

Policy statement by Chiropractic Australia on Vaccination & Immunisation

Chiropractic Australia endorses the Australian Government's policy and position on immunisation as a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases.¹ This support is underpinned by overwhelming evidence of the risk/benefit profile of mass immunisation.² It is supported by governments throughout the world and the World Health Organisation as one of the most important public health interventions.³

Vaccination, along with any medical intervention, involves risk to a minority of individuals. Chiropractic Australia supports the right of the individual to refuse vaccination but as primary contact practitioners, chiropractors have a special responsibility to themselves, their patients and the public at large, in the prevention and control of vaccine preventable diseases. Therefore, Chiropractic Australia endorses the Guidelines for the Control and Prevention of Infection in Healthcare (2010) of the National Health & Medical Research Council⁴, including the recommendations on immunisation for health workers.

Other than in the context of the promotion of public health, vaccination and immunisation are outside the scope of chiropractic practice. Patients or members of the public who seek advice on specific aspects of vaccination and immunisation should be referred to an appropriately trained health professional, such as a general medical practitioner.

Patients seeking information on the risks and benefits of immunisation should also be directed to the Australian Academy of Science website for the latest information on the science of immunisation <http://www.science.org.au/policy/immunisation.html>

References

1. Immunise Australia Program. Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, July 2007. Available at: <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/> [Accessed September 4, 2011]
2. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccine Safety and Adverse Events.](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/safety/default.htm) Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/safety/default.htm> [Accessed September 4, 2011]
3. World Health Organisation (WHO). Immunization safety, 2009. Available: http://www.who.int/immunization_safety/en/ [Accessed September 5, 2011]
4. National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare, 2010. Available: <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/book/australian-guidelines-prevention-and-control-infection-healthcare-2010/c2-2-2-immunisation> [Accessed September 5, 2011]