

# Guidelines for membership and operation of NCIRS-AIP email discussion group

## Management of this document

This policy was discussed and reviewed by	NCIRS Communication and education project group NCIRS Evidence based practice and policy support project group
Endorsed by	NCIRS Communication and education project group
Next review date	August 2012
Document owner	NCIRS-AIP list administrators

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## **Background to NCIRS-AIP**

The Australian Immunisation Professionals (NCIRS-AIP) email discussion group was created by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) in 2003 to facilitate communication between professionals involved in immunisation in Australia, whether at the level of research, policy development, or as immunisation providers. The group also welcomes professionals in other countries who wish to learn more about immunisation in Australia and/or communicate their experience with us.

The group was created as a private group for immunisation professionals. People wanting to join this list must be willing to state clearly who they are, where they work and what their involvement with immunisation is.

Posts and responses are encouraged from all members and, in the interests of open and rapid communication, discussion content is not screened before distribution to the group. NCIRS keeps a watching brief on messages posted to the group and provides additional information where it is thought to be useful.

As at August 2011, the NCIRS-AIP group had almost 500 members.

## **Purpose of these guidelines**

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- formalise the processes for the operation of the NCIRS-AIP discussion group
- provide list membership criteria
- provide guidance on acceptable content and use.

## **List administration**

The NCIRS-AIP discussion group has two list administrators who are employees of NCIRS.

Duties of the list administrators are to:

- receive requests for subscription to the group
- confirm that applicants meet membership criteria
- process subscription requests (accept or reject)
- perform administrative tasks associated with list management and troubleshoot problems encountered by members.

## Subscription processing

Information about the NCIRS-AIP discussion group and instructions for subscribing are available at <http://mailman.ucc.usyd.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/ncirs-aip>.

On receipt of a subscription request, a list administrator will send an email to the applicant requesting further information in order to ascertain their professional involvement in the field of immunisation (full name, position, organisation the applicant works for or represents, and a brief outline of their involvement with immunisation).

If the information received from the applicant meets the [membership criteria](#) of the list, the subscription request will be approved.

If the details provided do not have enough information to meet membership criteria, the subscription request will be rejected and an email of explanation sent to the applicant.

If the applicant does not reply to the initial email request for further information, a single reminder email will be sent after 1 month. If information is still not forthcoming by the date specified in that email, the subscription request will be discarded.

A list of all subscribed addresses is accessible by list members only. Members can choose (in the options they set for their subscription) to conceal their address from the subscriber list.

## Membership criteria

### **Members working in the area of immunisation**

NCIRS-AIP is a private group for professionals working in the area of immunisation, for example, immunisation providers, program managers, public health staff, immunisation educators, researchers, policy makers, students, etc. As explained above, members are required to provide details of their professional involvement in immunisation when they join NCIRS-AIP.

### **Members employed by or working for media organisations**

NCIRS-AIP membership is open to specialist medical writers who write for the professional medical media or a health professional audience.

If a medical writer who meets these criteria requests subscription to NCIRS-AIP, they must agree to treat all exchanges posted on NCIRS-AIP as confidential (excepting news or other items that are already in the public domain). If a media member considers issues discussed by other members to be newsworthy, and would like to use them in an immunisation-related media item, it is imperative that the individual members are contacted for an official comment rather than using any material that has been posted to NCIRS-AIP.

### **Members employed by or working for pharmaceutical companies**

NCIRS-AIP membership is open to individuals employed by pharmaceutical companies with responsibility for vaccine products.

If a pharmaceutical company employee who meets these criteria requests subscription to NCIRS-AIP, they must agree that they will not use NCIRS-AIP for product promotion and should regard all exchanges posted on NCIRS-AIP as confidential (excepting news or other items that are already in the public domain). Posts by other members should not be reproduced in any other forum without specific written permission of the member(s) involved.

## **Posting messages to NCIRS-AIP**

### **Posting a message**

To post a message to the NCIRS-AIP group, send your email to [ncirs-aip@mail.usyd.edu.au](mailto:ncirs-aip@mail.usyd.edu.au)

Please include your full name and organisational affiliation in your message.

Messages from NCIRS-AIP will appear in your Inbox with '[NCIRS-AIP]' at the beginning of the subject line.

**Be aware that clicking 'reply' to a message from NCIRS-AIP will send your reply to all members of the list.** If you wish to contact just the individual member who posted a message, you will need to copy their address to your email To field.

If you use an automated 'out-of-office' message, please ensure (if your email software provides the option) that a reply sent to the NCIRS-AIP email address will not be distributed to the whole group.

Material posted on NCIRS-AIP represents the personal opinions of individual members and does not necessarily represent the opinion of the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS).

