

**Issue: Exemption from Centrelink Income Management / Basics card**

Raised by: Kacy Kohn (Regional Coordinator, East Arnhem)

Background: On 21 June 2010 the Australian Government passed legislation to introduce a new model of [Income Management](#) in the Northern Territory. This replaced the Income Management scheme that was operating only in prescribed areas of the Northern Territory.

Included in the changes is the opportunity for individuals to apply for exemption from Income Management and the use of [Basics cards](#). This exemption process requires some information to be provided by a nurse or doctor.

Remote Health clinical staff raised concern about the potentially large degree of work that these requirements may generate. However, requests for this information are non clinical and are deemed to be relatively low priority work. Is there a way to streamline these requests to encourage more prompt action by clinical staff?

Discussion: In most instances, there is only a relatively small level of information that is required from Nurses / Doctors in relation to this issue. To be exempt from Income Management, Centrelink require confirmation regarding two particular aspects of health care:

1. The individual's child/children must have had at least one documented health check between the age of 24 -30 months. The only information Centrelink require is the *child's name* and the *date* that a check was attended. No other clinical information is needed.
2. Confirmation is required that childhood immunisations are up to date. Staff can print off an immunisation summary, add a notation to indicate if the child up to date with the Immunisation Schedule, and sign.

Or - Write on formal documentation that immunisations are up to date.

Or - Refer Client to Medicare who can provide this information to Centrelink.

Centrelink require that only medical, or registered nursing, staff can provide this information.

A related issue involves the provision of information regarding school attendance / absence due to illness. This information should be provided to Centrelink by the school, as the school should hold medical certificates that were done at time of a particular illness. Reports / certificates should not be generated or re-generated by clinic staff for this purpose.

Consultation: Centrelink Income Management / Exemption team.

References: www.centrelink.gov.au

Outcome: Remote Health medical or nursing staff should respond to requests to provide the above mentioned information where applicable.

An optional [form](#) has been developed to assist clinical staff in this process.