

Administration of vaccines – Scope of practice for healthcare professionals

Healthcare professionals can prescribe (if authorised) and administer vaccines if they meet their relevant professional standards and are practising within their lawful scope of professional practice within state and territory legislation. This resource is a guide only and aims to provide an overview of the scope of practice relating to healthcare professionals prescribing and administering vaccines. Additional links and information regarding the administration of COVID-19 vaccine and state and territory legislation, policy directives and guidelines are also listed. During a declared public health emergency, some healthcare workers may be able to administer relevant vaccines. Advice on this will be made available by the relevant jurisdiction.

This guide needs to be read in conjunction with the relevant state and territory legislation as there are differences between jurisdictions.

Immunisation providers should screen people before vaccination, obtain valid consent and ensure that the correct equipment and procedures are in place as per the <u>Australian Immunisation Handbook</u>.

Contact your state or territory health departments for further information.

Table 1: Overview of the scope of practice for healthcare professionals administering vaccines. This table excludes COVID-19 vaccines outside the general practice setting (see <u>Table 3</u> for COVID-19 vaccines.)

	Can do	Cannot do	Qualifications, scope of practice and guidance for employers	Exceptions and additional notes
Medical practitioners	 Medical practitioners can: prescribe, prepare and administer vaccines prescribe and administer Q fever and yellow fever vaccines on completion of an accredited course for Q fever and yellow fever 	Medical practitioners cannot: administer Q fever vaccine if they have not completed an accredited Q fever course administer yellow fever vaccine if: they have not received yellow fever accreditation. The course must be	Medical practitioners must: have current registration with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) have both a provider and prescriber number for Medicare Australia to assist with patient access, to the Medicare	Exception: In South Australia, there is no required course to administer Q fever vaccine, but prior knowledge is required.
	vaccination. Yellow fever course must be	completed every 3 years to maintain qualification	rebates and Pharmaceutical Benefits Schemes	



Can do	Cannot do	Qualifications, scope of practice and guidance for employers	Exceptions and additional notes
completed every 3 years to maintain qualification. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column	 they are unable to provide a certificate of completion to the yellow fever vaccination centre where they intend to practise. it has been more than 3 years since they completed the yellow fever course. 	 practice in accordance with federal, state and territory legislation and professional regulation governing medical practitioner practice ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Employers must (where applicable): ensure the medical practitioner provides evidence of formal qualifications, including annual statement of proficiency in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and anaphylaxis training if required by the relevant jurisdiction. be satisfied that the medical practitioner is educated, authorised and competent to perform in this role. 	
Nurse practitioners can :	Nurse practitioners cannot :	Nurse practitioners must:	Exception:
 prescribe, prepare and administer vaccines prescribe and administer yellow fever vaccination if they: are an accredited provider and it is 	 administer yellow fever vaccine if they: have not received yellow fever accreditation and maintained qualifications every 3 years. are unable to provide a 	 be a registered nurse, registered in Division 1 of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) with endorsement as a nurse practitioner meet the <u>Nurse practitioner</u> 	In South Australia, there is no required course to administer Q fever vaccine, but prior knowledge is required.
	completed every 3 years to maintain qualification. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column Nurse practitioners can: • prescribe, prepare and administer vaccines • prescribe and administer yellow fever vaccination if they: – are an accredited	completed every 3 years to maintain qualification. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column Nurse practitioners can: • prescribe, prepare and administer vaccines • prescribe and administer yellow fever vaccination administer yellow fever vaccine if they: - are an accredited - they are unable to provide a certificate of completion to the yellow fever vaccination centre where they intend to practise. - it has been more than 3 years since they completed the yellow fever course. Nurse practitioners can: • administer yellow fever vaccine if they: - have not received yellow fever accreditation and maintained qualifications every 3 years.	completed every 3 years to maintain qualification. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column Refer to Exceptions and tertitory legistation and professional regulation governing medical practitioner protitioner practice Regulation and professional regulation governing medical practitioner practice Regulation and tertitory legistation and professional regulation appractitioner practice Regulation and tertitory legistation and professional regulation appractitioner practitioner practice Refer to Exceptional and tertitory legistation and professional regulation appractitioner practitioner practitioner practitioner practitioner practitio



