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| **Purpose:** To provide an explanation of approved immunisation programmes. | |
| **Item** | **Explanation** |
| **Approved immunisation programme** | Regulation 2 of the Medicines Regulations 1984 defines an “approved immunisation programme” as a vaccination programme:   1. pursuant to the National Immunisation Schedule administered by Pharmac; or 2. approved by the Director-General or a Medical Officer of Health.   Note: Section 23(7) of the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 states: “In performing any of its functions in relation to the supply of pharmaceuticals, a DHB must not act inconsistently with the pharmaceutical schedule”. |
| **National Immunisation Schedule** | The National Immunisation Schedule (set out in Section I of the New Zealand Pharmaceutical Schedule) is managed by PHARMAC and is a list of all funded vaccines for children and adults. It includes all vaccines funded for:   * children and adults; * individuals at higher risk of a vaccine preventable disease; * individuals during an outbreak.   Note: the Ministry of Health is responsible for the National Immunisation Programme, including implementing the National Immunisation Schedule. Refer: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/immunisation> |
| **Variations to the National Immunisation Schedule** | All decisions about changes to the National Immunisation Schedule are made by PHARMAC. Applications to PHARMAC for variations can be made by anyone. Refer: <http://www.pharmac.govt.nz/medicines/how-medicines-are-funded/new-funding-applications/> |
| **Local Approved Immunisation Programme** | A local immunisation programme may be approved by the Director-General or a Medical Officer of Health. For example, a Medical Officer of Health may approve the use of unfunded vaccines to meet a specific need within their region such as:   * influenza vaccination to healthy adults aged 64 years and under, in general practice and workplace settings; or * hepatitis B vaccination in occupational health settings.   (A local approved immunisation programme would not normally include travel vaccines)  In practice, DHBs and DHB hospitals may not fund any vaccines outside of the New Zealand Pharmaceutical Schedule unless approved by PHARMAC. |
| **Authorisation of Vaccinators** | An authorised vaccinator may administer vaccines in an approved immunisation programme without the need for a prescription.  Regulations 44A(1) and 44A(2) of the Medicines Regulations state:  “Any medical practitioner or other person who is authorised by the Director-General or a Medical Officer of Health in accordance with this regulation to administer, for the purposes of an approved immunisation programme, a vaccine that is a prescription medicine, may, in carrying out that immunisation programme, administer that prescription medicine otherwise than pursuant to a prescription.  The Director-General or a Medical Officer of Health may authorise any person to administer a vaccine for the purposes of an approved immunisation programme if that person, following written application, provides documentary evidence satisfying the Director-General or the Medical Officer of Health, as the case may be, that that person—  (a) can carry out basic emergency techniques including resuscitation and the treatment of anaphylaxis; and  (b) has knowledge of the safe and effective handling of immunisation products and equipment; and  (c) can demonstrate clinical interpersonal skills; and  (d) has knowledge of the relevant diseases and vaccines in order to be able to explain the vaccination to the patient, or to the parent or guardian of the patient who is to consent to the vaccination on behalf of the patient, to ensure that the patient or the parent or guardian of the patient can give informed consent to the vaccination.”  More information about each of these matters is set out in the [Immunisation Handbook](http://immunisation.book.health.govt.nz/). |