

Yorke town Community Children's Centre

Illness, Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy

Policy Number **2**

Policy statement

- Yorke town Community Children's Centre has a duty of care to ensure that all persons¹ are provided with a high level of protection during the hours of the service's operation.
Protection includes:
 - notifying children, families and staff/carers when an excludable illness or disease is present in the service;
 - maintaining a record of children's and staff/carers immunisation status;
 - complying to relevant South Australian Health Commission exclusion guidelines; and
 - increasing staff/carers awareness of cross infection through physical contact with others.
- The purpose of this policy is to manage illness and prevent the spread of infectious illnesses and diseases.
- The policy assists the service to:
 - meet children's needs when they are unwell;
 - identify symptoms of illness;
 - notify families or emergency contact² when a symptom of an infectious illness, disease or medical condition has been observed;
 - notify all persons when an excludable infectious illness or disease has been confirmed by a medical practitioner;
 - assess when an illness is an emergency³;
 - assess when an illness requires immediate medical attention⁴;
 - assess when an illness requires medical advice⁵;
 - identify and comply to exclusion guidelines and timeframes;
 - identify when an illness or disease is no longer excludable or infectious; and
 - maintain immunisation records of children in the Rural Care Program.

Families, staff, students, volunteers and visitors can also display symptoms of an infectious illness or disease while in the service's environment and as such,

¹ For the purpose of this policy, 'persons' include children, families, staff, carers, carers' family, management, ancillary staff (administrative staff, cleaners, maintenance personnel), students, volunteers, visitors, local community, school community, licensee.

² For the purpose of this policy, 'emergency contact' is the individual nominated on a child's enrolment form or **staff/carer**, student or volunteer contact details as the person to be contacted in case of an emergency.

³ For the purpose of this policy, 'emergency' is defined as when the symptoms of an illness are life threatening, and may require first aid action and/or an ambulance. For example, a child displays symptoms of meningitis, such as a stiff neck, vomiting, fever, headache, drowsiness and a rash.

⁴ For the purpose of this policy, 'immediate medical attention' is defined as when the symptoms may indicate that the illness is potentially serious. For example, a child complains or displays symptoms of intense abdominal pain.

⁵ For the purpose of this policy, 'medical advice' is defined as when symptoms may indicate that the illness is potentially infectious. For example, continuous, 'sticky' eye discharge.

the service has an equal duty of care to all persons. The Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy is applicable to children and adults.

- The service prevents the spread of illness and disease by implementing the following strategies which:
 - promote handwashing and other hygienic practices;
 - identify and exclude children and staff with symptoms of an excludable infectious illness or disease;
 - maintain clean and hygienic environments; and
 - encourage child and adult immunisation.

Please refer to the service's Hygiene and Infection Control Policy.

- It is understood by staff, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and other persons that the Illness, Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the service's duty of care, it is a requirement that management and staff implement and endorse the service's Illness, Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy and procedures.

Strategies and practices

Hygiene and infection control

- Please refer to the service's Hygiene and Infection Control Policy.

Immunisation

Children

At the Centre we encourage parents to have **children of all ages** given age appropriate immunisations by health professionals.

- On enrolment, **Rural Care parents** fill in the medical form giving details of immunisation. For verification, parents are requested to bring the child/children's Child and Youth Family Services Book (Blue Book), or a statement from Medicare from which the immunisation record will be copied and placed in the child's file.
- **Rural Care Staff will ensure records are updated each term to give the latest medical history.**

Children who are not immunised

- If for cultural or medical reasons a family does not wish to immunise their child/children, the Director will advise the family when there is an outbreak of a contagious disease and suggest the parent(s) not bring their child/children to the Centre whilst there is an outbreak. If the parent(s) still wish to bring their child/children, the parent(s) are requested to sign a letter which states the health risks of bringing their child/children to the Centre during this time and are made aware that their child/children will attend at their own risk.

Staff

- Staff are encouraged to be immunised for influenza including swine flu.
- It is recommended that all staff receive a booster of tetanus and diphtheria every 10 years. It is also recommended that staff be immunised against Hepatitis A if working with children under 2 years of age.
- Staff should discuss their history of measles and rubella immunisation with their doctor, and if they wish, have additional immunisations such as the influenza vaccine and Hepatitis B.
- Staff employed at the Centre will have a pre-employment health screen by a medical practitioner, which includes a screen for tuberculosis, and a statement that the person is fit to work in a child care setting.

Staff Exclusion

- Infected workers may be excluded from the centre for the appropriate exclusion period.

Pregnant Workers/Parents and Infectious Diseases

- Pregnant parents will be made aware of how some infectious diseases can affect their unborn child. The Director will post relevant information in areas visible to parents. The Director will give pregnant child care professionals more detailed information.

Identifying symptoms of an excludable infectious illness or disease

- Please refer to National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.). Canberra: Author.
- This site will inform parents of infectious diseases using the "You've Got What? DECS resource (OHSW shelf in office).

Exclusion guidelines

- We are committed to reducing the effect of infectious diseases in the care environment by promoting safe and hygienic practices and implementing an exclusion policy for those who may be infectious.
- Children known to be carriers of blood borne viruses such as Hepatitis B & C and HIV are not excluded from care unless there is some childhood illness, which would exclude any other child.
- Upon enrolment all **Rural Care Parents** will be given a copy of the Immunisation and Exclusion policy.

