



Immunisation news

Vaccination rates for children up to five years old maintained at high levels

The latest quarterly immunisation coverage data for children in the UK who reached their first, second, or fifth birthday during January to March 2014 are now available at [web link 1](#). This is the fourth quarterly data to be collected since the re-organisation of the NHS in England and the figures across the board remain good with vaccine uptake levels well in excess of 90% for most vaccines assessed at one and two years of age (please note the information in the report on the collection of the MenC vaccine uptake rates relating to the change in the schedule).

This is a credit to all concerned and shows that despite the major reorganisation of the NHS there has been no 'delivery dip' (literally and metaphorically) in protecting children against infectious diseases.

JCVI advises pertussis vaccination in pregnancy should continue for at least the next five years

- Pertussis vaccination of pregnant women should continue for the next five years
- Pertussis activity in the general population remains at high levels
- Uptake of vaccine in pregnant women is 60%
- Babies of unvaccinated mothers continue to die before their first routine vaccination is due
- Whooping cough cases in babies born to vaccinated mothers reduced by over 90%
- No safety issues found in the vaccination of thousands of pregnant women

In June, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that the maternal pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination programme, which started in October 2012, should be continued for at least the next five years (see [web link 2](#)).

The evidence considered by JCVI included a new Public Health England study which was published in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* (see [web link 3](#)). This study showed high levels of protection against pertussis in babies born to vaccinated mothers. Babies born to women vaccinated at least a week before delivery, had a 91% reduction in the risk of pertussis disease in their first weeks of life when compared with babies whose mothers had not been vaccinated. The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) also found no safety concerns relating to pertussis vaccination in pregnancy based on a large study of nearly 18,000 vaccinated women with similar rates of normal, healthy births in vaccinated as and in unvaccinated women (see [web link 4](#)).

Pertussis activity has fallen in all age groups since the pregnancy programme was introduced but the number of reported cases remains higher than before 2012 in all age groups over one year of age. The greatest decrease in disease since the peak in 2012 has been in infants under six months of age who are targeted by the maternal pertussis vaccination programme.

There were 14 deaths in infants diagnosed with pertussis in 2012 and born before the vaccination in pregnancy programme started, A further eight deaths have been reported in infants diagnosed with pertussis in 2013 and so far this year. The mothers of seven of the eight babies who died in 2013 and 2014 were not vaccinated in pregnancy and the babies were all infected before they could receive their first infant pertussis vaccine.

In view of the ongoing raised levels of pertussis activity in older age groups and the deaths in infants, it's very important that women are immunised between weeks 28 and 32 of pregnancy to maximise the likelihood that the baby will be protected from birth through the transfer of the mother's antibodies in the womb. Although women may be immunised up to week 38 of pregnancy, later immunisation is not ideal as the baby is less likely to be protected by their mother's immunity. At this stage of pregnancy, vaccination would potentially only directly protect the mother against disease and thereby just reduce the risk of exposure to her infant.

The uptake of the pertussis vaccine in pregnant women is around 60% in England. This is a testament to the midwives, practice nurses, GPs and pharmacists who are delivering this programme. All pregnant women should continue to be given the opportunity to be vaccinated, by using every contact to remind them of the importance of vaccination and by sign-posting them to vaccination services in their local area. All babies should continue to receive their primary vaccinations, scheduled at 2, 3 and 4 months, in a timely manner.

Further information is available at [web link 5](#), [web link 6](#) and [web link 7](#).

Optional GP practice payment tool for the prenatal pertussis vaccination programme

From May 2014, PHE implemented an automated collection, the 'Pertussis vaccine uptake for pregnant women 2014/15 – sentinel GP collection', in order to assess the coverage of this programme.

Due to requests made by a number of NHS England area teams the 'Optional GP practice payment tool for the prenatal pertussis vaccination programme' which was due to close on 31 July will remain open. This tool is used to facilitate payment of GP practices for this programme in areas where an alternative method has not yet been implemented. If you are unsure whether you need to complete this tool, please contact your NHS England area team for advice.

Quarter 1 – for April, May and June 2014, the tool will remain open until 22 August 2014 to give enough time for GP practices to enter their data for payment purposes in areas where they have been requested to do so by NHS England. Only Section 2 – 'Cumulative data (FY 2013/14/15) to support payment calculations' on the survey form needs to be filled in. Section 1 is no longer required as it has now been taken over by the 'Pertussis vaccine uptake for pregnant women 2014/15 – sentinel GP collection'.