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F	practice - have completed the accredited course every 3 years to maintain qualification. - are employed within an approved yellow fever vaccination centre. • assess, prescribe or administer Q fever vaccine if they have completed Q fever training and it is within their scope of practice. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column	the yellow fever vaccination centre where they intend to practise. - if it has been more than 3 years since they completed the course • administer Q fever vaccine if they have not completed Q fever training.	 where relevant, have both a provider and prescriber number for Medicare Australia to assist with patient access, to the Medicare rebates and Pharmaceutical Benefits Schemes practice within their scope of practice and in accordance with federal, state and territory legislation ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to AIR. Employers must (where applicable): ensure the nurse practitioner provides evidence of formal qualifications, including annual statement of proficiency in CPR and anaphylaxis training if required by the relevant jurisdiction. be satisfied that the nurse practitioner is educated, authorised and competent to perform in this role. 	



	Can do	Cannot do	Qualifications, scope of practice and guidance for employers	Exceptions and additional notes
Authorised nurse or authorised midwife* immunisers	Authorised nurse or authorised midwife immuniser can: • prepare and administer vaccines listed within the relevant medicines, poisons, drugs, controlled substances or therapeutic regulations or acts or authorities within their relevant jurisdiction without a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner. The exception to this is herpes zoster vaccine (Zostavax) which may require medical authorisation. Note exception for Tasmania • prepare and administer other vaccines if they have a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner • administer the tuberculosis vaccine (BCG) if they have completed the training	Authorised nurse or authorised midwife immuniser* cannot: • prepare or administer vaccines not listed on the relevant medicines, poisons, drugs, controlled substances or therapeutic regulations or acts within their relevant jurisdiction unless they have a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner.	Authorised nurse or midwife immuniser must: • be currently registered as a nurse (Division 1) or registered as a midwife with the NMBA without conditions on the registration which prevent the nurse or midwife administering a vaccine • have completed an accredited immunisation course or as approved by their jurisdiction • work within their scope of practice, in line with the relevant state or territory drug and poisons legislation • have maintained their knowledge and currency of practice in relation to immunisation and vaccinations • ensure a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner is available to be contacted as required by the authorised nurse or midwife immuniser • ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to AIR. Employers must: • ensure the authorised nurse or authorised midwife immuniser provides evidence of formal	 Exceptions: In Tasmania, authorised nurse and authorised midwife immunisers can administer zoster vaccine if they have completed and meet the appropriate training requirements. In Tasmania, authorised nurse and authorised midwife immunisers cannot administer tuberculosis (BCG) vaccine. Tuberculosis vaccine (BCG) can only be administered under a medical practitioner's order. In Queensland under the Health Drugs and Poisons Regulation, registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses without notation can administer a medication to a person on the oral or written instruction of a dentist, doctor, suitably qualified



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	required by their jurisdiction and follow any other regulation as required by their state or territory. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column		qualifications, including annual statement of proficiency in CPR and anaphylaxis training if required by the relevant jurisdiction • be satisfied that the authorised nurse or authorised midwife is educated, authorised, competent and capable to perform in this role.	nurse practitioner or physician's assistant.
Registered nurses and midwives	Registered nurses and midwives can: • prepare and administer vaccines with a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner and the medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner must be available for supervision or advice if required. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column	Registered nurses and midwives cannot: administer vaccines without a medication order from a medical practitioner or a suitably qualified nurse practitioner administer yellow fever vaccine administer Q fever vaccine administer tuberculosis vaccine (BCG).	Registered nurses and midwives must: • be currently registered as a nurse (Division 1) or registered as a midwife with the NMBA without conditions on the registration which prevent the nurse or midwife administering a vaccine • work within their scope of practice, in line with the relevant state or territory drug and poisons legislation and at their own level of professional knowledge and experience • ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to AIR. Employers must: • ensure the registered nurse or registered midwife provides evidence of formal qualifications, including annual	• In Queensland, under the Health Drugs and Poisons Regulation, registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses without notation can administer a medication to a person on the oral or written instruction of a dentist, doctor, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant.



