

## PORTFOLIO: HEALTH

### CONTENTIOUS ISSUE: NO JAB, NO PLAY POLICY

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#### KEY MESSAGES

- Led by the Department of Health, representatives from Health, Education and Communities have developed a coordinated three-part approach to strengthening immunisation requirements for children in early education and care in Western Australia (WA).
- Part 1 entails introducing universal immunisation record checks from 2019 onwards for all children enrolling at government and non-government schools (for kindergarten and pre-primary), child care services and community kindergartens.

#### BACKGROUND

- According to data in the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR), 93%, 90% and 93% of WA children are fully immunised at one, two, and five years of age, respectively.
- The AIR data underestimate the proportion of fully immunised children in WA by approximately 4-5% due to sub-optimal data capture; this suggests overall coverage in WA is around 95%.
- 95% coverage is considered optimal for 'herd immunity' (indirect protection of the population) against sustained outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.
- AIR data on 'conscientious objection' to vaccines shows that 1.5% of children in WA have a parental objection to vaccination.
- Since 2016, only fully immunised children or those with a medical exemption are eligible for Commonwealth child care subsidies. An estimated 90% of parents of children attending child care services in WA receive Commonwealth child care subsidies. More than 97,000 children attend child care services in WA in 2018.

#### CURRENT SITUATION

- The Department of Health is currently drafting instructions for new health regulations (Part 1) to introduce immunisation record checks and reporting requirements for enrolment at schools and child care services, and exclusion of unvaccinated children during a disease outbreak.
- The Departments of Education and Communities are currently undertaking the necessary consultation and regulatory impact assessment ahead of presenting proposed changes to regulations covering Part 1 to Ministers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
- Part 1 is expected to commence at the beginning of the 2019 school year.

- [REDACTED] and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has been playing an active role in progressing WA initiatives to strengthening immunisation requirements for children in early education and care.

**CURRENT AS:** 1 August 2018

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