Preamble

Regulation 18(3) of the Controlled Substances (Poisons) Regulations 2011 authorises a registered health practitioner of a class determined by the Minister to administer an S4 drug if the administration is in accordance with the Vaccine Administration Code (VAC) published by the South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing (the Department) and provided that all the other requirements of regulation 18(3) are met. The registered health practitioner must meet specified requirements about training, vaccines, immunisation programs and organisations that deliver immunisation programs.

Who is able to initiate administration of a vaccine in accordance with the authorisation?

Health practitioners authorised to immunise independent of a medical order, if all requirements under the Vaccine Administration Code are met, include registered nurses, midwives and pharmacists.

- Registered nurses who have successfully completed the approved training program Understanding Vaccines and the National Immunisation Program or another training program listed in Table 1 Approved training programs in South Australia for registered nurses as published on the SA Health website, may administer all vaccines listed in Appendix 2 to the Code.

- Registered nurses who have successfully completed the approved training program Understanding vaccines and adult vaccination requirements for workplace programs can administer vaccines listed in Appendix 2 to the Code; however, the vaccine must only be administered to persons 16 years of age or over.

- Registered midwives who have successfully completed the approved training program Understanding Vaccines for Midwives – Vaccination during pregnancy and early childhood can administer hepatitis B vaccine, influenza vaccine, MMR vaccine and dTpa vaccine to a person 16 years of age or over and paediatric hepatitis B vaccine to infants within 7 days of birth.

- Registered pharmacists who have successfully completed an approved training program Manage the delivery and administration of injections and immunisations (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia) or Vaccination services delivered by pharmacists (Pharmacy Guild of Australia) and have completed as a prerequisite the SA Health program Understanding vaccines and adult vaccination requirements for workplace programs can administer inactivated influenza, MMR, dTpa/IPV vaccines to a person 16 years of age or over.

- Registered Pharmacists who have successfully completed an approved training program Manage the delivery and administration of injections and immunisations - Pharmaceutical Society of Australia or Vaccination services delivered by pharmacists - Pharmacy Guild of Australia and have completed as a prerequisite the SA Health program Understanding influenza and the influenza vaccination program, can administer inactivated influenza vaccines to a person 16 years of age or older.
Which training programs are approved in South Australia?

**Registered nurses**

*Understanding Vaccines and the National Immunisation Program* or another training program listed in Table 1 *Approved training programs in South Australia for registered nurses* as published on the SA Health website, are approved training programs. Any immunisation educational programs that have been approved by another State or Territory Health Department for authorisation of registered health practitioners are recognised as approved training programs.

*Understanding vaccines and adult vaccination requirements for workplace programs* with conditions attached.

**Registered Pharmacists**

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia - *Pharmacists administering injections and immunisations* and Pharmacy Guild of Australia - *Vaccination services delivered by pharmacists*, are currently approved training programs in South Australia for pharmacists.

The SA Health program *Understanding vaccines and adult vaccination requirements for workplace programs* is as a prerequisite for the approved training programs for pharmacists to administer inactivated influenza vaccine, MMR or dTpa/IPV vaccines.

**Registered Midwives**

*Understanding Vaccines for Midwives – Vaccination during pregnancy and early childhood* is the approved training program for midwives.

Why is adrenaline injection not listed in Appendix 2 of the Vaccine Administration Code?

Adrenaline 1 in 1000 injection is not listed because it is an S3 poison (Pharmacist Only Medicine). The authorisation under regulation 18(3) of the *Controlled Substances (Poisons) Regulations 2011* applies to the administration of S4 drugs. The drugs listed in Appendix 2 are S4 drugs.

May I administer adrenaline injection without a written or verbal instruction from a medical practitioner?

A registered health practitioner is able to administer the S3 poison adrenaline 1 in 1000 injection without a written or verbal instruction from a medical practitioner. The administration of adrenaline injection should be in accordance with the clinical guidelines in the current online edition of the *Australian Immunisation Handbook*.

How would I know if my employer is an organisation that is approved to deliver immunisation programs?

Recognised health facilities are organisations that do not need to seek approval from the Minister. Recognised health facilities include incorporated hospitals, councils or council subsidiaries and the SA Ambulance Service, and are considered approved organisations to deliver immunisation programs.

Other organisations employing authorised registered health practitioners to deliver immunisation programs without medical orders require approval from the Minister.

Organisations approved by the Minister are listed on the SA Health website.
Where would I find information about applying for approval as an organisation to deliver immunisation programs?

The Organisations delivering immunisation programs: Information guide and application form outlines the requirements to become an approved organisation.