Exclusion

- If a child is unwell at home parents/guardians are asked not to bring the child to the Centre.
- We follow the guidelines from Staying Healthy in Child Care. Staff may request a pathology report to confirm cases of infectious diseases such as Rotavirus or conjunctivitis to assist us to determine when your child may re enter the centre.
- Children with vomiting and diarrhoea may not return to the centre until 24 hours from their last occurrence of vomiting or diarrhoea.

- Children and staff with infectious diseases will be excluded from the Centre in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines. A medical certificate is required after contracting diphtheria, hepatitis, polio, tuberculosis, typhoid and paratyphoid before the adult or child can be re-admitted to the Centre.
- In the case of serious ill health or hospitalisation the child or staff member will require a medical certificate from their medical practitioner or specialist, verifying that their recovery is sufficient to enable their return to the Centre.
- Parents will keep the child/children with an infectious or potentially infectious disease away from the Centre for an appropriate exclusion period (see information attached). The exclusion period is based on the time the person with a specific disease or condition might be infectious. Some diseases require a medical certificate before the child or adult can be readmitted to the Centre.
- The Governing Council requires children who display symptoms of infectious disease or illness, other than the common cold, be isolated and removed from the Centre as soon as possible.
- Senior Staff will make the initial decision regarding this exclusion from care.

Identifying symptoms of illness:

- Symptoms indicating an illness may include:
 - behaviour that is unusual for the individual child, such as child who is normally active and who suddenly becomes lethargic or drowsy;
 - high temperature or fever;
 - loose bowels;
 - faeces which is grey, pale or contains blood;
 - vomiting;
 - discharge from the eye or ear;
 - skin that displays rashes, blisters, spots, crusty or weeping sores;
 - loss of appetite;
 - dark urine;
 - headaches;
 - stiff neck or other muscular and joint pain;
 - continuous scratching of scalp or skin;
 - difficulty in swallowing or complaining of a sore throat;
 - persistent, prolonged or severe coughing; or
 - difficulty in breathing.

(Staying Healthy in Child Care, 2005, p. 18)

- Senior Staff will make the initial decision regarding this need to seek medical attention and contact emergency contact.

Notifying families or emergency contacts

- If a child is unwell whilst at the Centre the parents/guardians will be notified and asked to take the child home. The child will be made comfortable and separated from the other children until the parent/guardian arrives.

High Temperatures

Our site may use an ear thermometer (tympanic) to determine the temperature of a child if they seem unwell. If a child has a temperature of 38.0 degrees or over Staff will inform the family or emergency contact. It will be up to the Rural Care Worker in consultation with family or emergency contact as to whether the child needs to go home.

If a child has a Temperature of 39.0 degrees or above children must be sent home. Staff will follow the guidelines from "Staying Healthy in Childcare".

Medications

- Please refer to the service's Medication Policy.

Protective behaviours and practices

Staff, carers, students and volunteers as role models

- Children learn through example and modelling is an important way to teach children about behaviours and practices.
- Staff, students and volunteers must comply with the Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy.

Staff/Carer professional development opportunities

- Staff will be encouraged to be familiar National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.).

Communication with different stakeholders

Families

- All families using the service will be informed of any infectious disease, which may be present in the care environment, including exclusion details (with the exception of those diseases dealt with by the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988* or *South Australian Public and Environmental Health Act 1987*).
- The centre will advise parents (via newsletters / notices / other communication structures), of any childhood diseases reported, symptoms to look for and the length of time the child/children needs to stay away from the centre if the disease is contracted using fact sheets from "Youv'e Got What?" DECS resource.

Staff/Carers

- When dealing with an unwell child staff will observe strategies from Health and Hygiene Policy.
- All illnesses at the Centre must be recorded in the sickness record.

Management

- Staff will be encouraged to be familiar National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.). Canberra: Author
- The Director will notify public health workers at the South Australian Health Commission in the event of an outbreak of diseases listed in NH & MRC recommended notifiable diseases.

Privacy and confidentiality

- Please refer to the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Policy review

- The service will review the Illness, Immunisation and Health Related Exclusion Policy and procedures, and related documents, every year.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Links to other policies

- Child protection
- Hygiene and infection control
- Medication
- Occupational health and safety
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Supporting children's individual needs

Sources and further reading

- Department of Health and Ageing. (2007). *Immunise Australia program*. Retrieved June 29, 2007, from <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/home>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2005). *Staying healthy in child care: Preventing infectious disease in child care* (4th ed.). Canberra: Author.
- Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988
- Infection Control Guidelines, June 1990.
- You've Got What? DECS resource
- National Health and Medical Research Council Exclusion Guidelines
- South Australian Public and Environmental Health Act 1987).

Useful websites

- HealthInsite - www.healthinsite.gov.au
- Immunise Australia Program - www.immunise.health.gov.au
- National Health and Medical Research Council - www.nhmrc.gov.au
- Child and Youth Health www.cyh.com
- National Child Care Accreditation www.ncac.gov.au

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Signatures

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Chairperson – Governing Council

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Director