Quarter 2 – the tool for July and August 2014 will open on 1 September 2014 and the tool for September 2014 will open on the 1 October 2014. Only the payment section will appear on the survey form – 'Cumulative data (2013/14/15) to support payment calculations – optional'. This is the same collection tool from the previous quarter but Section 1 will no longer be visible.

Public Health England and ImmForm are unable to advise GP practices on queries regarding payments which should be directed to your NHS England area team.

Shingles' 2013/14 vaccination programme coming to an end – 2014/15 programme about to start

On 31 August 2014, the first year's shingles vaccination programme comes to an end, so it's important that surgeries ensure they have vaccinated as many as possible of their eligible patients (i.e. those aged 70 or 79 on 1 September 2013) (see [web link 8](#)).

The programme for 2014/15 starts on 1 September 2014 and covers those aged 70, 78 and 79 on that date (see [web link 9](#)).

Schools out – it'll be freshers' week before you know it

So don't forget to invite prospective university students for their MenC injection before they head off to university or take the opportunity to vaccinate them should they attend surgery for any other reason up until 31 October 2014 – see [web link 11](#). A university is defined as any higher educational establishment that is a member of UCAS – the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

To get the best protection, students should be vaccinated at least two weeks before they start university but if they miss out they can get vaccinated through the university's health centre.

Final flu vaccine uptake figures for 2013/14

Reports on the final uptake rates of flu vaccine among GP patients and frontline healthcare workers (HCWs) for the winter season 2013/14 are now available at [web link 12](#). Detailed uptake data, broken down by clinical commissioning groups, area teams and local authorities, are also presented. The uptake figures are very much in line with previous years' but the uptake in HCWs showed a welcome improvement from 45% to 54%. Whilst this is encouraging, the figures are still well below what is desirable to protect patients, HCWs themselves, and their families and friends.

The annual flu surveillance report for 2013/14 has also been published and can be viewed at [web link 13](#).

GP contract – definition of flu season vaccination period

The national enhanced service specification for delivering an influenza vaccination service in general practice allows GP practices to start vaccinating from 1 August until 31 March; this also matches the period for QOF payments. Contractually the time frame has always been defined in this way but the time period covered by the contract has become more obvious since the new arrangements within the NHS and the development of a national service specification. Please note that there is no change in the expectations about when flu supplies are likely to be available and therefore GPs will not be able to start vaccination in August.

STOP PRESS 1

Chapter 19 Influenza of the Green Book has been updated and is available at [web link 24](#).

Two new training slide sets for health professionals have also been published – one covering the childhood flu vaccination programme and the other the national flu vaccination programme – see [web link 10](#).

STOP PRESS 2

MenB vaccine negotiations begin – see [web link 25](#)

Resources

Core publications updated



The so-called ‘core’ immunisation publications (‘Babies’, ‘12 and 13 months’, ‘Pre-school’ and ‘Secondary schools’ for short), are being updated to reflect the new schedule that starts on 1 September 2014, i.e. the addition of four-year-olds to the routine flu vaccination cohort.

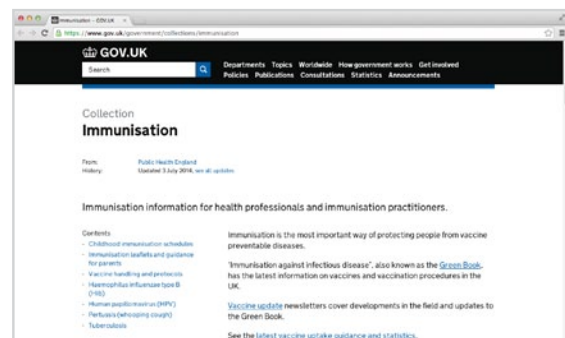
The secondary schools leaflet is the one most affected because of the reduction in the number of doses of HPV vaccine from three to two and should be available to order from [web link 14](#) before the end of July.

Training resources for the introduction of Infanrix IPV Hib

Two new publications for healthcare professionals describing the addition of Infanrix IPV Hib to the vaccination programme are available at [web link 16](#).

Immunisation front page on GOV.UK revamp

In order to keep pace with the ever-increasing amount of information being uploaded on to the immunisation section of the GOV.UK website, the front page has been re-arranged to make accessibility and navigation easier – see [web link 17](#). The website should be consulted regularly to keep up to date with the latest information on all immunisation matters.



