



## Australian Natural Therapists Association Ltd.

*ANTA – It's Your Choice, Naturally*

ABN 68 000 161 142

10<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Mr Trevor Ruthenberg MP  
Chair  
Health and Community Services Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Ruthenberg

Re: Public Health (Exclusion of Unvaccinated Children from Child Care) Amendment Bill 2013

The Australian Natural Therapists Association Ltd (ANTA) would like to thank the Health and Community Services Committee for inviting ANTA to make a submission on the Public Health (Exclusion of Unvaccinated Children from Child Care) Amendment Bill 2013.

ANTA is a national natural therapy association which accredits and represents the interests of professional practitioners trained in the following disciplines:

Acupuncture (registered)	Aromatherapy
Ayurveda	Chinese Herbal Medicine (registered)
Counselling	Homoeopathy
Myotherapy	Musculoskeletal Therapy
Naturopathy	Nutritional Medicine
Oriental Massage	Remedial Massage Therapy
Shiatsu	Western Herbal Medicine

ANTA has concerns with Clause 4 of the Bill that seeks to amend Section 158 of the Act which applies to Chapter 5 of the Act and in particular the following definition:

*exemption certificate means a certificate given by a doctor stating that the vaccination of a child for a vaccine preventable condition, or all vaccine preventable conditions, would not be medically advisable under the current edition of the Australian Immunisation Handbook published by the Commonwealth.*

ANTA notes the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing Immunise Australia Program includes information regarding Immunisation Related Payments for Parents.

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**ANTA MEMBERS – RECOGNISED PROFESSIONALS**

The information provided by the Australian Government to parents states:

*Government benefits are available to parents of children who meet certain immunisation requirements, that is, they are up to date with immunisation or have an appropriate exemption.*

*To receive benefits without your child being fully immunised your healthcare provider needs to certify that:*

- *your child has a medical reason not to have a particular vaccination; or*
- *your child has had a disease and has a natural immunity; or*
- *a particular vaccine is unavailable.*

*You can refuse to be vaccinated on medical grounds if you have a personal, philosophical, religious or medical belief that your child should not be immunised and you will need to complete the Immunisation exemption: Conscientious objection form available from Medicare with the assistance of your healthcare provider.*

The Bill as it stands does not recognise the rights of all parents to exercise their conscientious objections, philosophical, religious or medical beliefs in relation to vaccination.

ANTA supports the rights of all parents to exercise their conscientious objection, philosophical, religious or medical beliefs in relation to vaccination.

ANTA believes the proposed Bill should be amended to include the benchmarks recently established under the Federal Government Immunise Australia Program to recognise the rights of all parents to exercise their conscientious objection, philosophical, religious or medical beliefs to vaccination.

Yours sincerely



Brian Coleman  
Executive Officer