

National Immunisation Education Program for Health Professionals (NIEPHP)



Campus
Online

Contact

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RATIONALE

The School of Nursing, Midwifery & Paramedicine offers the National Immunisation Education Program for Health Professionals (NIEPHP). The NIEPHP prepares health professionals for the legislated role of Health Professional Immuniser. This is an advanced role incorporating semi-independent practice under a Drug Therapy Protocol with role responsibilities specified by an organisation's Health Management Protocol. This role recognition enables the health professional to practice within particular parameters of practice, which ensures safety of both the public and the health professional.

THE ROLE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IMMUNISER

Immunisation is an important public health issue for all health professionals. Across Australia, a Health Professional may practice as a Health Professional Immuniser if they have completed a suitable education program.

Health Professional Immunisers are permitted to act under the state/territory Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulations to obtain and administer vaccinations in accordance with the state/territory Drug Therapy Protocol and their organisation's Health Management Protocol. Health Professional Immuniser practice is guided by practices detailed in the Australian Immunisation Handbook and other government publications.

The role of Health Professional Immunisers is largely independent, working in collaboration with a team of health care professionals. Health Professionals who have completed other programs may be able to apply for credit or recognition of prior learning.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The National Immunisation Education Program for Health Professionals (NIEPHP) is nationally recognised by Health Education Services Australia as an accredited program against the National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals.

AHPRA registered health professionals who have previously been assessed for competency of technical skills used in vaccination are no longer required to complete a formal clinical practice placement.

Students will undertake learning content relevant to clinical practice and complete a self-assessment checklist of clinical competency. This is in line with *The National Framework for Immunisation Education for Health Professionals, 2018*.

Students who have not undertaken previous assessment for clinical competency or are otherwise not eligible will need to organise and undertake clinical practice and competency assessment relevant to their profession (e.g. Pharmacists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners).

“Good preparation for the role and prepared me well. Really enjoyed the course at ACU and liked the flexibility of how it was delivered.”

Cath Nolan, ACU graduate

National Immunisation Education Program for Health Professionals

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the NIEPHP, the health professional will be able to:

- Apply relevant legislation, policies and ethical principles to professional practice as a health professional immuniser.
- Integrate knowledge of the principles of immunisation and vaccination within the health professional role in health promotion.
- Demonstrate competency in the administration of vaccines in a range of clinical contexts.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to outcomes of the vaccination process.
- Provide an immunisation service that is congruent with relevant standards of immunisation practice, whilst working within the requirements of the National and State Drug Therapy Protocol and the organisation's Health Management Protocol.
- Provision of person centred and family centred care to enable safe and high-quality administration of immunisation services in a variety of settings, within an Australian health care context.

PRE-REQUISITE REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to enrol, students must:

- provide evidence of current AHPRA registration.

Students should also have:

- current CPR certification
- intermediate IT literacy skills
- regular access to a computer or laptop with an internet connection and a valid email address.

COURSE LENGTH

Students will undertake 150 hours of focused learning, including online learning modules and self-assessment of clinical competency.

The program should be completed according to the study schedule over a 16-week period.

PROGRAM DATES 2023

There are four intakes in 2023:

6 February
 3 April
 5 June
 7 August

PROGRAM COMPONENTS STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The program comprises:

An online unit of:

- six theoretical modules,
- online readings
- associated online quiz questions
- catch up practical scenarios.
- An online clinical preparation module and self-competency assessment, consisting of:
 - videos and online learning materials
 - a checklist for self-assessment of clinical competency
 - in line with the *National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals*, 2018.

- The total time commitment of the participant is recognised as 150 hours of focused learning.

Participants will be required to undertake:

- Self-directed, guided online learning
- Self-directed quiz completion
- Self-directed learning and self-assessment of clinical competency.

Theory component (online – computer based)

Theory for the NIEPHP is accessed online. Students enrol, set up their own username and password, make payment online and then access the Program. Students will need their own computer with reliable internet access or to be able to access a computer regularly e.g. workplace or local library.

Content and readings are available to students in the online unit. No paper-based materials are provided, but students may print content and readings, if desired.

Students are required to undertake all online readings and answer all online quiz questions to successfully complete all online modules.

Students may be required to complete further repeat questions or written responses if they do not successfully pass module quizzes.



“Course content is current and taught me how to continue to stay current. Very useful content.”

Alicia Kirkwood, ACU graduate

The time taken to complete the theoretical component is calculated at 150 hours of focused learning which, is equivalent to one unit of study.

However, the time spent by a student on theory depends on the student's educational preparation and their familiarity with content and the online learning environment.

Online support is provided by the Lecturer.

Clinical component:

AHPRA registered health professionals who were previously assessed for competency of technical skills used in vaccination are no longer required to complete a formal clinical practice placement.

Students will undertake learning content relevant to clinical practice and complete a self-assessment checklist of clinical competency. This is in line with the *National Framework for Immunisation Education for Health Professionals, 2018*.

