

Dear Immunisation Providers

Completion of Pertussis vaccination program for parents and grandparents

This is to remind all Immunisation Providers that the pertussis vaccination program for new parents and grandparents will finish on **31 December 2011**. After this date any adult, including parents or grandparents who wish to protect themselves from pertussis infection will need to purchase the vaccine via private prescription.

Important considerations:

- Early treatment can help prevent the infection spreading.
- **In the early stages of pertussis disease, PCR is the preferred method of testing.**
- Anyone with symptoms of whooping cough should see their doctor for diagnosis and treatment and avoid contact with babies less than 12 months of age.
- Babies can receive their first dose of vaccines from 6 weeks of age but parents should still keep them away from anyone with a cough.
- The four year old booster can be given at three years and six months.
- Any coughing illness, regardless of age or vaccination status, consider pertussis.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all immunisation providers for your continued support with the delivery of pertussis vaccinations to parents and grandparents to help us protect new babies from whooping cough.

If you require further information or have any questions please call the Health Protection Service on 6205 2300.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andrew Pengilley
A/g Chief Health Officer
Population Health Division

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