



Brad Hazzard
Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOUGHER VACCINATION RULES FOR CHILD CARE

Parents who refuse to vaccinate their children will no longer be allowed to enrol them in child care with the “conscientious objector” option scrapped from January 2018.

Minister for Health Brad Hazzard said the new rules will reduce the risk of children contracting potentially deadly diseases such as whooping cough and meningococcal.

“The NSW Government and the majority of the NSW community have achieved outstanding vaccination rates but there’s no room for complacency,” Mr Hazzard said.

“We have spent more than any other State Government to protect our community through vaccination because the overwhelming scientific evidence is that vaccination is safe and highly effective in preventing disease.

“However, all it takes is one unvaccinated child and dozens of others could be put at risk of serious illness – so we are being very clear that choices of conscientious objectors, which are not evidence based, will no longer be allowed to impact other families.”

The Public Health Amendment (Review) Bill 2017 was passed by the NSW Parliament last night.

Directors of child care centres who do not comply with the strengthened requirements under the Public Health Act will face a fine of up to \$5500.

NSW Health will assist the child care sector to understand and implement the new requirements – which will only apply to newly enrolled children from January 1 – ahead of the start date. Children on a recognised catch-up vaccination schedule or those who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons will still be able to be enrolled.

The legislation also gives public health officers the power to exclude unvaccinated children from secondary schools when there is a disease outbreak. This provision previously only applied to primary schools and child care centres.

Removing this exemption will align with the Australian Government’s ‘No Job, No Pay’ measure, under which certain child care and family tax benefits are dependent on a child being vaccinated.

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/childcare_ga.aspx

MEDIA: Natasha Wallace | Minister Hazzard | 0439 484 015