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# Shingles vaccine coverage report for those becoming 70 and 78 years of age in April to June 2018: England

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## Key points

- since April 2017 the shingles vaccination programme offers the shingles vaccine to those turning 70 and 78 years old. Adults remain eligible until their 80<sup>th</sup> birthday
- this is the first quarterly shingles report of the fiscal year 2018/19 based on this eligibility criteria, evaluating those who became 70 or 78 from 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018, assessed at the end of September 2018
- coverage figures provided in this report are not directly comparable to figures from previous reports, which were based on a different methodology and eligibility criteria
- provisional vaccine coverage estimates for adults that became eligible for the shingles vaccine from 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 show 19.6% coverage for the 70 year old routine cohort and 20.5% coverage for the 78 year old catch-up cohort
- further quarterly assessments of coverage in this three-month birth cohort will be undertaken in December 2018, March 2019 and June 2019. These data will be published in future quarterly reports
- the highest cumulative coverage is observed among 75 year olds, who were offered shingles vaccine in the earliest routine cohorts five years ago
- the lowest coverage is observed among 71 and 79 year olds, some of whom may not have been offered vaccine yet as they had already had their 70th/78th birthday when the criteria was changed on 1 April 2017
- vaccine coverage for each earlier routine cohorts (aged 72 to 75 years) continues to increase year on year through opportunistic vaccination
- it is important to immunise all patients who have missed the vaccine, particularly the cohorts that transitioned to the new criteria. All individuals ages 70 to 76 years old and 78 to 79 years old remain eligible for the vaccine

## Introduction

The shingles vaccination programme began on 1 September 2013. The aim of the programme is to offer routine vaccination to all 70 year olds each year, with a catch-up programme for older cohorts each year until 2020/21 to capture individuals born up to 1 September 1942 (i.e. aged 71 to 79 years on 1 September 2013 at the programme launch). For the first five years, vaccine coverage of the vaccination programme was monitored in England by PHE through monthly cumulative collections via automatic uploads of GP practice-level data using the ImmForm website and regular estimates of coverage published on the [PHE website](#) [1].

From 1st April 2017 the eligibility criteria for receiving shingles vaccine changed and individuals become eligible on their 70th birthday (routine cohort) or their 78th birthday (catch-up cohort) and remain eligible up to their 80th birthday [2-5].

GPs may continue to offer immunisation to anyone who was eligible for shingles vaccine in the first five years of the programme but has not yet been vaccinated, up until their 80th birthday [1]. This includes people currently aged 71 through to those aged 76 years old with birthday before 2 September 1942, or 78 to 79 years old [1-4]. As a live viral vaccine, the shingles vaccine is contraindicated for immunosuppressed individuals. It is essential to assess the eligibility of individuals prior to offering the shingles vaccine and ensure that those who can benefit are not excluded. Further information on shingles vaccine eligibility is available in the “Immunisation against infectious disease” book (the Green Book) [5].

To continue to accurately evaluate vaccine coverage for the shingles programme in 2018/19, PHE has changed the specification for the ImmForm data extractions from GP IT systems and the methodology for the calculation of vaccine coverage to reflect the new delivery model.

This first report of data extracted using the revised specification presents the initial herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine coverage data for adults who turned 70 for the routine cohort or 78 for the catch-up cohort between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018, evaluated at the end of September 2018. It is important to note that vaccine coverage for adults who have become eligible under the revised criteria is not directly comparable to previous cumulative vaccine coverage estimates using the former eligibility criteria from the 2017/18, 2016/17, 2015/16, 2014/15 and 2013/14 programmes [6].

## Methods

This report presents shingles vaccine coverage data for adults that had their 70th birthday for the routine cohort or 78th birthday for the catch up cohort between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018. Coverage was measured for these cohorts from data collected on 23 September 2018. This allows between 3 to 5 months, depending on the date of birth, for individuals to receive the vaccine (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Birth range and collection dates for both the routine (70 year olds) and catch-up (78 year olds) cohorts for quarter one of 2018/19.

Quarter and age	Eligible birth dates	Data collected from
Quarter 1		
70	01/04/1948 – 30/06/1948	01/04/2018 – 23/09/2018
78	01/04/1940 - 30/06/1940	

Further quarterly assessments of coverage in this three-month birth cohort will include vaccine given up to December 2018, March 2019 and June 2019. These data will likely show increased coverage as individuals will have had more time to be vaccinated and will be published in future quarterly reports.

