

Media Release



Health
South Western Sydney
Local Health District

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Time to immunise

As a new school year approaches, parents are reminded to make sure their children are fully immunised before beginning primary school.

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) Director of Public Health Dr Stephen Conaty said it was important that all primary school-aged children were up to date with vaccinations to help protect against preventable diseases.

"Parents are reminded that all children should have booster needles between three and a half and four years of age. These cover a range of diseases, including measles and whooping cough," Dr Conaty said.

"When enrolling a child in school, parents are asked to provide evidence of their child's immunisation history.

"They can do this by obtaining an Immunisation History Statement, issued by the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

"An Immunisation History Statement will be automatically sent to a child's address after ACIR has received information that a child has been immunised with the vaccines that are due by age four," he said.

Schools are not able to accept other records such as the Blue Book or overseas vaccination records. Parents should see their GP or immunisation provider if records of their vaccinations need to be sent to ACIR so they can obtain an Immunisation History Statement.

Dr Conaty said immunisation programs in NSW have been extremely effective in reducing the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases.

"Important causes of meningitis like Haemophilus influenza type B and meningococcal C are now rare," Dr Conaty said.

"However, vaccine preventable illnesses like whooping cough, chicken pox and measles, continue to occur in the community.

"Vaccination is the best way to protect a child from these serious diseases. If most children are vaccinated this also protects those who are too young to be vaccinated, or those who can't be vaccinated because of medical conditions," he said.

Parents can request another copy of the History Statement by calling the ACIR on **1800 653 809**, emailing acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au or visiting Medicare Online Services at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online or a local Medicare office

For more information contact the **Public Health Unit** on 8778 0855 or 1300 066 055 or visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation