



# Electronic Reporting of Immunisations to ACIR

Practices in CSDGP increasingly have access to a broadband internet connection and many are signing up to use Medicare Australia's Online Claiming system for billing.

In this context many practices are becoming attracted to the prospect of being able to report immunisations to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) via the internet.

If you are considering online reporting to ACIR here's what you need to know.

a) The main benefits of reporting to ACIR electronically are:

- *timely reporting*  
ACIR "purple forms" sometimes hang around the surgery for a while before being posted and there may also be a delay in data entry once they are received by ACIR.
- *quicker access to immunisation incentive payments for GPs and parents*  
delays in reporting ultimately mean that a child's immunisation record may be falsely out-of-date. Until the data has been updated parents and GPs will be unable to claim immunisation incentive payments to which they are entitled.
- *reduced data entry error*  
ACIR purple forms need to be entered manually. Despite the best efforts of ACIR staff, sometimes data entry errors occur. Reporting online reduces the number of people involved in processing a report thereby decreasing the likelihood that a data entry error will occur.

b) At present there are two ways of making electronic reports to ACIR. The table below summarises main points to consider about each of these options:

Method of online reporting	Things to consider
Using your practice management software to batch and transmit ACIR reports via online claiming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This option is only available to practices that are using online claiming.</li> <li>▪ Not all practice management packages allow ACIR reporting – check with your software manufacturer for details.</li> <li>▪ If you are entering vaccinations into your clinical software this information will not automatically transfer to your practice management software unless you are using Medical Director in combination with Pracsoft. For all other software products someone in the practice will have to re-enter the data into the practice management software to enable it to be transferred to ACIR.</li> </ul>
Medicare Australia secure internet site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This option is available to any practice that has access to a broadband internet connection.</li> <li>▪ Accessing the ACIR secure site allows you to login directly to the ACIR database. In addition to reporting immunisation, this means that you can also check and update a child's immunisation history online, including recording immunisations that were given by another provider.</li> <li>▪ Login details to the ACIR secure site are linked to individual GP provider numbers. In cases where practice staff are performing data entry on behalf of all GPs in a practice, this may mean that practice staff have to login and logout of the site under multiple usernames and passwords depending on which GP in the practice performed the immunisation.</li> </ul>

c) Online reporting is not a “magic bullet” for improving immunisation coverage rates. Most practices can attain immunisation rates above 90% without swapping to an online system of reporting to ACIR. In addition to establishing a good system for reporting immunisations to ACIR, to really improve your immunisation coverage rate above 90% you will also need to:

- routinely report immunisations given by another GP or immunisation provider.
- request a copy of the quarterly due/overdue report from ACIR and recall for immunisation all children identified as overdue.

d) So what does CSDGP recommend?

- practices using Medical Director and Pracsoft should consider reporting immunisations to ACIR electronically through online claiming.
- most small and medium sized practices can benefit from reporting via the ACIR secure internet site although this will depend on how many GPs are working in the practice and the availability of practice staff to perform data entry.
- reporting to ACIR using purple forms is still a good option for many practices.

For more information on online reporting, including how to access and use the ACIR secure internet site, contact Jo Wild at CSDGP. Phone: 8752 4919. Email: [jwild@csdgp.com.au](mailto:jwild@csdgp.com.au)