GP practice-level shingles vaccine coverage data are automatically uploaded via participating GP IT suppliers to the ImmForm\* website on a quarterly basis. These data are then validated and analysed by PHE to check data completeness, identify and query any anomalous results and describe epidemiological trends. The automated quarterly survey measures vaccine coverage as the total number of patients turning 70 or 78 between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018 who received the shingles vaccine prior to 23 September 2018 (numerator) as a proportion of the total number of registered patients turning 70 or 78 between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018 (denominator).

This quarterly survey also extracted coverage estimates as at 23 September 2018 for each fiscal year birth cohort (1 April to 31 March births) for individuals born between 1 April 1938 and 31 March 1950, i.e. aged 71 years to 80 years (minus future catch-up cohorts born 1 April 1941 to 1 September 1942 inclusive).

\* ImmForm is the system used by Public Health England to record vaccine coverage data for some immunisation programmes and to provide vaccine ordering facilities for NHS England

## Participation and data quality

A total of 6,831/ 6,972 (98.0%) GP practices reported shingles vaccine coverage data for the first quarter. Data from the smallest IT provider were unreliable and were excluded for this report. As a result local shingles coverage estimates for a small number of local teams (LTs) and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) have reduced participation from GP practices, particularly in South West England.

# Results

## Routine and catch-up cohort coverage – April to June 2018 quarter (as at 23 September 2018)

- due to the changes in the methodology for the calculation of vaccine coverage, the data are not directly comparable to cumulative vaccine coverage estimates from previous years.
- 19.6% of adults that turned 70 years old between 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 were vaccinated by the end of September
- 20.5% of those becoming 78 years old (catch-up cohort) in the same period were vaccinated
- coverage by LT ranged from 16.8% (Kent Surrey and Sussex) to 22.9% (Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Thames Valley) for the routine 70 year old cohort and from 17.6% (London) to 23.9% (Yorkshire and Humber) for the 78 year old catch-up cohort (Table 2); [see data tables](#).

## Vaccine coverage for fiscal year (April to March) birth cohorts, as at 23 September 2018

- vaccine coverage for each earlier routine cohorts (aged 72 to 75 years) continues to increase year on year through opportunistic vaccination (Table 3)
- the highest coverage is observed among 75 year olds, who were offered shingles vaccine in the earliest routine cohorts five years ago
- the lowest coverage is observed among 71 and 79 year olds, some of whom may not have been offered vaccine yet as they already had their 70<sup>th</sup> / 78<sup>th</sup> birthday when the criteria was changed on 1 April 2017 (Table 3).

**Table 2.** Shingles vaccine coverage for adults turning 70 and 78 between 1 April 2018 and 30 June 2018 and vaccinated prior to 23 September 2018 by NHS England Local Team

<b>NHS England Local Team</b>	<b>Percent of practices reporting data on 23 September 2018</b>	<b>Percent coverage in routine cohort (70 year olds)</b>	<b>Percent coverage in catch-up cohort (78 year olds)</b>
Midlands and East (Central Midlands)	99.0	16.9	18.1
London	96.8	18.1	17.6
North (Cheshire and Merseyside)	99.7	19.4	19.9
North (Lancashire)	99.1	20.0	19.5
Midlands and East (North Midlands)	98.5	19.3	21.4
North (Greater Manchester)	98.9	18.3	18.9
Midlands and East (East)	99.0	19.9	21.1
South East (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)	99.0	16.8	19.8
North (Cumbria and North East)	99.0	17.8	19.2
Midlands and East (West Midlands)	98.7	20.1	21.8
North (Yorkshire and Humber)	99.1	22.3	23.9
South West (South West North)	98.8	19.7	20.6
South West (South West South)	86.5	21.6	22.2
South East (Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Thames Valley)	99.3	22.9	23.5
<b>England</b>	<b>98.0</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>20.5</b>

**Table 3.** Shingles vaccine coverage for adults turning 71-76 and 79-80 years old between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 and vaccinated prior to 23 September 2018 by NHS Local Team

