

# Infection Control Policy

## PURPOSE

Centacare North Queensland is committed to providing a safe workplace for our workers and workplace visitors. We acknowledge the potential for our staff to be exposed to infectious disease whilst delivering services to children and vulnerable adults within the community and on site.

The most effective way for Centacare NQ to comply and meet workplace health and safety obligations, duty of care to workers and the people they interact with is to adopt government health management directives and encourage workers to maintain recommended vaccination regimes against infectious diseases.

The purpose of this policy is:

- Support proactive approaches to staff health and wellbeing
- To identify the transmission risk of infectious diseases to workers of Centacare NQ in their day to day activities and minimise this risk as far as reasonably practicable; and
- Strongly encourage staff to comply with industry standards relating to infection control recommendations, government immunisation and health management directives,

## SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all staff, contractors, students and volunteers working for Centacare NQ, who in the course of their work or study may be exposed to infectious disease that is preventable by vaccination or health management practices.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Centacare NQ commits to a zero tolerance approach to staff and client's health & safety and preventing the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases including:

- Influenza
- Covid 19
- Hepatitis B
- Tetanus
- Measles, Mumps & Rubella
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)

Centacare NQ recognises that being vaccinated, is personal choice and strongly encourages all staff to be vaccinated against a range of infectious diseases they may risk exposure to in the course of their daily work interactions.

Centacare NQ respects the clients right to exercise *choice and control of their service delivery* by supporting their decisions and discretion to choose to work with vaccinated staff.

This is a lawful and reasonable choice that Centacare NQ is providing to our workers and client base as part of our duty of care and in recognition of the potential vulnerabilities our clients and staff may have.

Centacare NQ is to record suitable proof of vaccination in compliance with specific funding contract directives.

### Scheduling of Vaccinations

Workers are responsible for making their own arrangements to receive their vaccinations.

### Record Keeping

Centacare NQ considers that the most effective way to ensure that it complies with any immunisation best practice and its duty of care to staff and clients is to collect and record the vaccination information of its workers.

- Staff must provide evidence of their vaccination status in accordance with Centacare NQ

- instructions.
- Acceptable proof of vaccination includes a digital vaccination certificate, an immunisation history statement or an international vaccination certificate for overseas travel.
- Where an individual has a medical exemption, Centacare NQ will collect and record evidence that the worker is unable to receive a vaccine
- If Centacare NQ does not hold vaccination information about a worker it will deem the person to be unvaccinated

In accordance with Centacare NQ's Privacy Principals, vaccination information will be securely stored and kept confidential and accessible only to people who are required to access it. Individuals can request to access their vaccination record information at any time and can also request that any relevant updates are made to it.

### **New Workers**

New workers will be advised of the Infection Control Policy in Centacare NQ's recruitment advertising and onboarding process.

### **Valid Medical Exemptions**

If staff are unable to receive a vaccination because they have a medical condition that prevents them from receiving the vaccination they may provide a satisfactory medical certificate from a registered medical practitioner certifying that the person is unable to receive the vaccination.

## **LEGISLATION, STANDARDS, REFERENCES**

- WHS Act (Qld) 2011
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) - National Employment Standards, Part 2-2, Division 6, Annual Leave
- National COVID-19 Community Protection Framework for a COVIDSafe Australia
- COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Manual for acute and non-acute healthcare settings V1.0
- Queensland Human Rights Commission 'Vaccination and Your Rights' QHRC Services Australia
- Workplace Health & Safety Policy CEN-P-003
- Workplace Wellness Policy CEN-P-002
- Safeguarding Children / Vulnerable People Policy CEN-P-008

## **COMMUNICATION**

- Executive Director, Senior Leadership Team and Managers are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate communication to Workers occurs.
- All workers are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

## **REVIEW DATE**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or more frequently pursuant to reforms or significant events.

**Paula Washington**  
**Executive Director**

**Date**

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