

Dear Colleague

DETAILS OF THE 2016-17 SHINGLES (HERPES ZOSTER) VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Introduction

1. This year's shingles programme will run from 1 September 2016 until 31 August 2017. The programme is principally aimed at:

- People aged 70 years (routine)
- People aged 76 years (catch-up).
- People aged 77 and 78 years (continuing catch up from February 2016)

2. In February 2016 we opened up the programme to two additional cohorts: patients born between 02/09/1937 and 01/09/1939 (now aged 77 and 78). Patients in that age range should still be considered part of this year's catch up due to the very low uptake in that age range.

3. In line with previous years, those who were eligible for the programme from the beginning (and who did not previously take up the offer of vaccination) can still be vaccinated. This includes those aged 71 to 73 (inclusive) and aged 79. Vaccine should not be offered to anyone aged over 80, even if they have previously been eligible, as efficacy of the vaccine declines with age.

4. We appreciate that this programme has become quite complicated as we continue to roll out the catch-up part of the programme. Ideally everyone aged 70 to 79 would be eligible, however at this time it is not possible to offer to everyone in that age range. We ask for your patience and support while we continue with the phased introduction. To help with this we have provided a table at Annex B as a guide to eligible patients.

5. Please note we still have 2 cohorts (74 and 75 year olds) who are currently outwith the catch-up programme and they will be included in future programming.

From the Chief Medical Officer
Chief Nursing Officer
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Dr Catherine Calderwood
Professor Fiona McQueen
Dr Rose Marie Parr

30 August 2016

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Addressees

For action

NHS Board Chief Executives
NHS Board Immunisation
Coordinators
NHS Board Medical Directors
Primary Care Leads, NHS Boards
Nurse Directors, NHS Boards
Directors of Public Health
Infectious Disease Consultants
General Practitioners
Practice Nurses
Health Visitors
CPHMs
Scottish Prison Service
Scottish Ambulance Service

For information

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6. **Vaccination can be administered at any time of the year – it does not need to be given at the same time as seasonal flu vaccinations.** If Practices decide to offer vaccination at the same time as flu, please be aware that the contraindications for the two vaccines are different.

Live Vaccine

7. Zostavax® is the only shingles vaccine with market authorisation available in the UK. It contains **live, attenuated virus** derived from the Oka/Merck strain of varicella zoster virus. This vaccine is contraindicated in some patients (eg immunosuppressed).

8. An easy to use tool has been created to help with eligibility and screening for contraindication for use by healthcare practitioners. This tool can be accessed at: <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/immvax/shinglesvaccine.aspx>.

Green Book Update

9. In 2016, Chapter 28a of the Green Book (Shingles) was updated to allow administration of Zostavax® vaccine by either the intramuscular (IM) or subcutaneous (SC) route, preferably in the deltoid region of the upper arm. Intramuscular injection is the preferred route of administration, as injection-site adverse reactions were significantly less frequent in those who received the vaccine via this route of administration. For individuals with a bleeding disorder, Zostavax should be given by deep subcutaneous injection to reduce the risk of bleeding. The vaccine must not be given intravascularly.

10. The chapter can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a>.

Action

11. Recipients are asked to note the contents of this letter, and to take action as necessary to support this important programme

12. **Annex A** to this letter provides some additional detail and **Annex B** outlines the relevant dates of birth for call up purposes

13. Thanks to you and your practice staff for your support in continuing to deliver this important vaccination programme.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Calderwood
Chief Medical Officer

Fiona McQueen
Chief Nursing Officer

Rose Marie Parr
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Annex A

2016-17 SHINGLES (HERPES ZOSTER) VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Eligibility

1. Vaccination should be offered to people aged 70 years – this is the routine programme. We are continuing the catch-up immunisation programme in 2016-17 for people aged 76, 77 and 78 years (otherwise known as the catch-up).
 - The routine cohort for those **aged 70** in 2016/17 is defined by the patient's age on 1st September 2016. Those born between 2 September 1945 and 1 September 1946 should be offered the vaccine in the 2016/17 routine programme.
 - The catch-up cohort for those **aged 76, 77 and 78** in 2016/17 are defined by the patient's age on 1st September 2016. Those born between 2 September 1937 and 1 September 1940 should be offered vaccine in the 2016/17 catch-up programme. Please note that while those age 77 and 78 years initially became eligible for vaccination in February 2016, uptake remains very low (see below).
2. NHS Boards and GP practices are reminded of their responsibilities in the vaccination of eligible persons who are housebound and those in care homes and long-term hospital care.