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			statement of proficiency in CPR and anaphylaxis training if required by the relevant jurisdiction. • be satisfied that registered nurse or registered midwife is educated and competent and confident to perform in this role.	
Enrolled nurses	 prepare and administer vaccines as follows: at the discretion of the medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner with a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner under direct[†] or indirect[‡] supervision of a registered nurse or a midwife registered with the NMBA if it is within their scope of practice and within their relevant workplace policies, 	 Enrolled nurses cannot: administer vaccines without a medication order from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner and without direct[†] or indirect[‡] supervision from a registered nurse or registered midwife administer vaccines if they have a notation on their registration which advises that they do not hold a Boardapproved qualification in administration of medicines. 	 be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia work within their scope of practice, in line with the relevant state or territory drugs and poisons legislation satisfy the supervising registered nurse or midwife that they are qualified and competent to perform immunisation administration. Supervision can be direct[†] or indirect.[‡] ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to AIR. Employers must: ensure the enrolled nurse provides evidence of formal qualifications, including annual statement of proficiency in CPR and anaphylaxis training if 	 Additional note: Where the enrolled nurse has a notation on their registration which advises that they do not hold a Board-approved qualification in administration of medicines, they are not able to prepare and administer vaccines. Exception: In Queensland under the Health Drugs and Poisons Regulation, registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses without notation can administer a



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	protocols. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column		required by the relevant jurisdiction • be satisfied that the enrolled nurse is educated and competent to perform in this role and ensure they are familiar with the relevant workplace policies, procedures and protocols • discuss the role of the enrolled nurse in administering medicines and vaccines with the supervising registered nurse or midwife • ensure registered nurses or midwives are aware of their legal responsibility for supervising enrolled nurses.	person on the oral or written instruction of a dentist, doctor, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant. • AND for enrolled nurses only, they must also be under the supervision of a dentist, doctor, midwife or registered nurse.
Aboriginal and	Aboriginal and Torres Strait	Aboriginal and Torres Strait	Aboriginal and Torres Strait	Exceptions:
Torres Strait Islander health practitioner The practitioner may use the titles: • Aboriginal health practitioner • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner	Islander health practitioners can: • prepare and administer vaccines under direct [†] or indirect [‡] supervision of a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner as long as they are appropriately qualified, trained and authorised to provide immunisations within	Islander health practitioners cannot: administer vaccines without a medication order or supervision from a medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner.	Islander health practitioners must: • be registered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia and meet the Board's registration standards • be employed by a general practice, Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation that has an exemption to claim Medicare benefits under subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance	 In Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners cannot prepare and administer vaccines (except for COVID-19 vaccines under a Public Health Emergency Order [PHEO]). In Queensland, an



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Torres Strait Islander health practitioner.	their scope of practice and within the relevant medicines, poisons, drugs, controlled substances or therapeutic regulations or acts or authorities within their relevant jurisdiction Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column		 Act 1973 practice within their scope of practice, in line with the relevant state or territory drugs and poisons legislation and their own level of professional knowledge and experience practice under direct or indirect supervision depending on their qualifications, competence and confidence ensure all vaccine encounters are reported to AIR. The authorised medical practitioner or suitably qualified nurse practitioner providing supervision must: retain responsibility for the health, safety and clinical outcomes of the patient. Employers must: ensure the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner provides evidence of formal qualifications including annual statement of proficiency in CPR and anaphylaxis training if required by the relevant jurisdiction be satisfied that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner is educated, 	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner working in an isolated practice area can prepare and administer vaccines with a medical order from a medical practitioner, dentist or nurse practitioner and in accordance with The Drug Therapy Protocol - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner – "Isolated Practice Area". In Northern Territory, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners do not require direct or indirect supervision.



	Can do	Cannot do	Qualifications, scope of practice and guidance for employers	Exceptions and additional notes
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers The health worker may use the titles:	In Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers working in an isolated practice area can prepare and administer vaccines with a medical order from a medical practitioner, , suitably qualified nurse practitioner or physician's assistant. Refer to Exceptions and additional notes column	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers cannot prepare or administer vaccines in either primary or outreach settings, except in Queensland	competent and confident to perform in this role and is in compliance with state or territory legislative requirements.	Exception: In Queensland, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker working in an isolated practice area can prepare and administer vaccines with a medical order from a medical practitioner, , suitably qualified nurse practitioner or physician's assistant in accordance with the Drug Therapy Protocol - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner — "Isolated Practice Area"
Pharmacist	Pharmacist immunisers	Pharmacist immunisers cannot:	Pharmacist immunisers must:	Additional note:
immuniser	can:	administer vaccines contrary to	be registered with the	In regards to authority
	prepare and administer	state and territory regulation.	Pharmacy Board of Australia	to supply a poison or
	vaccines if they are	supervise the administration of	and meet the	restricted substance
	appropriately qualified,	vaccines by an authorised	Board's <u>registration</u>	by wholesale to an



