 - 29 April 2024 in an off-site setting (residential aged care or disability home)
- Service Providers cannot charge patients any additional fees for a NIPVIP Service. Service Providers must declare upon lodgement of each claim that no such fees have been levied
- Selective participation where pharmacies choose to claim under the Program for some eligible NIP vaccines while charging eligible patients an administration fee for other eligible NIP vaccines is not permitted
- The NIP vaccine must be administered to a patient aged 5 years or older, and in a pharmacy, residential aged care or disability home.

7 AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Service Providers must retain full and true records (including all patient consent forms) related to the provision of services for a minimum of seven years post payment claim. Such records must be kept in a manner that permits them to be conveniently and properly audited, and enables the amounts claimed as well as the services provided under the General Terms and these Program Rules to be determined. Service Providers may be subject to audits by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (or its representative) and/or state and territory governments to verify compliance with the General Terms and these Program Rules. Service Providers must provide all requested records as part of such audit(s).

Service Providers must ensure the use of current documents when obtaining information or consent from patients. Service Providers that wrongfully or incorrectly receive support and/or do not meet the requirements set out in the General Terms and these Program Rules may be subject to compliance action (as determined by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, PPA and/or state and territory governments) and repayment may be required.

Under section 137.1 of the Criminal Code, giving false and misleading information is a serious offence. If an audit/compliance action is to be conducted, Service Providers will be required to produce documentation within a specified time frame.

Service Providers should also note that in addition to compliance action, as per the General Terms, participation can be terminated by notice if:

- a. You have failed to carry out the services
- b. You breach the relevant Program Rules
- c. The PPA considers that any statement made by you is incorrect, misleading or incomplete in a way which would have affected your eligibility to participate in this program and other programs administered by the PPA
- d. The PPA considers that you will be unable to perform your services under these General Terms
- e. The Australian Government terminates or reduces the scope of its agreement with the PPA in relation to the Programs or suspends the PPA's performance of the same
- f. The Australian Government cancels your participation in this program and/or one or more Department of Health, Disability and Ageing funded Programs as outlined in the relevant Program Rules.



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