2.1.3 Valid consent

Valid consent can be defined as the voluntary agreement by an individual to a proposed procedure, given after sufficient, appropriate and reliable information about the procedure, including the potential risks and benefits, has been conveyed to that individual. As part of the consent procedure, persons to be vaccinated and/or their parents/carers should be given sufficient information (preferably written) on the risks and benefits of each vaccine, including what adverse events are possible, how common they are and what they should do about them (the table inside the front cover of this *Handbook*, *Side effects following immunisation for vaccines used in the National Immunisation Program (NIP) (National Immunisation Program) schedule*, can be used for this purpose).

For consent to be legally valid, the following elements must be present:

1. It must be given by a person with legal capacity, and of sufficient intellectual capacity to understand the implications of being vaccinated.

2. It must be given voluntarily in the absence of undue pressure, coercion or manipulation.

3. It must cover the specific procedure that is to be performed.

4. It can only be given after the potential risks and benefits of the relevant vaccine, risks of not having it and any alternative options have been explained to the individual.

The individual must have sufficient opportunity to seek further details or explanations about the vaccine(s) and/or its administration. The information must be provided in a language or by other means the individual can understand. Where appropriate, an interpreter and/or cultural support person should be involved.

Consent should be obtained before each vaccination, once it has been established that there are no medical condition(s) that contraindicate vaccination. Consent can be verbal or written.