



OFFICE OF THE  
CHIEF PHARMACIST  
UPDATE

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**Administration of vaccines by pharmacists in South Australia**

New amendments to the [Controlled Substances \(Poisons\) Regulations 2011](#) came into effect on 23 January 2025.

The amendments support trained pharmacists to continue to administer the range of vaccines they were administering under the Vaccine Administration Code (the VAC) in addition to facilitating appropriately trained pharmacists administering a wider range of vaccines, including those needed for the purpose of travel. This change will give consumers a broader choice as to where they receive vaccine services, while recognising vaccination as a part of many pharmacists' scope of practice and empowering pharmacists to work to their full scope. Pharmacists were removed from the VAC on 30 January 2025.

The new regulation ([18\(3a\)](#)) allows a pharmacist who has successfully completed an immunisation education or training program to administer any schedule 4 vaccine within their individual scope of practice, without a prescription in accordance with the Australian Immunisation Handbook. For example, they may administer:

- Vaccines as part of specified programs, for example the National Immunisation Program (NIP) or State-funded programs in accordance with program requirements, and
- Privately funded vaccines, including vaccines required for the purpose of travel.

It is important to be aware that the Handbook outlines specific requirements for certain vaccines (e.g. only approved vaccination centres can administer Yellow Fever vaccines).

Individual pharmacists must ensure they are working within their scope of practice and have all the requisite professional skills, relevant training, competencies, and knowledge. A provisionally registered pharmacist (intern pharmacist) may administer a vaccine under the direct supervision of a registered pharmacist if they meet the training requirements stipulated in the legislation.

Pharmacists are encouraged to review the SA Health Immunisation Section [FAQ](#) document which is available on the SA Health website. Additionally, a 'Pharmacist Vaccine Administration Protocols' document will be available shortly and distributed to pharmacists to support this regulatory change affecting pharmacist vaccination services.

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### Practice considerations

Pharmacists administering vaccines should consult with their indemnity insurer prior to providing the service. Specific considerations for pharmacists and pharmacy services providers to ensure safe and effective provision of a service include ensuring:

- All relevant training and education has been completed and refreshed at required intervals.
- Compliance with best practice guidelines including [PSA Practice Guidelines for the provision of immunisation services](#).
- Administration is in accordance with product information and the Australian Immunisation Handbook.
- Immediate and ready access to relevant resources.
- Sufficient staffing to ensure safe delivery of the vaccine service and other pharmacy services.
- Safety of patients and pharmacy staff including appropriate safe handling procedures, infection control, sharps, and clinical waste management.
- Standard operating procedures are in place for service delivery and implemented consistently.
- Appropriate mechanisms to document and record the service are in place.
- Knowledge of signs and symptoms of adverse reactions and relevant management plans available including anaphylaxis management.
- Service delivery occurs in an area of the pharmacy providing auditory and visual privacy.

### Access to vaccine stock

As pharmacists were removed from the VAC there will also no longer a requirement for pharmacy premises to be registered as an approved organisation by the SA Health Immunisation Section. Pharmacists will still be required to register with the Vaccine Distribution Centre (VDC) to obtain supply of government funded vaccine stock.

Access to stock of vaccines being used outside of specified programs, such as for the purpose of travel, will be via private funding through standard medicine suppliers.

#### **Key Points:**

- Vaccinations for purposes of travel may now be administered by appropriately trained and skilled pharmacists.
- Individual pharmacists must ensure they are working within their scope of practice and have all the requisite professional skills, relevant training, competencies, and knowledge before providing a service to the public.
- The new regulation requires that:
  - Pharmacists must have successfully completed an approved education and training program, *and*
  - Administration of vaccines must be in accordance with the Australian Immunisation Handbook or, in the absence of information published in the Handbook, another resource as approved by the Minister.
- There is no longer a requirement for pharmacy premises to be registered with the SA Health Immunisation Section, however the pharmacy will continue to need to register with the Vaccine Distribution Centre to access government funded vaccine stock.
- For participation in funded vaccination programs, compliance with National and State program rules is still required.

## Resources

The SA Health Immunisation Section can be contacted for more information on [HealthImmunisationadmin@sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthImmunisationadmin@sa.gov.au) or phone 1300 232 272.

[SA Health Website | Pharmacist Vaccine Administration FAQs](#)

[The Australian Immunisation Handbook](#)

[Practice Guidelines for the provision of immunisation services](#)

[Pharmacist Immunisers | SA Health](#)

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## Changes to South Australian vaping laws impacting pharmacists

Pharmacists are reminded that the amendments to the South Australian *Tobacco and E-Cigarette Products Act 1997* **banning the supply of any vapes (including vaping devices) to people under 18 years of age** are now in force for health professionals.

More information is available in the [Chief Pharmacist Update](#) from 5 December 2024.

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## Insulin discontinuations – publication of guidance and fact sheets for clinicians and consumers

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) has recently published resources to outline strategies and safety considerations in relation to the discontinuations of some insulin products in Australia over the next two years.

The resources support clinicians and consumers in managing any changes between insulin products to ensure patient safety and link to [TGA guidance](#) on the products impacted and alternatives.

The following resources are now available on the Commission's web page [Medication safety and medicines shortages: alerts and guidance](#):

- [Guidance - Discontinuation of insulin products: Strategies and safety considerations](#)
  - [Fact sheet - Discontinuation of Protaphane® InnoLet®: Strategies and safety considerations](#)
  - [Fact sheet for consumers - Important changes for people who use insulin](#)
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Please forward this update to staff or colleagues who may not have received it and contact us at [Health.OfficeoftheChiefPharmacist@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.OfficeoftheChiefPharmacist@sa.gov.au) to be added to our mailing list or with any other enquiries.

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