New flu leaflets for winter 2014/15



Updated from last year, the children's flu leaflet presents information for parents on the Fluzenq Tetra nasal flu vaccine that is being used this year and includes descriptions of the additional cohorts of children that are being vaccinated routinely (four-year-olds) and in pilot programmes (years 7 and 8 at school). It can be downloaded at [web link 15](#) along with template letters, a consent form and other resources, and will be available to order from [web link 14](#).

This year, a new leaflet is available that describes how having the flu vaccination during pregnancy can help protect the mother and her baby against infection, and there's also a more general leaflet aimed at all those eligible for flu vaccination, including those in at-risk groups, that has been updated for 2014/15. These publications can be downloaded at [web link 10](#) and are available to order at [web link 14](#).



Vaccine wastage

Looking after your vaccines, protecting your patients

The correct storage and handling of vaccines are essential in maintaining their efficacy and reducing wastage. A recent article in Management in practice at [web link 18](#) describes in detail how best to look after your vaccines from ordering through to administration to ensure the safety and effectiveness of all your vaccination programmes.

Fridge failures helpsheet updated

ImmForm helpsheet 18 has been updated to include the latest information on the reporting of fridge failures and other incidents that break the cold chain. See [web link 19](#).

Vaccine supply

Vaccines available from ImmForm

Helpsheet 13 has been updated to include the recent additions to the list of vaccines available through the ImmForm website – see [web link 19](#).

HPV vaccine – switch to two-dose schedule for Gardasil and patient information leaflets

As outlined in an earlier tripartite letter ([web link 20](#)), the schedule for Gardasil is changing from a three-dose course to a two-dose course from the start of the academic year, September 2014.

However, packs of Gardasil ordered through ImmForm will continue to have the patient information leaflet (PIL) for the three-dose course packaged in the box. From 1 August, to ensure patients are receiving the correct information, deliveries of Gardasil will include loose copies of the new two-dose PIL which can be given to patients when they attend for vaccination.

Where existing stocks of Gardasil held locally are to be used for the school year 2014/15, the new PIL is available electronically as a pdf at [web link 21](#) and can be printed out locally.

Freshers' booster dose of Men C

As noted above, prospective university students should be offered a meningococcal C booster before they start university, which is defined as any higher educational establishment that is a member of UCAS – the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

NeisVac-C is available through ImmForm for this booster dose. Where possible please order from the stock of NeisVac-C vaccine allocated for the adolescent programme, rather than the vaccine for the infant programme.

Infanrix IPV Hib now available

As featured in last month's issue (see [web link 8](#)), this vaccine is an alternative to Pediacel and has been available to order from 1 July 2014. Training slides and a Q&A document have been produced to provide more information about this vaccine. These are available at [web link 16](#). See also the Resources section above.

Where possible and if supplies allow, the same DTaP-containing vaccine should be used for all three doses of the primary course. If this is not possible, whichever primary vaccine is available (Pediacel or Infanrix IPV Hib) should be used. Vaccination should not be delayed because the vaccine used for previous doses is unavailable or not known.

To balance stocks of primary vaccines, a cap of five doses per order per week has been introduced for Pediacel. There is no cap on orders for Infanrix IPV Hib.

Children's flu vaccines update

Fluenz Tetra is not expected to be available to order on ImmForm before late-September 2014. Further details will be made available during the summer. Please ensure you have read the recent tripartite flu letter at [web link 22](#).

The shelf-life of Fluenz Tetra is relatively short. It is likely that orders made from the first batch available will expire in mid-December 2014.

For those children contraindicated to Fluenz Tetra, the quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine Fluarix Tetra (GSK) and the trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (split virion) BP (SPMSD) will also be available through ImmForm. Please note that Fluarix Tetra should not be offered to those under three years of age.

See page 7 of April and May's Vaccine updates at [web link 23](#) for ways of avoiding confusing your Fluenz with your Fluarix.

Yellow fever vaccine, supply of Stamaril

Sanofi Pasteur MSD are temporarily unable to supply the UK market with UK packs of Stamaril. However, Sanofi Pasteur MSD are liaising with both the MHRA and NaTHNaC and are able to supply alternative European presentations of yellow fever vaccine. For further information, designated yellow fever centres can contact Sanofi Pasteur MSD customer service on 0800 0855511.

