

# Options for improving childhood vaccination rates including 'No Jab No Play' – talking points

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## Important background:

- The proportion of children fully vaccinated in WA is at an all-time high ~ 93.6% at 12 months age.
- The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) undercounts vaccinations so actual coverage is even higher.
- From a public health perspective, 95% vaccination coverage is the target.
- Parents are already required to have their children fully vaccinated in order to receive Federal child care benefits.
- There is little evidence from national childhood immunisation rates that the 2016 'No Jab, No Pay' law has had any substantive impact on improving vaccination coverage in young children.

- Rates of vaccine refusal are very low in WA (1.5%).
- Vaccine refusers are unlikely to change their position in response to government policies.

- There is already State and Federal legislation covering this issue (but it is not enforced).
  1. *Childcare and preschools* - The Education and Care Services National Law Regulations 2012 (Western Australia) – states “162. Health information to be kept in enrolment record - The health information to be kept in the enrolment record for each

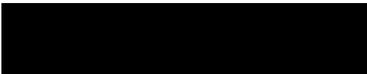
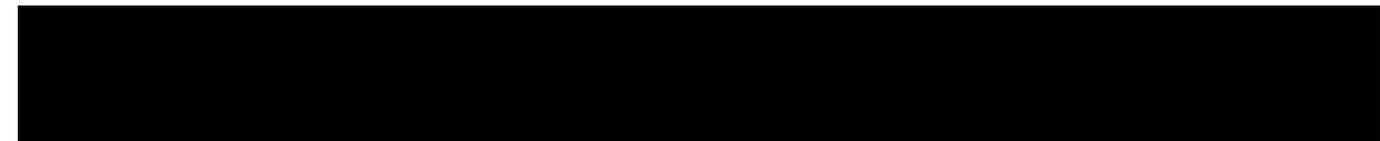
child enrolled at the education and care service is... (f) the immunisation status of the child;”

[https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/gazette/gazette.nsf/lookup/2012-137/\\$file/gg137.pdf](https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/gazette/gazette.nsf/lookup/2012-137/$file/gg137.pdf)

2. *Schools* - The WA School Education Act 1999 states “A person who wishes to make an application for enrolment at a school is to provide the following information... (f) the vaccination status of the enrollee;” [http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/legis/wa/consol\\_act/sea1999170/s16.html](http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/legis/wa/consol_act/sea1999170/s16.html)

### **What can and should be done:**

1. Enforce existing child care and school reporting laws and regulations that require reporting of immunisation status upon enrolment.
2. Strengthen existing laws and regulations to require that:
  - child care centres and preschools maintain the currency of children’s vaccination records as the child reaches immunisation milestones
  - child care centres and preschools refuse enrolment or attendance to children whose parents refuse to provide information the child’s immunisation status to the childcare or school
  - child care centres and preschools provide contact details for parents of children who are not fully vaccinated to the Department of Health for follow-up
  - government audits child care centres and preschools to ensure compliance with universal collection and maintenance of immunisation records
  - there are penalties for child care centres and schools for non-compliance with immunisation regulations
3. Create an effective referral mechanism for providing parents of under-vaccinated children identified at childcare/school with options for getting their child fully immunised.



Prevention and Control Program