Can do	Cannot do	Qualifications, scope of practice and guidance for employers	Exceptions and additional notes
trained and a to provide immunisation their scope of and as details the relevant repoisons, drug controlled sulfor therapeutic regulations of authorities for pharmacists relevant jurise. • supervise interpharmacists administer variablect to relevant regulations. Refer to exception additional notes.	within their community pharmacy. f practice ed within medicines, ps, pstances or a racts or a racts or a recipion within their diction ern so accines evant state gulations ets.		authorised nurse immuniser or midwife immuniser, Pharmacist Immunisers must refer to the relevant medicines, poisons, drugs, controlled substances or therapeutic regulations or acts within their relevant jurisdiction.



Table 2: National and jurisdiction legislation, authorisations, policy directives and guidelines relating to vaccinations

Jurisdiction	Legislation	Authorisations, policy directives and guidelines
National	Australian Immunisation Register Rule 2015	AHPRA Registered nurse standards for practice
	Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015	AHPRA Enrolled nurse standards for practice
		AHPRA Midwife standards for practice
		AHPRA Nurse practitioner standards for practice
		AHPRA Types of Medical Registration
		AHPRA Pharmacy Registration Standards
		AHPRA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
		Health Practice Board of Australia Registration Standards
Australian Capital	ACT Government Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods	Nurse and midwife immunisers
Territory	Act 2008	Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods (Nurse and Midwife
		Immunisers) Direction 2020 (No 1)
		Pharmacist vaccinations
New South Wales	NSW Government Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966	Supply of Poisons and Restricted Substances – Authority for
	No 31	registered nurses and midwives
		Pharmacist initiation and administration of vaccines
		Aboriginal Health Worker Guidelines
Northern Territory	NT Government Medicines, Poisons, and Therapeutic Good Act	Northern Territory Government Department of Health Medicines
	2012	and poisons
		Pharmacist vaccinations
		Northern Territory of Australia Medicines, Poisons and
		Therapeutic Goods Act 2012 Qualifications Prescribed for
		Pharmacist to Supply and Administer Schedule 4 Vaccine
		Northern Territory of Australia Medicines, Poisons and
		Therapeutic Goods Act 2012 Prescribed Qualifications for
		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners to
		Supply, Administer or Possess Vaccines
		S25 2017 Prescribed Qualifications for Nurses and Midwives to
		Supply, Administer or Possess Vaccines (p 4-6)
		https://health.nt.gov.au/professionals/centre-for-disease-
		control/immunisation-health-professionals/covid-19-vaccine-
		protocol-cvap



Jurisdiction	Legislation	Authorisations, policy directives and guidelines
Queensland	QLD Government Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulations 1996	COVID-19 Vaccination Code Queensland Pharmacist Vaccination Standard
South Australia	SA Government Controlled Substances (Poisons) regulations 2011	Vaccine Administration Code Authorisation to administer a vaccine without a medical order: Frequently asked questions
Tasmania	Tasmanian Government Poisons Act 1971 Tasmanian Poisons Regulations 2018	Tasmanian Vaccination Program Guidelines Authorised Immunisers in Tasmania
Victoria	VIC Government Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (the Act) and the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 (the Regulations).	Secretary Approval: Nurse Immunisers Victorian Pharmacist-Administered Vaccination Program Guidelines
Western Australia	WA Government Medicines and Poisons Regulation 2016	Structured Administration and Supply Arrangement (SASA) WA Health Administering Vaccines



COVID-19 vaccination

All COVID-19 immunisation providers must complete the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination training offered by the Australian College of Nursing and any other mandatory training required by relevant states and territories.

All employers must ensure the immunisation providers and healthcare professionals involved in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines have completed the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination training modules and any other additional or supplementary training required by relevant states and territories.