Vaccine Supply

3. Central vaccine supply must only be used for those in the eligible cohorts.

Call Up

4. There will be no centralised letter for this programme. We would encourage all GP practices to provide call and recall by way of a letter, to make their patients aware they are eligible for vaccine, as recent experience has indicated that such letters can have a very positive impact on uptake. A template letter will be available nearer the time to help with this (see <http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/23880.aspx>). Leaflets are also provided to GP practices to accompany letters

Aimed at Health Practitioners: Eligibility screening tool for contraindications for shingles vaccine

5. To help with eligibility and minimise the potential for vaccination errors, a screening tool is available to support the programme. This provides a series of questions to help assess whether an individual should be offered the shingles vaccine. This tool can be accessed at <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/immvax/shinglesvaccine.aspx>.

Aimed at General Public: Ready Reckoner for checking eligibility

6. To help raise awareness of the programme an online ready reckoner tool for members of the public to check their eligibility for the shingles vaccine is available. This appears on the NHS Immunisation Scotland website <http://www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/vaccines-and-diseases/shingles.aspx>.

Vaccine Usage

7. Full details on use, dosage, administration, concomitant administration with other vaccines, contraindications, consent and reporting of adverse reactions with Zostavax® (the vaccine used in the programme) is set out in the chapter 28a on Shingles (Herpes Zoster). This is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a>.

Patient Group Direction (PGD)

8. A national specimen Patient Group Direction (PGD) for administration of Zostavax® is available on the Health Protection Scotland website at <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/immvax/pgd.aspx>.

Supply

9. Zostavax® should be ordered through NHS vaccine holding centres using the ordering system required by each NHS Board. GP practices and vaccine holding centres must liaise closely to ensure sufficient vaccine availability prior to the scheduling of immunisation appointments. Please ensure that stock with the shortest expiry date is used first to preserve this expensive vaccine.

Uptake Rates (provisional figures to end June 2016)

10. The following uptake was achieved

70 year olds - 52.9%

78 year olds - 49.7%

In addition, from February 2016 two further catch up groups (those aged 76 and 77 as at 1 September 2015) were added to the programme. This attracted around 20% uptake in the first few months. This measure helped ensure vaccine supply nearing its expiry date was not wasted.

Other issues

11. General Information on the topics listed below can be found in earlier communications on this vaccination programme (see: [http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/cmo/CMO\(2014\)21.pdf](http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/cmo/CMO(2014)21.pdf))

- Storage
- Vaccine Stock Management
- Reporting of Adverse Events
- Monitoring Vaccine Uptake: Data Extraction
- GP Contractual Arrangements

Communication Materials

12. Information leaflets and posters will again be made available to GP practices to support this immunisation programme and to help inform the general public. NHS Education for Scotland in partnership with Health Protection Scotland has produced educational resources for registered healthcare practitioners. These resources, once updated, will be

available at www.immunisationscotland.org.uk and <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-theme-initiative/public-health/health-protection/immunisation/shingles.aspx> respectively.

Annex B

Age on 1 st September 2016	2016-17 programme: Patient's date of birth is:	
69 or under	02/09/1946 or later	Ineligible
70	02/09/1945 to 01/09/1946	New routine cohort
71	02/09/1944 to 01/09/1945	Mop up cohort from previous years – to be offered vaccine
72	02/09/1943 to 01/09/1944	
73	02/09/1942 to 01/09/1943	
74	02/09/1941 to 01/09/1942	Ineligible
75	02/09/1940 to 01/09/1941	Ineligible
76	02/09/1939 to 01/09/1940	New catch up cohort
77	02/09/1938 to 01/09/1939	Catch up cohort (eligible from February 2016)
78	02/09/1937 to 01/09/1938	Catch up cohort (eligible from February 2016)
79	02/09/1936 to 01/09/1937	Mop up cohort from previous years – to be offered vaccine
80	02/09/1935 to 01/09/1936	Ineligible