

Thursday, 21 April 2016

Medical mums urge child immunisation

World Immunisation Week (24—30 April) 2016

Mothers who are also local health professionals will feature prominently in a regional media campaign backing childhood immunisation.

During World Immunisation Week (24—30 April), Brisbane North PHN is reaching out to areas where immunisation coverage is low and where the number of parents who have registered a contentious objection to vaccination is high.

The Medical Mums campaign will feature local General Practitioners (GPs) and other health professionals talking about why they immunise their own children. It will also include a patient education resource for GPs to use with their patients.

Dana, one of the GPs who agreed to participate in the campaign, is also mum to sons Oliver and Harry and says she didn't hesitate to vaccinate her children.

"Every parent...is trying to do the best thing for their child, but I know as a doctor, that the evidence is very clear that immunisations protect against some dangerous diseases and they're very safe," Dana said.

"In the playground, at playgroups, in shopping centres, everywhere we go, our kids are exposed to disease and the risk is still there, even if your children aren't in childcare," she said.

While the introduction of the Federal Government's 'No Jab, No Pay' laws earlier this year is expected to lift immunisation rates across our region, there are pockets where the rates remain too low to provide the community with adequate protection from disease.

The western suburbs of Brisbane are home to a high number of contentious objectors and will be a major focus for the Medical Mums campaign.

Despite the latest government figures showing the one-year-old immunisation rate around Indooroopilly rising by 4 per cent and around Kenmore, Brookfield and Moggill by 2.3 per cent, these areas remain well below target.

The Caboolture hinterland and Redcliffe are among the areas most at risk in the Moreton Bay region. More work is also needed to lift one- and two-year-old immunisation rates among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

It is important to note that under the 'No Jab, No Pay' laws, conscientious objection and vaccination objection on non-medical grounds are no longer valid exemptions from immunisation requirements.

To get the facts about immunisation, go to: www.medicalmums.com.au.

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Editor's note:

A Medical Mums press kit is available for download from Dropbox here: <http://ow.ly/4mVe2j>

It includes:

- Examples of online and print campaign advertising
- Patient education resource
- Links to useful websites
- Broadcast quality video footage (unbranded) of interviews with our medical mums
- Broadcast quality video overlay footage (unbranded) of our medical mums with their children.

About the Brisbane North PHN

Brisbane North PHN supports clinicians and communities in Brisbane's northern suburbs, Moreton Bay Regional Council and parts of Somerset Regional Council. It covers approximately 4,100 km² of urban, regional and rural areas, with a population of over 900,000.

The Federal Government announced the establishment of 31 Primary Health Networks to replace the national network of Medicare Locals in 2015. The Government selected successful PHNs through an open and competitive process, including the Brisbane North PHN.

The key objectives of the PHN are:

- increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes; and
- improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

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