PPD2TU (Mantoux test)

Tuberculin purified protein derivative (PPD) containing two tuberculin units per 0.1ml (2TU) is currently available to order but a restriction of one order for one pack per week remains in place. Please note that each pack of PPD2TU contains ten vials with a minimum of ten doses per vial, i.e. 100 doses in all.

BCG vaccine

BCG vaccine is currently available to order but a restriction of ten packs per order per week is now in place.

Please note that each pack of BCG vaccine contains ten vials with a minimum of ten doses per vial, i.e. 100 doses in all.

Movianto UK deliveries over the August Bank Holiday

Due to the August Bank Holiday, there will be no deliveries or order processing by Movianto UK on:

- Monday 25 August

Please see the table on the following page for revised order and delivery dates.

Customers whose scheduled delivery day falls on a Bank Holiday are reminded to be prepared for the break in deliveries and to order accordingly. Please make sure you have sufficient room in your fridge for any additional vaccine you wish to stock over this holiday period.

Orders can still be placed on ImmForm on all days, but on Bank Holidays they will not be processed by Movianto UK for dispatch at their warehouse, hence the revised order cut off day.

We recommend you have two to four weeks of vaccine stock held in your fridge, so you may wish to bear in mind when ordering for the holiday period. We also recommend that you have at least two contacts registered on ImmForm, as cover for leave etc. To register please see the ImmForm helpsheet on how to register at [web link 6](#).

Delivery date	Order cut-off date	Order cut-off time
Monday, 18/08/2014	Thursday, 14/08/2014	11:55 AM
Tuesday, 19/08/2014	Friday, 15/08/2014	11:55 AM
Wednesday, 20/08/2014	Monday, 18/08/2014	11:55 AM
Thursday, 21/08/2014	Tuesday, 19/08/2014	11:55 AM
Friday, 22/08/2014	Wednesday, 20/08/2014	11:55 AM
Monday, 25/08/2014	Closed no deliveries	
Tuesday, 26/08/2014	Thursday, 21/08/2014	11:55 AM
Wednesday, 27/08/2014	Friday, 22/08/2014	11:55 AM
Thursday, 28/08/2014	Tuesday, 26/08/2014	11:55 AM
Friday, 29/08/2014	Wednesday, 27/08/2014	11:55 AM
Monday, 1/09/2014	Thursday, 28/08/2014	11:55 AM
Tuesday, 2/09/2014	Friday, 29/08/2014	11:55 AM

An example of how deliveries are affected by the Bank Holidays: if your normal delivery day is a Monday, the cut off for placing an order for a delivery for use around the August Bank Holiday is 11:55 on Thursday 14 August for delivery on Monday 18 August. If you miss this date, the next Monday delivery will be Monday 1 September.

The normal delivery cycle resumes on Thursday 28 August and normal ordering cycle resumes on Tuesday 26 August.

Out of schedule deliveries cannot be made for failure to place orders in good time.

Web links

- web link 1 <http://www.hpa.org.uk/hpr/archives/2014/hpr2514.pdf>
- web link 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation#minutes>
- web link 3 [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(14\)60686-3/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)60686-3/abstract)
- web link 4 <http://www.bmj.com/content/349/bmj.g4219>
- web link 5 <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/WhoopingCough/ImmunisationForPregnantWomen/>
- web link 6 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/197839/130510_Pertussis_continuation_letter_FINAL.pdf
- web link 7 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/287832/vaccine_update_211_v17.pdf
- web link 8 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-update-issue-216-june-2014>
- web link 9 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-update-issue-213-march-2014>
- web link 10 www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-flu-programme
- web link 11 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/meningitis-c-leaflet-for-university-students>
- web link 12 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#seasonal-flu-vaccine-uptake>
- web link 13 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/high-activity-in-a-low-flu-season>
- web link 14 http://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk/ecom_dh/public/home.jsf
- web link 15 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-flu-immunisation-programme-from-september-2014-to-2015-information-for-parents-and-schools>
- web link 16 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-infanrix-ipvhib-in-the-infant-immunisation-schedule>
- web link 17 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunisation>
- web link 18 <http://www.managementinpractice.com/premises/insight-keeping-it-cool>

Continued overleaf

- web link 19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immform>
- web link 20 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310958/HPV_Joint_Letter_14_May.pdf
- web link 21 <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033/PIL/GARDASIL/>
- web link 22 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-immunisation-programme-2014-to-2015>
- web link 23 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-update>
- web link 24 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/influenza-the-green-book-chapter-19>
- web link 25 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/meningitis-b-vaccine-price-negotiations-begin>