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Dear Colleague

Information on the Prevenar 13® Vaccine Supplementary Program

The Commonwealth Government is providing a free supplementary dose of Prevenar 13 to all children aged between 12 and 35 months of age who have been previously vaccinated with Prevenar 7.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) have recommended children aged 36-48 months will also benefit from receiving a supplementary dose of Prevenar 13 in addition to Pneumovax 23 due at 4 years of age.

The program will commence from 1st October 2011 and end 30th September 2012.

With the decrease of invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* serotypes covered by Prevenar 7 vaccine, Australia is now experiencing an increase in the serotypes not covered by this vaccine.

Serotype 19A is emerging as the leading cause of IPD in Australia for children less than 2 years of age. This is particularly concerning given it is also a serotype associated with multiple antibiotic resistance.

Among cases of pneumococcal disease notified in South Australia from 2006, the proportion caused by serotype 19A has increased twofold.

Prevenar 13 vaccine contains 13 serotypes including 19A. Prevenar 13 has been included on the schedule since July 1 2011 and is provided at 2, 4 and 6 months of age.

A supplementary dose of Prevenar 13 is to be offered to children 12-35 months of age who received Prevenar 7 as this will provide some protection against the additional 6 pneumococcal serotypes not contained in Prevenar 7.

A guide to support your practice staff in determining eligibility for this supplementary dose of Prevenar 13 is enclosed.

Please consider how you will promote the supplementary dose of Prevenar 13 to the eligible group.

You can place Prevenar 13 orders for the supplementary catch up program using the usual vaccine order form.

If you have any further queries, please contact the Immunisation Section on 1300 232 272.

Dr Ann Koehler
Director
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL BRANCH

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