

## Infectious Diseases Policy

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### 1. Policy Statement

#### Values

NERPSA is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff, and any other persons participating in the program.
- Responding to the needs of any child who is injured, becomes ill, or is traumatised whilst attending the centre.
- Providing up-to-date information for families and staff regarding immunisation and the protection of all children from infectious diseases

#### Purpose

The NERPSA Infectious Diseases Policy will:

- Ensure there are procedures to be followed if a child or staff member is ill or has an infectious disease
- State responsibilities of staff, parents/guardians and committee/board

### 2. Scope

- The NERPSA Infectious Diseases Policy applies to NERPSA, individual kindergartens within the NERPSA cluster, their committees and staff and parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled, or have children already enrolled at NERPSA.

### 3. Context

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law VIC (2010)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Health Records Act 2001
- Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

### 4. Definitions

**Exclusion:** Unable to attend or participate in the program

**Illness:** Any sickness and/or associated symptoms that affect the child's normal participation in the program

**Immunisation status:** The extent to which a child has been immunised in relation to the recommended immunisation schedule.

**Infectious disease:** A disease that could be spread by air, water, interpersonal contact.

**Medication:** Any substance that is administered for the treatment of an illness or condition.

**Recommended minimum exclusion period:** The period recommended by the Department of Health and Human Services for excluding any person from attending a children's service to prevent the spread of infectious diseases through interpersonal contact.

## 5. Sources and Related NERPSA Policies

- Communicable Diseases Section, Public Health Group, Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (2005) *The Blue Book: Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases*. Available at <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/The-blue-book>
- Communicable Disease and Prevention Control Unit: phone – 1300 651 160, <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au> and [infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au)
- Department of Health: [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)
- Department of Health and Human Services (2012) *Head lice management guidelines*: <http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Head-lice-management-guidelines->
- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, ACECQA
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*, ACECQA
- National Health and Medical Research Council (2005) *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious diseases in child care*, [www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines)  
(Note: this publication is currently being revised and will have significant changes. It is important that services refer to the most up-to-date version of this resource.)
- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services: [www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation)

## 6. Procedures

### Infectious diseases

Educators are responsible for:

- 6.1. Ensuring that information from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) about the recommended minimum exclusion periods (refer to *Sources*) is displayed in a prominent position within the centre.
- 6.2. Contacting the DHHS Communicable Diseases section on 1300 651 160 to notify if a child is suffering from a vaccine preventable disease (refer to DHHS *Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table* ).
- 6.3. Contacting the DHHS Communicable Diseases section on 1300 651 160 to notify if a child has a communicable disease as listed in the DHHS *Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table* and to seek advice on exclusion of cases and contacts.
- 6.4. Ensuring the exclusion requirements for infectious diseases is adhered to, including staying away from the centre for 48 hours if they have vomiting or diarrhoea
- 6.5. Advising the parents/guardians on enrolment that the DHHS *Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table* will be followed in regard to the outbreak of any infectious diseases
- 6.6. Advising the parents/guardians of a child who is not fully immunised on enrolment that they will be required to keep their child at home when an infectious disease is diagnosed at the service, and until there are no more occurrences of that disease and the exclusion period has ceased
- 6.7. Notifying the committee/board and parents/guardians of any outbreak of an infectious disease within the centre. Information is to be displayed in a prominent position.
- 6.8. Requesting parents/guardians to notify the centre if their child has an infectious disease.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- 6.9. Keeping their child/ren at home when an infectious disease has been diagnosed at the service and their child is not fully immunised against that infectious disease, until there are no more occurrences of that disease and the exclusion period has ceased
- 6.10. Notifying the centre if their child has an infectious disease. Please note: vomiting and diarrhoea are considered infectious diseases and children are to be kept away from the centre for 48 hours after the last episode

- 6.11. Providing accurate and current information regarding the immunisation status of their child/children when they enrol and any subsequent changes to this whilst they are attending the centre
- 6.12. Complying with the DHHS *Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table*.

**Dealing with illness and emergency care.**

- 6.13. It is recommended to display these contact numbers at each telephone:
  - Ambulance
  - DHHS regional office
  - Committee/licensee representatives
  - Asthma Victoria 03 9326 7055 or toll free 1800 645 130 [advice@asthma.org.au](mailto:advice@asthma.org.au)
  - Police
  - Victorian Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26
  - Local Fire Brigade

**Immunisation Record**

- 6.14. If an immunisation record cannot be provided at enrolment the parent/guardian can access this information as follows:
  - 6.14.1. Contact the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 and request an immunisation history statement. This service is free of charge and it takes 7-10 working days to process.
  - 6.14.2. Attend any Medicare Office and request an immunisation history statement.

**7. Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, NERPSA will:

- Seek feedback regarding the effectiveness of the policy
- Monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required.

**8. Authorisation**

The policy was adopted by NERPSA on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

**9. Review date**

The policy shall be reviewed every two years from date of adoption.