NHS England Local Team	Routine Cohort						Catch-up cohort	
	71 year olds*	72 year olds	73 year olds	74 year olds	75 year olds	76 year olds**	79 year olds***	80 year olds
	Eligible since 2017	Eligible since 2016	Eligible since 2015	Eligible since 2014	Eligible since 2013	Partially eligible since 2013	Eligible since 2017	Eligible since 2016
Midlands and East (Central Midlands)	34.7	49.0	62.3	70.6	75.2	45.3	35.8	51.3
London	32.1	47.4	58.3	65.0	68.8	42.7	33.5	48.6
North (Cheshire and Merseyside)	31.2	49.9	64.3	71.3	74.8	44.9	33.0	53.3
North (Lancashire)	31.7	50.2	64.9	72.3	76.4	45.4	33.2	52.3
Midlands and East (North Midlands)	37.3	53.6	65.0	72.5	76.4	46.1	36.1	55.3
North (Greater Manchester)	31.9	48.6	61.3	70.0	73.4	43.5	33.9	51.3
Midlands and East (East)	35.6	49.4	61.0	69.4	73.0	43.6	36.2	51.6
South East (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)	35.3	52.7	64.1	70.3	73.9	44.6	37.5	55.5
North (Cumbria and North East)	35.1	52.4	65.4	72.4	75.7	45.2	35.9	54.2
Midlands and East (West Midlands)	34.3	50.5	62.4	69.9	73.7	45.1	36.1	52.8
North (Yorkshire and Humber)	39.3	52.6	63.6	71.3	75.1	45.0	38.1	53.2
South West (South West North)	38.8	54.3	66.5	73.3	77.1	46.3	41.3	56.8
South West (South West South)	38.6	52.8	64.0	71.8	75.0	46.3	42.0	57.5
South East (Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Thames Valley)	37.6	55.1	66.7	74.1	78.2	47.5	40.5	58.9
<b>England</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>70.8</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>53.6</b>

\* Observed coverage is low in the 71 year olds as half (those born 2 September 1947 to 31 March 1948) would have already had their 70<sup>th</sup> birthday by 1 April 2018 when sufficient supply of the vaccine was available.

\*\* Observed coverage is low in the 76 year olds as half (those born 1 April 1942 to 1 September 1942) will not become eligible until their 78<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2020, whereas half (those born 2 September 1942 to 31 March 1943) were offered the vaccine as part of the first routine programme in 2013/14.

\*\*\* Observed coverage is low in the 79 year olds as half (those born 2 September 1939 to 31 March 1940) would have already had their 78<sup>th</sup> birthday by 1 April 2018 when sufficient supply of the vaccine was available.

No coverage is available for 77 year olds (born 1 April 1941 to 31 March 1942) as they will become eligible for the shingles vaccine on their 78<sup>th</sup> birthday as part of the catch-up cohort in 2019/20.

## Discussion

Comparing shingles coverage data for this quarter with estimates from previous years is complex due to the new eligibility criteria and coverage calculation methodology. Additionally, the data collection is now based on the financial year April to March rather than from September to August as in all previous shingles coverage publications [7].

The provisional shingles vaccine coverage estimate to the end of September 2018 for adults turning 70 is 19.6% and 20.5% for those turning 78 between 1 April and 30 June 2018. Subsequent cumulative quarterly evaluations of this quarterly birth cohort at the end of December 2018, and March and June 2019 should show increasing coverage as vaccinations received later in their 70<sup>th</sup>/78<sup>th</sup> year are captured.

Previous routine and catch-up cohorts remain eligible for vaccination until their 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and longer term vaccine coverage data has shown increases in coverage in these cohorts in subsequent years (Table 3) [7]. The large difference in coverage between the 71 and 72 year olds (35.6% and 51.3%, respectively) as well as between 79 and 80 year olds (36.8% and 53.6%, respectively) is likely in part to be associated to the change in eligibility criteria as half of these cohorts would have already had their 70<sup>th</sup>/78<sup>th</sup> birthday by 1 April 2017 when the criteria was changed and may not have been offered the vaccine routinely. Additionally, these two cohorts have had less time to be opportunistically vaccinated which may also contribute to their lower coverage estimates. It is important that GPs continue to offer the shingles vaccine to all eligible patients from the current and previous cohorts (particularly the 71 and 79 year olds who may have missed the vaccine when there was a change in the eligibility criteria) in order to prevent an increased susceptibility to shingles among these cohorts.



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