



Factsheet for vaccination providers

Refugees and other humanitarian entrants are eligible for free catch-up vaccines on an ongoing basis through the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

Funded vaccines for refugee and other humanitarian entrants aged 20 years and over are set out in **Table 1**. For refugees or humanitarian entrants aged 10 to 19 years, refer to fact sheet – *Free catch-up vaccines for all individuals aged 10 to 19 years*.

Refugees and other humanitarian entrants should also be closely evaluated regarding the potential need for other vaccines based on risk factors (e.g. influenza vaccine). Refer to the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) for more information.

Assess vaccination history

All refugees and other humanitarian entrants aged 20 years and over will need an assessment of their immunisation status to clarify their vaccination history, enter their information into the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) if it has not been recorded, and provide catch-up vaccines if needed.

For refugees and other humanitarian entrants, check if overseas (written) immunisation records are available.

Refugees and other humanitarian entrants may have received vaccinations through the visa application process or in Australian immigration detention. Check for documentation, detention health summaries, or health discharge assessments from sources such as:

- the Departure Health Check – provided to Offshore Humanitarian entrants (voluntary process)
- Australian immigration detention health records.

The Department of Social Services provides a free document translating service for Australian citizens and new migrants settling permanently in Australia. Within the first two years of arriving in Australia, eligible individuals can have key personal documents (including vaccination records) translated into English, free of charge, to assist with settlement into the community. The [Free Translating Service](#) is available on the Department of Social Services website.

Create a catch-up schedule

Once an assessment of any existing vaccination records and other relevant clinical information is undertaken, develop a catch-up schedule. The objective of catch-up vaccination is to complete a course of age appropriate vaccination and provide optimal protection as quickly as possible, generally using minimum dosing intervals.

If there is a written record of any vaccine doses, those vaccine doses should not be repeated and only enough doses to meet the total required should be given (see Table 1).

If any prior vaccine dose cannot be confirmed due to incomplete documentation, it should generally be assumed that those doses have not been given.

Serological testing to determine the need for specific vaccinations is not routinely recommended.

Apart from a possible increase in local adverse events for frequent doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis-containing vaccines, there are no significant adverse events associated with additional doses of vaccines given to immune individuals.

Information on developing a catch-up schedule is available in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#), including intervals between vaccine doses and groups with special vaccination requirements, such as migrants to Australia.

Reporting to the AIR

Vaccination providers should report to the AIR all vaccinations they give to their patients in Australia and those given overseas where the appropriate documentation is available. If your GP practice software does not automatically report vaccinations to the AIR, then you will need to report these vaccinations directly using the AIR site.

Information about registering to send or receive immunisation data from the AIR is available on the [Australian Government Department of Human Services](#) website.

Ordering vaccines

Catch-up vaccines can be ordered through the process used to order other NIP vaccines.

Table 1: Nationally funded catch-up vaccines for refugees and other humanitarian entrants aged 20 years and over

Antigen	Total doses needed	Minimal interval between doses	Notes
Diphtheria, tetanus	3 doses	Between doses 1 and 2: 4 weeks Between doses 2 and 3: 4 weeks	People should receive 1 of the doses as dTpa-containing vaccine to provide the catch-up dose for pertussis. The course can be completed with dT. If dT is not available, use dTpa or dTpa-IPV for all 3 primary doses.
Pertussis	1 dose	Not required	People ≥10 years of age who did not receive all the pertussis vaccine doses recommended before the age of 10 years only need 1 dose to be considered up to date. This is regardless of the number of previous doses they received before the age of 10 years.
Poliomyelitis	3 doses	Between doses 1 and 2: 4 weeks Between doses 2 and 3: 4 weeks	None
Measles, mumps and rubella	2 doses	4 weeks	None
Hepatitis B Aged ≥20 years	3 adult doses	Between doses 1 and 2: 1 month Between doses 2 and 3: 2 months	Minimum interval between dose 1 and dose 3 is 4 months.
Varicella	2 doses	4 weeks	MMRV is not recommended for use in people ≥14 years of age.

State and territory health department contact numbers:

ACT	02 6205 2300	SA	1300 232 272
NSW	1300 066 055	TAS	1800 671 738
NT	08 8922 8044	VIC	1300 882 008
WA	08 9321 1312	QLD	13 HEALTH (13 432 584)



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