Urgent and/or patient-specific immunisation queries, should be directed in the first instance to:

1. your local public health unit immunisation coordinator; or
2. your state or territory immunisation coordinator; or
3. the Immunise Australia Information Hotline on 1800 671 811.

Replies to patient-specific immunisation queries posted to NCIRS-AIP are not a substitute for, and cannot be considered as, individual medical advice.

## Content restrictions

- Please *do not* post messages with **attachments** (e.g. pdfs). They will not be received by members who elect to receive messages as digests and could pose a security risk or infringe copyright. Also, messages with attachments are *not* saved in the list archives.
- Members may post **job advertisements** that they think may be relevant to NCIRS-AIP members (remembering that members are from all over Australia and New Zealand). Advertisements must be free of graphics and attachments and include clear contact details or an external link for replies (making it clear that replies to the advertisement should not be sent to the NCIRS-AIP group).
- Members may post information relating to **courses, conferences, workshops, meetings, etc.** which are relevant to NCIRS-AIP members.
- Members may post links to relevant **press releases or media items** about specific immunisation-related issues in their local area, state or territory.
- Posting of advertisements for **commercial products** is not acceptable.

## Unsubscribing or changing your address, password or options

If you wish to unsubscribe, change your address, password or options, or get a password reminder, go to <http://mailman.ucc.usyd.edu.au/mailman/options/ncirs-aip>. You must know your password to change your options (including changing the password itself) or to unsubscribe.

Available options include:

**Mail delivery** – set this option to *Disabled* if you want to stay subscribed, but don't want mail delivered to you for a while (e.g. if you are going on leave).

**Digest mode** – turn digest mode on to get posts bundled together (usually one per day but possibly more on busy days), instead of singly when each message is posted.

**Password reminder email** –you can choose to get an email once a month reminding you what your password is, and how to unsubscribe or change your options.

**Conceal address from subscriber list** – when someone views the list membership, your email address is normally shown (in an obscured fashion to thwart spam harvesters). You can choose to not have your email address show up on this membership list at all. The membership list is only accessible to other list members.

## List archives

Archives of messages previously posted to NCIRS-AIP are available at <http://mailman.ucc.usyd.edu.au/mailman/private/ncirs-aip/>. Archives are only available to list members. Please be aware that if your email includes a logo or other picture, the list software will treat the picture as an attachment and the message will not be saved in the list archives.

## **Breaches of NCIRS-AIP guidelines**

NCIRS as administrator of the NCIRS-AIP discussion group reserves the right to unsubscribe members found to be in breach of these guidelines. Apparent breaches will be investigated as required and member(s) involved will be warned or unsubscribed as appropriate.

## **Complaints**

Members who wish to lodge a complaint relating to the operation or content of NCIRS-AIP should contact the list administrator by emailing [ncirs-aip-owner@mail.usyd.edu.au](mailto:ncirs-aip-owner@mail.usyd.edu.au)

## **Terms and Conditions**

Please read the following terms and conditions relating to the use of NCIRS-AIP carefully. Any future changes to these guidelines and terms and conditions will be posted on the NCIRS website and communicated to all members.

These Terms and Conditions apply to use of the Australian Immunisation Professionals (NCIRS-AIP) email discussion group operated by the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS).

The NCIRS-AIP email discussion group is intended for professionals working in or students formally enrolled in the area of immunisation, vaccines and vaccine preventable diseases. To become a member of (subscribe to) the NCIRS-AIP email discussion group, you must state clearly who you are, where you work and what your involvement with immunisation is.

By subscribing to NCIRS-AIP you warrant that all of the information you provide to us at the time of subscription is true, complete, and up-to-date. If you provide any information that is untrue, inaccurate, or incomplete, or we have reasonable grounds to suspect that such is the case, NCIRS reserves the right to suspend or terminate your NCIRS-AIP subscription and refuse any future use of NCIRS-AIP.

By providing this information at the time of subscription, you acknowledge, accept and agree to abide by these terms and conditions of use. If you do not comply with these Terms and Conditions at any time, NCIRS reserves the right to cancel your NCIRS-AIP subscription.

You further agree not to request NCIRS-AIP subscription on behalf of someone else, or create a false or misleading identity for the purposes of subscribing to NCIRS-AIP.

If your subscription is cancelled for any reason, you agree not to subscribe again with NCIRS-AIP using another name or through any other means.

If NCIRS has reason to suspect that your subscription has previously been cancelled we reserve the right to reject or cancel any new subscription request.