In addition, organisations seeking approval will need to apply to register with the Australian Immunisation Register. See How to register as a provider and request access to the AIR.

What are the additional requirements for the administration of vaccines?

If a vaccine is administered as part of the National Immunisation Program it must be administered in accordance with the National Immunisation Program Schedule and the specific recommendations in the current online edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook.

If the vaccine is not being administered as part of the National Immunisation Program it must be administered in accordance with the requirements specified by the Minister. The requirements specified by the Minister permit administration of a vaccine that is listed in Appendix 2 of the Vaccine Administration Code or a vaccine approved by the Minister under:

- seasonal influenza programs for persons 6 months of age or older; or
- the Department’s New Arrival Refugee Immunisation Program; or
- the recommendations for specific vaccines or the recommendations for special risk groups in the Australian Immunisation Handbook (but not part of the funded program), with the conditions that the vaccine must not be administered for the purpose of travel, or for the management of a tetanus prone wound; or
- occupational health programs.

Other immunisation programs may be approved to take account of local situations or outbreaks of infectious diseases.

The requirements for administration under programs that are not part of the National Immunisation Program are listed on the SA Health website.

Does the authorisation cover administration of vaccines in Appendix 2 of the Vaccine Administration Code for the purpose of travel?

Vaccines such as Twinrix (hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine) may not be administered for the purpose of travel as the requirements specified by the Minister do not allow administration of the vaccines for the purpose of travel.

If a person has a vaccine such as Twinrix prescribed by a medical practitioner for the purpose of travel, a registered nurse may administer the vaccine to that person.

Can vaccines be administered on a user pays basis if the administration is in accordance with the authorisation?

Vaccines that are listed in Appendix 2 of the Vaccine Administration Code and are administered in accordance with the requirements specified by the Minister may be administered to any person on a user pays basis. For example, seasonal influenza vaccine for a person 6 months of age or older, or a booster dose of diphtheria-pertussis-
tetanus vaccine for an adult (a recommendation for a specific vaccine in the current online edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook but not part of the funded program) may be administered on a user pays basis.

If a person has a vaccine prescribed by a medical practitioner, the vaccine may also be administered to the person on a user pays basis by authorised health practitioners.

Are standing drug orders required?

Regulation 18(3) provides the authorisation for a health practitioner to initiate administration of a vaccine in accordance with the Vaccine Administration Code, without having an instruction from a medical practitioner. A standing drug order would not be required.

An organisation may choose to develop protocols to support delivery of the immunisation program and support best practice. It is a matter for the organisation to decide who would sign off any such protocols. Any protocols must be consistent with the requirements under regulation 18(3).

Can an authorised registered nurse delegate to an unauthorised registered nurse or an enrolled nurse, administration of a vaccine?

A nurse (RN or EN) may administer a prescription drug (not being a drug of dependence), e.g. a vaccine, if he or she is acting in the ordinary course of his or her profession as per the Controlled Substances Act 1984(18(1d)(a)(i)). This is generally taken to mean that a nurse may administer a vaccine if he or she is acting on an instruction (verbal or written) from a prescriber. An instruction would include an appropriately approved standing drug order.

An authorised registered nurse is not a prescriber (a prescriber is a person who lawfully gives a prescription for a drug). Therefore an authorised registered nurse does not delegate the administration of vaccine to an unauthorised registered nurse or an enrolled nurse.

Can a provisionally registered pharmacist undertake an approved immunisation training program then practice as an authorised practitioner whilst provisionally registered or once they gain general registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia?

While pharmacy students and interns are not precluded from enrolling and completing an immunisation training program, doing so will not meet the requirements leading to authorisation whilst provisionally registered or once they achieve general registration with the Pharmacy Board of Australia.

Pharmacists are a class of practitioner recognised under the requirements of the Vaccine Administration Code and must complete the training requirements (including the SA Health immunisation program prerequisite) as a registered health professional (not provisionally registered) to meet the requirements of the Code.

Can a student nurse/midwife undertake an approved immunisation training program then practice as an authorised practitioner once they gain registration from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia?
While student nurses/midwives are not precluded from enrolling and completing an immunisation training program, doing so will not meet the requirements leading to authorisation once they achieve registration with the Nursing/Midwifery Board of Australia.

Registered Nurses and Midwives are a class of practitioner recognised under the requirements of the Vaccine Administration Code and must complete the training requirements as a registered health professional.

Where can I get more information?

Clinical information and advice is available from expert immunisation nurses in the Immunisation Section, CDCB. The Immunisation Section can be contacted on 1300 232 272 Monday to Friday 8.30 am – 5.00 pm.