

## ABSTRACT

This study carries forward the exploration of the need for additional initiatives to enhance vaccination uptake against hepatitis A infection in child care workers in the Bundaberg region. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the self reported hepatitis A immunisation levels amongst workers in long day care (LDC) centres. The study set out to evaluate by survey, the awareness levels of National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommendations for hepatitis A immunisation of workers, compare reported hepatitis A levels with self reported hepatitis B immunisation levels and centre practices in relation to policy, record keeping and centre director and worker risk perception. The study was conducted as a confidential postal survey between July and September 1999, by purposive sampling with questionnaires of 163 workers and 15 centre directors. Although a majority believed their occupational situation placed them at increased risk, only 34.3% of workers were immunised against hepatitis A. Changing nappies of children on a weekly basis was reported by 72.4%. While twice as many workers were reportedly immunised for hepatitis B than hepatitis A, only half had subsequently undertaken serological testing to confirm hepatitis B post-vaccination immunity. Most workers perceived their occupation placed them at increased risk of infection and were aware of NHMRC recommendations for immunisation, but failed to translate this to vaccination uptake against hepatitis A. Only one centre reported a policy for staff immunisation, while 93% had policies for children. Record keeping was reportedly inconsistent across surveyed centres, with irregular updating and identified a need for further policy and educational and training initiatives for improvements at regional LDC centres. Findings confirm a lack of awareness of NHMRC recommendations. The study suggests a continuing misconception of greater risk of hepatitis B than hepatitis A. Approximately 25% of surveyed workers were in favour of either free immunisation or some form of government or employer subsidised immunisation program for child care staff. This dissertation established a set of regional data on current hepatitis A awareness and self reported immunisation levels in LDC centres.

**SELF-REPORTED  
HEPATITIS 'A' IMMUNISATION  
AMONGST CHILD CARE WORKERS  
IN THE BUNDABERG REGION**

(A Cross Sectional Study  
of  
Long Day Care Centres)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF MAPS</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose of the study	10
1.2 Statement of Hypothesis	11
1.3 Definitions	12
1.4 Limitations	15
1.5 Delimitations	16
<b>CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1 Hepatitis A - Epidemiology	18
2.1.1 Morbidity Data - An Inconsistent Picture	19
2.1.2 Clinical Features of Hepatitis A	20
2.2 Hepatitis B - Epidemiology	21

2.2.1	Clinical Features of Hepatitis B	22
2.2.2	Hepatitis B - Transmission in the Workplace	23
2.3	Employer's Duty to Vaccinate	25
2.4	Main Routes of Infection for Hepatitis A	26
2.4.1	Person to Person Transmission	26
2.4.2	Food-Borne Transmission	29
2.4.3	Water-Borne Transmission	30
2.4.4	Fomites	32
2.5	Workplace Risk Factors	32
2.6	Prevalence of Hepatitis A in the Community	35
2.6.1	Prevalence of Hepatitis B in the Community	36
2.7	Occupations at Risk of Hepatitis A	37
2.8	Hepatitis A Outbreaks	41
2.9	Hepatitis A in Child Care Settings	47
2.10	Conclusion	57

### **CHAPTER 3:            METHODOLOGY            60**

3.1	Design of the Research	60
3.2	Sampling Design	63
3.3	Sampling Strategy	64
3.4	Replication Decision	67
3.5	Ethical Issues	69
3.6	Data Security	70

3.7	Research Instrument	70
3.8	Pilot Study	76
3.9	Study Sample	77
3.10	Data Collection	80
3.11	Data Handling and Cleaning	81
3.12	Statistical Analysis	83
<b>CHAPTER 4:</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>88</b>
4.1	Child Care Worker Responses	88
4.2	Child Care Worker Demographics	89
4.3	Immunisation Status and General Health	92
4.4	Hepatitis A Survey Data	93
4.5	Hepatitis B Survey Data	96
4.6	Training	98
4.7	Centre Management Responses	98
4.8	Centre Licensing	100
4.9	Centre Operational Arrangements	100
4.10	Immunisation Policy	102
4.11	Staff Immunisation Records	104
4.12	Children's Immunisation Records	108

<b>CHAPTER 5:</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>111</b>
5.1	Aspects of the Study Design	111
5.2	Survey Response	113
5.3	Child Care Worker Demographics	115
5.3.1	Worker Immunisation Status at Commencement	119
5.4	Hepatitis A	120
5.5	Hepatitis B	125
5.6	Training	129
5.7	Centre Management and Demographics	131
5.8	Centre Operational Arrangements	131
5.9	Centre Staffing Arrangements	134
5.10	Issues Relating to Policy and Procedures	135
5.10.1	Child Care Act	136
5.10.2	Child Care Regulations	137
5.10.3	Other Responsibilities and Obligations	137
5.11	Perception of Risk	140
5.12	Maintenance of Staff Records	142
5.13	Maintenance of Children's Records	146
5.14	Summary	148