You are entirely responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of your password and subscription information. You agree to notify the NCIRS-AIP administrator immediately in the



event of any known or suspected unauthorised use of your subscription, or any known or suspected breach of security, including loss, theft, or unauthorised disclosure of your or anyone else's password. You are entirely responsible for any and all activities which occur under your subscription. You agree to immediately notify us of any unauthorised use of your subscription or any other breach of security known to you.

NCIRS does not accept any liability for any injury, loss or damage incurred by use of or in reliance on the information provided through the NCIRS-AIP email discussion group whether arising from negligence or otherwise.

NCIRS has made all reasonable efforts to ensure that content provided to NCIRS-AIP by NCIRS employees is accurate and up-to-date. However, NCIRS cannot guarantee complete accuracy of the content on NCIRS-AIP and assumes no legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of any information found on NCIRS-AIP.

Clinical decisions for an individual patient or vaccine recipient are the responsibility of the treating health care professional. Advice given on NCIRS-AIP regarding patient-specific immunisation queries is not a substitute for and cannot be considered as individual medical advice. Where any doubt exists regarding the appropriateness or not of any content on NCIRS-AIP, it is strongly recommended that further information and advice be sought before a clinical decision is made.

#### **Group standards and conduct guidelines**

You acknowledge that all content posted to NCIRS-AIP is the sole responsibility of the person who made such postings.

You agree not to use NCIRS-AIP to do, or attempt to do, any of the following:

- a. Post, email or otherwise transmit any postings or other materials that are unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, tortious, defamatory, vulgar, obscene, libelous, defamatory, invasive of another's privacy, hateful, or racially, ethnically, religiously, sexually or otherwise objectionable;
- b. Impersonate any person or entity, including, but not limited to, any user of NCIRS-AIP, an employee or representative of NCIRS, or any other person or entity, or falsely state or otherwise misrepresent an affiliation with NCIRS or any other person or entity;
- c. Forge headers or otherwise manipulate identifiers in order to disguise the origin of any postings or other materials transmitted to NCIRS-AIP;
- d. Post, email or otherwise transmit any postings or other materials that are not your own, or that you do not have a right to post;
- e. Post, email or otherwise transmit any postings or other materials that infringe upon any patent, trademark, trade secret, moral right, copyright, right of privacy or publicity or other proprietary rights of any party;

- f. Post, email or otherwise transmit any unsolicited or unauthorised advertising or promotional materials, "junk mail", "spam", "chain letters", "pyramid schemes", or any other form of commercial solicitation or promotion;
- g. Post, email or otherwise transmit any postings or other materials that contain software viruses or any other computer code, files or programs designed to interrupt, destroy, limit or divert the functionality of any computer software or hardware or telecommunications equipment;
- h. Disrupt the normal operation of NCIRS-AIP, or otherwise act in a manner that negatively affects or otherwise diminishes the quality of another member's experience of NCIRS-AIP;
- i. "Stalk" or otherwise harass another member of NCIRS-AIP or employee of NCIRS;
- j. Solicit, collect or post personal data or attempt to solicit, collect or post personal data about other members of NCIRS-AIP (including user names or passwords) or about any other third party; or
- k. Access or attempt to access another member's account without his or her consent.

### **Privacy policy**

NCIRS is committed to protecting your privacy and security.

Personally identifiable information may include your name, work address, email address, and telephone number. Such information is requested when you apply to subscribe to NCIRS-AIP in order to establish your eligibility for membership of NCIRS-AIP.

Information provided to NCIRS to establish your eligibility for membership of NCIRS-AIP (which includes personally identifiable information) will be stored on a secure server maintained by the The Children's Hospital at Westmead, accessible only by selected NCIRS employees.

NCIRS will not sell, share, license, trade or rent your personally identifiable information.

Details of enquiries posted to NCIRS-AIP which are answered by an NCIRS staff member will be recorded in a database stored on a secure server maintained by The Children's Hospital at Westmead and accessible only by selected NCIRS employees. De-identified aggregate data on enquiries received are sometimes reported by NCIRS, for example, in our newsletters.

If you are unsubscribed from NCIRS-AIP, whether that is done by you, the list administrator or automatically as a result of technical issues with your subscription address, NCIRS will continue to store the information you provided to establish your eligibility for membership of NCIRS-AIP (which includes personally identifiable information) to enable us to draw on this information in the event you should re-subscribe to NCIRS-AIP.

NCIRS reserves the right to use de-identified information pertaining to members' employment/involvement in immunisation, provided by members at the time of subscribing, to review and evaluate the membership and use of the NCIRS-AIP email group.

A list of all addresses subscribed to NCIRS-AIP is accessible by list members only.

All messages posted to NCIRS-AIP are stored in list archives on a server maintained by the University of Sydney. These archives are only accessible by list members.