



# Well Child Tamariki Ora (WCTO) Provider Update

May 2018

*From the WCTO Promotion Team at the Immunisation Advisory Centre*

In this newsletter:

- An important reminder from the Ministry of Health about the deadline for worker safety checking under the Vulnerable Children Act
- News from Inland Revenue about the new Families Package
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## **Deadline for worker safety checking under the Vulnerable Children Act.**

The Vulnerable Children Act 2014 requires **all paid employees and contractors who work with children for state-funded organisations to be safety checked** to ensure that they are safe to work with children. There is an upcoming deadline for **all existing core workers to be checked by 1 July 2018**. Under the Act, **core children's workers** are those who may regularly work alone with children without the parent or guardian present and are the only children's worker present or have primary responsibility for the child e.g., doctors, nurses, midwives, pediatricians, youth counsellors.



The Act's accompanying regulations, the Vulnerable Children

(Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015, contain the detailed requirements for safety checking and can be accessed at:

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2015/0106/latest/DLM6482241.html#DLM6482245>.

Guidance on interpreting and applying the legislation is available in the document linked below, which is produced by Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children:

<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Safer-Recruitment-Safer-Children.pdf>

Third party organisations can also be asked to perform safety checks. The Ministry of Health has engaged with CVCheck to provide this service. You can find more information on safety checking, including costs and how to apply, on CVCheck's website: <https://cvcheck.com/nz>.

Questions about safety checking can be directed to the Ministry by calling 0800 855 066.

## The Families Package – what it means for NZ families



From 1 July 2018, financial support for many NZ families is increasing because of the Families Package.

Part of the package is the Best Start tax credit. This is a new weekly payment of \$60 per child, available to eligible parents who have a baby due on or after 1 July 2018.

All families will receive this payment until the child turns 1 year old, regardless of their household income.

Households whose income is less than \$79,000 will continue to receive \$60 per week until the child turns 3

years old. Those earning above \$79,000 may continue to receive payments at a reduced amount. The upper threshold is \$94,000 (for one child) when payments stop.

### *How do people apply?*

Parents apply for Best Start when registering your baby's birth through [SmartStart](#). There are no additional forms to complete. Once correctly completed, the information is sent directly to Inland Revenue. Payments will start either straight away or, if the person is receiving paid parental leave, Best Start payments begin once paid parental leave ends.

If a person has multiple births then they will receive \$60 per child.

If a person does not register their baby through SmartStart, they can apply for Best Start by completing the Working for Families registration (FS1) form either online or by hand and posting it to IR.

### *What makes a person eligible?*

- They must be the principal caregiver of the child
- They must be a NZ resident/citizen and have been in NZ for a continuous period of 12 months at any time
- They must have an IRD number for the child for who they will get Best Start payments
- The child they are claiming for is both a resident and present in NZ

### *What if the baby comes early?*

If a baby is due on or after 1 July and is born before 1 July then they are still eligible for Best Start. They may also be eligible for the parental tax credit. If this is the case, then they can choose which one they apply for.

This choice only applies to those babies born before 1 July whose due date was on or after 1 July.

### *Paid parental leave*

Paid parental leave is also extending from 18 weeks up to a maximum of 22 weeks for parents with:

- babies born or expected on or after 1 July, or
- children under the age of 6 years coming into their care on or after 1 July.

Keeping-in-touch hours, which allow an employee on parental leave to stay connected with their employer and perform work from time to time (e.g., attend a team day), will increase from 40 hours to 52.

For more information go to <http://www.ird.govt.nz/news-updates/families-package-bill.html>



## Healthcare workers and the influenza vaccine



The flu season is once again upon us. Healthcare workers are at greater risk of catching flu, being more likely to be exposed to the virus.

New Zealand research shows that 4 out of 5 people infected with the virus show no symptoms.<sup>1</sup>

If you were to contract flu, and be one of those without symptoms, you could unknowingly infect your family and loved ones, as well as those with whom you work.

The World Health Organization recommends healthcare workers are vaccinated against influenza. Your influenza vaccination may be free. For 2018, the Ministry of Health has introduced the goal of 80% of DHB-based healthcare workers are vaccinated. Over the past few years, coverage rates for this group has been about 60-65%.<sup>2</sup> For more information about flu, [download this pdf](#).

Also, check out this upcoming TV ad from the influenza immunisation national promotional campaign <https://vimeo.com/212849223>

## Renewed concerns over gas heaters

Portable gas heaters are again in the news. Recall in 2016, University of Auckland Growing Up in New Zealand researchers reported an increased risk in respiratory illness in children, associated with the use of portable gas heaters. Unflued emissions and increased condensation, particularly when used in confined spaces, make the use of portable gas heaters concerning. The [EECA website](#) has information about the cost of different home heating options and eligibility for insulation funding.

Under the Housing Improvement Regulations 1947, landlords are required to provide heating in any living room. Approved forms of heating may differ between councils. As part of the Healthy Homes Guarantee Act 2017, heating requirements, including forms of approved heating provided by landlords, will be discussed later this year.

## Fire safety—smoke alarms

Working smoke alarms are compulsory in all rental homes, and must be installed:

- within 3 meters of each bedroom door, or in every room where a person sleeps
- in each level or story of a multi-story or multi-level home
- in all rental homes, boarding houses, rental caravans, and self-contained sleep-outs.

See the [Tenancy Services](#) or [Fire and Emergency New Zealand](#) websites for more information.



<sup>1</sup> Huang Q. Key findings - SHIVERS. 2016 New Zealand Influenza Symposium; Wellington, New Zealand; 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health. 2017 Workforce influenza immunisation coverage rates by District Health Boards [Internet]. Wellington: Ministry of Health; 2017 [cited 2017 December 19]. Available from: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/immunisation/influenza>.

### Tell us what you want

This newsletter is a resource for you, providers of Well Child services (WCTO providers, midwives, kaiawhina...). If there is a topic you would like to know more about, or if you have a WCTO-related question you'd like answered, let us know.

Email Donna at [d.watson@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:d.watson@auckland.ac.nz) subject heading \*\*\*WCTO newsletter\*\*\*



### Upcoming events

- International Day of the Midwife 5<sup>th</sup> May
- International Nurses Day 12<sup>th</sup> May
- International Day of Families 15<sup>th</sup> May
- World Smokefree Day 31<sup>st</sup> May
- Matariki 7<sup>th</sup> June
- World Breastfeeding Week 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> August

Website address: [www.wellchild.org.nz](http://www.wellchild.org.nz)

Newsletter mail-out dates for 2018: 14th May, 13th August & 12th November



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