Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

BE WISE IMMUNISE

Western Australian Infant and Maternal Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Immunisation Program

Fact sheet – for WA immunisation providers

About RSV

RSV causes illness in people of all ages, but infants aged less than 6 months are at a higher risk of severe disease.

RSV infections are often mild with symptoms similar to a common cold. RSV is one of the most frequent causes of coughs, colds and earaches. However, patients with RSV may also deteriorate rapidly, resulting in bronchiolitis and pneumonia.

Hospital admission due to RSV is 8 times higher than admission from influenza among children aged younger than 1 year.

WA Infant and Maternal RSV Immunisation Program

- **Option A – Abrysvo:** The maternal RSV vaccine (Abrysvo) is funded year-round under the National Immunisation Program (NIP). Pregnant women are recommended to receive the RSV vaccine from 28 weeks gestation to protect infants from birth through to 6 months. Abrysvo can be administered at any time of the year.
- **Option B – Beyfortus:** Beyfortus is a monoclonal antibody that provides immediate protective immunity against RSV infection. WA Department of Health funds Beyfortus for eligible at-risk children. Beyfortus is not available for private purchase in WA. The program is offered statewide between 1 April and 30 September each year, and in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions year-round.

Both Abrysvo and Beyfortus can be accessed at participating birthing hospitals, GPs, Aboriginal medical services, and community health immunisation clinics. Community pharmacies will offer Abrysvo but not Beyfortus.

For up to date eligibility information, refer to WA Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Immunisation Programs on the WA Health website.

RSV immunisation effectiveness

Both Abrysvo and Beyfortus have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of RSV associated hospitalisation among infants. Passive infant immunisation with Beyfortus was associated with lower rates of RSV-related hospitalisation and severe outcomes compared with maternal vaccination using Abrysvo. This highlights the importance of ensuring eligible infants are given Beyfortus before leaving the hospital.

A clinical trial found that maternal Abrysvo vaccination reduced RSV associated hospitalisation in infants by 57 per cent over 6 months and was 70 per cent effective against severe medically attended RSV confirmed lower respiratory tract infection. A clinical trial of Beyfortus showed 77 per cent efficacy against both RSV hospitalisation and very severe medically attended RSV associated lower respiratory tract infection for up to 150 days after immunisation.

Administration and co-administration

Both Abrysvo and Beyfortus are given as intramuscular (IM) injections. Abrysvo is administered into the deltoid and Beyfortus is given to infants in the outer part of the upper thigh.

Abrysvo can be safely co-administered with other antenatal vaccines.

Beyfortus can be co-administered with other routine childhood vaccines, including the Hepatitis B vaccine birth dose.

Training requirements

Training information can be found at Immunisation education. A free online RSV education module is available, and completion of this module is mandatory for WA immunisation providers working under the Structured Administration Supply Arrangements (SASA).

Contraindications to receiving RSV immunisation

The only absolute contraindications to Abrysvo use are:

- anaphylaxis after a previous dose of the same RSV vaccine
- anaphylaxis after any component of an RSV vaccine.

Pregnant women who are less than 28 weeks gestation are not yet recommended to receive Abrysvo.

Arexvy is not registered for use in pregnant women. If Arexvy is inadvertently given to a pregnant woman, do not give Abrysvo.

The only absolute contraindications to Beyfortus use are:

- anaphylaxis after a previous dose of the same monoclonal antibody
- anaphylaxis after any component of a monoclonal antibody.

Infants receiving Beyfortus when sick

Immunisations should generally be deferred for individuals with a moderate or severe acute illness. This helps avoid diagnostic confusion that may arise between the underlying illness and possible side effects from the immunisation.

Possible side effects

Severe side effects after Abrysvo and Beyfortus are uncommon. The most common side effects for pregnant people who receive Abrysvo are injection site pain and fatigue. The most common side effects of Beyfortus include pain, redness, rash or swelling at the injection site. These are typically minor and will resolve within a few days.

How do I report suspected adverse events following immunisation (AEFI)?

The WA Department of Health conducts ongoing safety monitoring for all immunisations, including Abrysvo and Beyfortus. The WA Vaccine Safety Surveillance (WAVSS) system is the centralised service for reporting any significant adverse events following immunisation. If you suspect a serious side effect after immunisation, you can report:

- online at SAFEVAC or
- call WAVSS on (08) 6456 0208 (9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday).

Reporting immunisations to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

Under the *Australian Immunisation Register Act 2015 (AIR Act)*, all vaccinations given under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) must be reported to the AIR. Reporting state-funded vaccinations to the AIR is a condition of holding a OneLink vaccine orders account.

WA providers can access a detailed How to Report to the AIR online guide.

How do I order Abrysvo and Beyfortus?

Providers will be contacted via the WA Department of Health Vaccine Ordering account email addresses when the immunisation products are available for ordering.

How do I store Abrysvo and Beyfortus?

The storage requirements are the same as other NIP vaccines. Refer to the National Vaccine Storage Guidelines: Strive for 5. Store at +2°C to +8°C. Do not freeze. Protect from light. More information can be found at Cold Chain Management.

More information

The WA Department of Health materials are updated as required, so check this webpage regularly for up-to-date recommendations and advice on the RSV Infant and Maternal Immunisation program .

- Subscribe to the Vaccine Updates e-newsletter
- RSV – statutory notification alert (WA Health)
- RSV Frequently Asked Questions (NCIRS)
- RSV immunisation – consumer website, fact sheet and FAQs (HealthyWA).

For further information about Abrysvo, the maternal RSV vaccination, visit Pfizer Australia.

For further information about RSV disease, useful resources on the use of Beyfortus in practice and access to patient education materials, you can visit Sanofi Australia's RSV web page.

Scan the below QR code to view full product information.

Providers will need to enter their AHPRA number to access both Pfizer and Sanofi website content.

This document can be made available in alternative formats.

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