

Australian Capital Territory

Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods (Vaccinations by Pharmacists) Direction 2020 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2020–36

made under the

**Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008, section 352
(Authorisation for pharmacist and intern pharmacist to administer vaccine without
prescription - Act, s 37 (1)(b))**

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 352 of the Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 (the MPTGR) establishes that a pharmacist is authorised to administer a vaccine to an adult without a prescription if the pharmacist administers the vaccine in accordance with a direction by the Chief Health Officer.

That same section also provides that the Chief Health Officer may, by disallowable instrument, give directions for the administration of a vaccine to an adult without prescription by a pharmacist (or intern pharmacists).

This instrument is a direction of the Chief Health Officer issued under section 352 of the MPTGR. The direction instructs that a pharmacist or intern pharmacist may administer a vaccine without prescription if they comply with the Pharmacist Vaccination Standards (Vaccination Standards) imposed by the Chief Health Officer at Schedule 1 of this instrument.

These Vaccination Standards are made for the purposes of establishing conditions and criteria under which registered pharmacists may initiate the administration of the seasonal influenza vaccine, the diphtheria, tetanus, a-cellular pertussis (dTpa) vaccine and the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine to patients aged 16 years and older, in the absence of a supply authority (prescription). The development of and updates to Vaccination Standards relating to pharmacist vaccinations is consistent with the approach taken by several Australian states and territories and takes into consideration targeted stakeholder consultation.

The Vaccination Standards outline the need for administering pharmacists to comply with the following three components:

- Completion of appropriate training to administer an approved vaccine;
- Practice standards; and
- Record keeping requirements.

Part A of the Vaccination Standards specifies the training requirements for pharmacists to be authorised to administer approved substance (vaccine) in the ACT.

These training requirements are intended to be consistent with the minimum training standards required in other Australian jurisdiction, being the completion of a training course that accords with the Australian Pharmacy Council *Standards for the Accreditation of Programs to Support Pharmacist Administration of Vaccines* (current version).

Part B of the Vaccination Standards provides an outline of general administration; premises, staffing and equipment; and administration area requirements. This section has been amended in this update to remove the exclusion from pharmacists being able to administer authorised vaccines to pregnant women, to achieve consistency with some other Australian jurisdictions' pharmacist vaccination programs and taking into consideration the views of stakeholders. ACT Health recognises that pregnant women are at a greater risk of vaccine preventable disease, most notably influenza, therefore the ability for pharmacists to administer vaccine to pregnant women is an important public health measure.

Part B also contains a change in this update to lower the patient minimum age for pharmacist administration of the influenza vaccine to 10 years. This change reflects that the majority of jurisdictions in Australia now allow pharmacists to administer influenza vaccine to this age group.

Since 2019 the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia have included standard childhood immunisation modules in their pharmacist vaccination training and are making these modules available to pharmacists who completed their training prior to 2019.

Part C of the Vaccination Standards sets out recording keeping requirements for pharmacists and pharmacies. This section requires pharmacists to consult, and record vaccination events on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for all National Immunisation Program funded vaccines. This section also encourages pharmacists to record privately funded vaccines on the AIR in the interest of establishing a consistent and accurate vaccination immunisation record for all Australians. Record keeping requirements under the Vaccinations Standards are broadly aligned with the record requirements of other Australian jurisdictions.

Appendix 1 describes the vaccines approved to be administered by pharmacists and associated conditions. Appendix 1 has been amended in this update to include the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) combination vaccine to achieve consistency with some other Australian jurisdictions' pharmacist vaccination programs and taking into consideration the views of stakeholders.