



Vaccine Potency

Successful vaccination programs within a practice depend on the quality of the vaccines when they are administered. "Strive for 5" is the essential references to this criterion. The current published edition is available online at <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/content/IMM77-cnt>. Practices must follow these guidelines regarding cold chain management, including monitoring and recording of storage facilities, as well as the use, transfer and disposal of vaccines.

RACGP 4th Edition Standards

5.3.2 *Our practice maintains the potency of vaccines.*

Assessment methods

- Documentary evidence of cold chain management system

Surveyors will need demonstrative evidence that vaccine supplies are monitored, including measures to ensure vaccines are not stocked beyond their use-by date and disposal procedures.

- Documentary evidence of refrigerator temperature recordings

Evidence on how the practice maintains and records refrigerator temperatures will be required, and if out of range, evidence of what action is / was taken.

- Interviews with staff responsible for cold chain management

Staff will be required to explain cold chain management processes and provide a policy for cold chain management procedures in line with current NHMRC guidelines.

Meeting the standards

The temperature range should be maintained between 2-8 degrees Celsius, and minimum and maximum temperatures recorded twice daily when the practice is open. Practices should ensure their stock control procedure includes checking the refrigerated items.

Currently, practices may use domestic refrigerators to store vaccines, but only when:

- A temperature probe is placed within the stored vaccines.
- Action is taken by staff if 'out of range temperatures' are recorded.
- Trays are used to place stored vaccines.

Best practice:

- Vaccines are stored in a dedicated / monitored vaccine fridge.
- Practice staff is able to describe what action is taken if temperatures are recorded outside the accepted range.
- All stored refrigerated items are regularly checked as part of stock control.
- Utilising a data logger to check the temperature recordings of the existing thermometer against the more accurate data logger and to map 'cold spots'.