Students who have not undertaken previous assessment for clinical competency or are otherwise not eligible will need to organise and undertake clinical practice and competency assessment relevant to their profession (e.g. Pharmacists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners).

This may involve attendance at a practice placement or workshop and satisfactory completion of competency assessment. The student is responsible for organising their own assessment and placement.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- Online reading of module content and relevant government and journal readings are accessed via internet links.
- Completion of online multiple-choice quiz questions for each module.
- A High Distinction (HD): 100% correct answers must be achieved for each online quiz (up to 3 attempts).
- Students may be required to complete further repeat questions or written responses if they do not successfully pass module quizzes.

CLINICAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

In line with the *National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals, 2018*, AHPRA registered professionals who **have** previously been assessed for competency of technical skills used in vaccination (i.e. in undergraduate program) will be required to complete:

- Self-assessment of eligibility for clinical competency assessment;
- Complete an online module component, watch videos, answer questions, complete a self-assessment checklist.

For AHPRA registered professionals who **have not** undertaken previous technical skills competency assessment, proof of satisfactory clinical competency assessment will be required in addition to the above-mentioned clinical requirements.

PROGRAM FEES

The full program cost is \$995.00 (incl. GST). This fee includes costs related to administration, teaching, technical resources. Payment is required to be made online by credit or debit card.

Health Professionals currently employed with Clinical Partners of ACU and ACU staff/alumni are entitled to a 10% discount, in line with the ACU Clinical School agreement.

REFUND POLICY

If you withdraw from the Program during the first two weeks from commencement, you will be charged an administrative fee of \$240 (incl. GST).

Should you withdraw from the Program after the first two weeks you will be ineligible for any refund on program costs.

In cases for withdrawal with evidence of special circumstances (i.e. valid medical reason), a partial refund will be considered.

PROGRAM COMPLETION

Participants must complete the program within the required timeframe specified when enrolling into the program.

Participants must complete each module according to the specified timeframe for each module in the online unit as per the study schedule.



“The course was very flexible, interesting and the coordinators were very supportive. It has opened up further job opportunities for me.”

Katy O'Connell, ACU Graduate

Upon satisfactory completion of theory and clinical components of the program, students will receive a statement of completion and transcript which are used as evidence of qualification as a Health Professional immuniser to employers.

Health Professionals must safely retain the statement of completion to show to potential future employers.

There will be a charge of \$30 to cover administrative costs to replace this statement if lost.

Participants must complete the program according to the required timeframe.

EMPLOYMENT AS A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IMMUNISER

Health Professional immunisers may be employed at council immunisation clinics, private immunisation companies, travel clinics, GP clinics, and hospital staff health clinics. Many positions are seasonal or casual.

There are limited full time employment opportunities for Health Professional Immunisers, so health professionals are urged to carefully consider their own employment prospects before commencing this program.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Numbers will be limited to facilitate efficient administration and teaching.
- No discussion will be entered into regarding continuation of the program beyond the specified completion date.
- Enrolments will not be processed unless current CPR Certificate and proof of registration is attached.

PROGRAM ENROLMENT

For further information and to register your interest in enrolling in this program please email: immuniser@acu.edu.au

RECOGNITION/ACCREDITATION FOR PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IMMUNISERS IN ALL AUSTRALIAN STATES/TERRITORIES

National

AHPRA does not provide an endorsement for Registered Health Professionals for immunisation practice.

Health Education Services Australia (HESA) provides national accreditation and recognition of immunisation programs. ACU received national accreditation in 2021. Health Professionals are responsible for ensuring they are aware of and practice with regard to any relevant legislation, policies and protocols guiding Immuniser practice in the state/territory in which they practice.

Queensland

The ACU Program for Nurse Immunisers has been accredited in Queensland since 1997.

If you completed that program between 1997-2021, you are already recognised for practice as an Immunisation Program Nurse in Queensland.

There is no need to undertake this program as well. You should also be eligible for recognition for practice in other states, as all state programs were aligned during this time.

COVID-19 VACCINE TRAINING

This program does not cover COVID-19 vaccination information. A free national information program on COVID-19 vaccines is provided by the federal government at this link: <https://www.health.gov.au/covid-19-vaccination-training-program>

Health Professionals are expected to complete the additional program prior to undertaking COVID-19 vaccination as an Immuniser.

WHO CAN APPLY TO ENROL AS A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IMMUNISER?

This course is suitable for any Health Professional registered with AHPRA who have completed medication endorsement and safe administration of injectable medications and who is *eligible* to practice in their state. Health Professionals may include:

- Registered Nurses
- Enrolled Nurses with medication endorsement
- Midwives
- Paramedics
- Pharmacists
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners

Please check your state or territory 'Health Ministerial department' for more information regarding the jurisdictional conditions for you to safely practice as a Health professional immuniser.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners, are encouraged to apply.