



## Diphtheria Preparedness Checklist for Clinics

May 2026

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### 1. Staff vaccination

- Ensure all staff have reviewed their immunisation history and encourage diphtheria booster vaccination where it has been greater than 5 years since last booster

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### 2. Clinic workflow – ensure procedures are in place to:

- Identify those with skin infection or sore throat/respiratory symptoms, or who are known contacts of diphtheria, at reception
- Provide a surgical mask for symptomatic patients and those who are known contacts
- Minimise movement of symptomatic patients and contacts through multiple areas of the clinic
- Ensure staff use appropriate PPE when assessing, swabbing and managing suspected and confirmed cases (use standard, contact and droplet precautions if unsure)
- Continue usual Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) preventative management for skin sores and sore throats as per guidelines, while also considering diphtheria as appropriate

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### 3. Signage and communications – ensure you have:

- Printed diphtheria flyers and posters for patients (see [AHCSA – Diphtheria Resources](#))
- Printed contact information sheets for contacts (see [ACHSA contact fact sheet](#))
- Contact and Droplet Precautions posters for staff (see [Contact Precautions](#) and [Droplet Precautions](#))
- Printed SA Diphtheria Outbreak Immunisation Schedule for clinical areas (see [Outbreak Immunisation Schedule](#))
- Diphtheria Contact Management Resources (see [Respiratory](#), [Cutaneous](#))

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### 4. Stock – ensure you have adequate supplies of:

- Bacterial swabs for MC&S and liquid Amie’s transport media
- Azithromycin – 500mg tablets and suspension (30 boxes more than usual stock levels)
- PPE including gowns, surgical masks, gloves and protective eyewear
- Sufficient supplies of handgel, clinell wipes, disinfected etc.
- Occlusive waterproof dressings to cover cutaneous diphtheria lesions
- Diphtheria-containing vaccines – see [SA Diphtheria Outbreak Immunisation Schedule](#)
- NIP vaccines as per usual processes
- dTpa vaccines to be ordered through the [Vaccine Distribution Centre](#) (VDC) using the appropriate category (NIP or state funded)
- ADT is PBS-subsidised and can be accessed via normal PBS processes used by your clinic



**5. Contact details** – make sure you have updated and easy to locate contact details in clinical areas for:

- SA Health CDCB — report a diphtheria case: 1300 232 272 (24 hours/7 days)
- Your local referral hospital
- RFDS where appropriate: 1800 733 772 (24 hours/7 days)

**6. Vaccinations :**

- Run clinic wide Communicare or other practice software queries and check AIR of all patients on clinic books to flag individuals in need of diphtheria vaccine or booster and initiate recalls for every client identified – this will assist considerably in preparing for and targeting vaccination roll out and follow up
- Opportunistically review patient immunisation status (including AIR) during all clinic encounters
- Ensure children, adolescents and pregnant women are up-to-date with NIP vaccinations as per the [SA Aboriginal Immunisation Recommendations](#)
- Offer All Aboriginal people aged 10 years and above Single dTpa dose if fully vaccinated and more than 5 years since last dose see [SA Diphtheria Outbreak Immunisation Schedule](#) )
- Ensure medium- and high-risk contacts are provided a diphtheria booster if more than 12 months since last dose
- Ensure vaccinations are added to AIR when given

**7. Resources** – ensure that clinicians have access to relevant guidance, including:

- [AHCSA — Diphtheria Resources](#)
- [Diphtheria Outbreak Response Immunisation Program | SA Health](#)
- [Interim Management of Diphtheria in Clinical Settings in South Australia](#)
- [SA Health – Diphtheria Contact Management – Respiratory Diphtheria](#)
- [SA Health – Diphtheria Contact Management – Cutaneous Diphtheria](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) for Infectious Respiratory Diseases Clinical Guideline](#)
- [SA Health — Diphtheria Information](#)
- [Australian CDC — diphtheria epidemiological updates](#)
- [Australian Immunisation Handbook — diphtheria](#)
- [Australian CDC – editable diphtheria health education resources](#)