Table 3: State and territory jurisdictional links for immunisation providers administering COVID-19 vaccines

Jurisdiction	COVID-19 vaccine authorisations, policy directives, guidelines and additional training requirements
Australian Capital Territory	ACT Health Nurse & Midwife Immunisers ACT Health Pharmacist vaccinations
New South Wales	NSW Government Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulations 2008- Authority NSW Health Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 NSW Government Authorised Nurse Immunisers 2020 Standard operating procedure for administration of COVID-19 vaccines in NSW vaccination clinics Authority to supply poisons and restricted substances – Registered Nurses and Registered Midwives Authorised Nurse/Midwife Immuniser authority NSW Government Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966-Authority for residential facilities (awaiting update) NSW Government Pharmacist Initiation and Administration of Vaccine NSW Pharmacist Vaccination Standards Authority to Supply Poisons and Restricted Substances- Defence Medical Technician
Northern Territory	NT Government Gazette, Medicines, Poisons, and Therapeutic Goods ACT 2012-Declarations and approval – COVID-19 Vaccine COVID-19 Vaccine Administrative Protocol COVID-19 vaccine protocols Drug Therapy Protocol – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner – Isolated Practice Area



	Drug Therapy Protocol – Indigenous Health Worker Isolated Practice Area
Queensland	Queensland Government Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996-Drug Therapy Protocol- Communicable Diseases <u>Program</u>
•	<u>First Nations COVID-19 vaccination training</u> (training module complements the ACN COVID-19 training module) <u>Queensland Health COVID-19 vaccination training</u>
South Australia	Controlled Substances Act 1984
	Poison Regulations - Licences to possess either an S4 and/or an S8 drug
	SA Health Vaccine Administration Code
	Vaccine standing drug order approved by organisational Drug and Therapeutics Committee or local endorsement committee
Tasmania	Tasmanian Government Poisons Regulations 2018
	Tasmanian Government Information for Immunisation Providers
Victoria	Victorian Government Medicines and poisons - Secretary approvals
	<u>Victorian COVID-19 e-Learning Competency</u> (This competency forms part of the pre-requisite training requirements for Victorian emergency authorised registered health professionals to administer COVID-19 vaccines).
	<u>Victorian COVID-19 AstraZeneca Supplementary eLearning</u> (This supplementary training has been developed to support vaccine providers to confidently deliver the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to people aged under 50 years.)
	<u>Victorian COVID-19 Vaccination Guidelines</u>
	Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017, Regulation 161
Western Australia	WA Government Structured Administration and Supply Arrangement (SASA)-information found under 'CEO of Health SASA'. WA COVID-19 Vaccination Program (Supplementary program to be used in conjunction with the ACN COVID-19 training
	module).

^{*} An authorised nurse/midwife immuniser can also be a direct entry midwife who has completed one of the following: Direct entry midwifery (Bachelor of Midwifery); Double degree (Bachelor of Nursing/Bachelor of Midwifery) or postgraduate qualification in midwifery following a nursing degree (Graduate Diploma and Masters level) and is able to immunise if they have completed an accredited immunisation course.

[†] Direct supervision is when the supervisor is present and personally observes, works with, guides and directs the person who is being supervised.

[‡] Indirect supervision is when the supervisor works in the same facility or organisation as the supervised person, but does not always observe their activities. The supervisor must be available for reasonable access. What is reasonable will depend on the context, the needs of the person receiving care and the needs of the person who is being supervised.



Additional resources

- Accredited Immunisation Education Programs: Health Education Services Australia
- COVID-19 frequently asked questions: Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency and National Boards
- Information for Yellow Fever Vaccination Centres and Providers: Australian Government Department of Health
- National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals: Australian Government Department of Health
- <u>Vaccines from community pharmacy at a glance:</u> National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance
- COVID-19 vaccines from community pharmacy: National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance

Disclaimer: This information has been collated by staff of the PHN Immunisation Support Program (a joint initiative of NCIRS and NPS MedicineWise) and checked for accuracy by a range of stakeholders. Great care is taken to provide accurate information at the time of creation; however, users are responsible for checking the currency of this information. Once printed, this document is no longer quality-controlled. Content considered correct as of 13 October 2021.