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS 152

6.1	Conclusions	152
6.2	Recommendations	153
6.3	Directions for Future Research	155

BIBLIOGRAPHY 156

## APPENDICES:

Appendix 1:	Child Care Worker Questionnaire	173
Appendix 2:	Child Care Directors' Questionnaire	183
Appendix 3:	Covering Letter and Consent Form for Survey Participants	192

## LIST of FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Figure 4.4.2</b> Column graph comparing the perceived risk of non-immunised child care workers contracting either hepatitis A or B disease with someone not working in child care.	95
<b>Figure 5.3.1</b> Line graph for question ‘Please indicate your age group?’	116
<b>Figure 5.3.2</b> Pie graph for question ‘What category of child care worker do you belong?’	117
<b>Figure 5.3.3</b> Pie graph for question ‘ Were you asked if you were immunised when you commenced work with your current employer?’	119
<b>Figure 5.4.1</b> Pie graph for question ‘Have you been vaccinated against hepatitis A?’	120
<b>Figure 5.4.2</b> Column graph for question ‘If not vaccinated against hepatitis A, please circle the reason which best describes why not?’	123
<b>Figure 5.5.1</b> Column graph showing percentage comparison for questions ‘Did you know that immunisation against hepatitis A and B was available?’	125
<b>Figure 5.5.2</b> Pie graph for question ‘Why did you choose to receive the hepatitis B vaccine?’	126
<b>Figure 5.5.3</b> Column graph showing comparisons for questions ‘Have you been vaccinated against hepatitis B?’ and ‘Did you think you were at risk from catching hepatitis B from infected persons in a child care setting?’	128



## LIST of TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Table 4.1</b> Summary of responses to the survey of long day care centres by location.	88
<b>Table 4.2.1</b> Tabulation of all respondents by age group and sex ( $n = 102$ ).	89
<b>Table 4.2.2</b> Summarised response data for child care worker questionnaire - Questions 1 to 9.	90
<b>Table 4.2.3</b> Summary of the usual groups of children under care by workers.	91
<b>Table 4.2.4</b> Summarised response data for child care worker questionnaire - Questions 10 to 13.	92
<b>Table 4.4.1</b> Summarised hepatitis A survey response data from child care workers - Questions 14 to 22.	94
<b>Table 4.4.3</b> Summarised chi-square test of association of worker risk perceptions of hepatitis A with risk perception of hepatitis B over workers belonging to other industries.	95
<b>Table 4.4.4</b> Summarised chi-square tests of association - numbers of workers immunised for hepatitis A compared with other listed variables.	97
<b>Table 4.5.1</b> Tabulated chi-square test of association of worker risk perception of hepatitis A with risk perceptions of hepatitis B from children in their care.	98
<b>Table 4.5.2</b> Summarised response data form workers relating to hepatitis B and training - Questions 23 to 28.	99
<b>Table 4.8.1</b> Summarised response data for centre directors's questionnaires - Questions 1 to 9.	101
<b>Table 4.9.1</b> Tabulated average number of children per age category in care at peak capacity at each centre.	100
<b>Table 4.9.2</b> Summarised response data for centre directors' questionnaire - Questions 10 to 15.	103

<b>Table 4.10.1</b>	Cochran's $\chi^2$ corrected test of association of participating centre characteristics with immunisation policy.	104
<b>Table 4.11.1</b>	Summarised response data for centre directors' questionnaires - Questions 16 to 20.	105
<b>Table 4.11.2</b>	Cochran's $\chi^2$ corrected test of association of participating centre characteristics with maintenance of staff records.	106
<b>Table 4.11.3</b>	Cochran's $\chi^2$ corrected test of association of participating centre characteristics with retention of staff hepatitis A records.	106
<b>Table 4.11.4</b>	Cochran's $\chi^2$ corrected test of association of participating centre directors' belief in importance of hepatitis A importance and hepatitis B importance.	107
<b>Table 4.11.5</b>	Child care directors - tabulated comparison showing respondent counts and percentages of importance they attached to immunisation of child care staff.	107
<b>Table 4.12.1</b>	Summarised response data for centre directors' questionnaires - Questions 21 to 23.	109
<b>Table 4.12.2</b>	Cochran's $\chi^2$ corrected test of association of participating centre characteristics with the maintenance of children's immunisation records	110
<b>Table 5.12.1</b>	Tabulated comments to the question "How regularly do you update staff records?"	143
<b>Table 5.13.1</b>	Tabulated comments and counts to the question of children's immunisation records.	147

## **LIST of MAPS**

	<b>Page</b>
Map 1.1 Map of the study location in the Bundaberg region.	9

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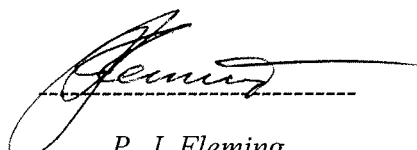
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P.J. Fleming

## **DECLARATION**

*The text of this dissertation is original work, generated by myself, under the guidance of my supervisors and does not contain any work previously undertaken by myself, for any other project. All information from other sources has been acknowledged as required through intext referencing.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. J. Fleming', is written over a horizontal dashed line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

P. J. Fleming