

Chief Medical Officer and Public Health Directorate

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1 April 2010

Dear Colleague

LAUNCH OF THE IMMUNISATION SCOTLAND WEBSITE

This is to advise you of a new resource to help patients and interested members of the public access information about immunisations and have their questions answered.

From Thursday 1 April 2010, Scotland will have a new national website all about immunisations: www.immunisationscotland.org.uk.

Immunisation Scotland is a 'one-stop-shop' site providing, in one place, information about all the current immunisation programmes in Scotland, the vaccines available and the diseases they protect against.

This new resource complements the existing range of printed information materials of leaflets, booklets and posters available on each of the immunisations. As all the information is in one place, this comprehensive site provides information on immunisations for babies, infants, children, teenagers, adults and those in at risk groups.

The site has been developed by NHS Health Scotland for NHSScotland and the Scottish Government. The provision of its content has been overseen by NHS Health Scotland in consultation with Health Protection Scotland, the Health Protection Team at the Scottish Government and colleagues working across NHSScotland.

Visitors to the site will be able to learn more about vaccines, when these are offered, and the diseases they protect against. The site includes updated information about MMR. In addition, it carries an interactive chart for parents and carers of babies and infants so that they understand when each immunisation is due under the Routine Childhood Immunisation Programme.



Raising awareness of the site:

There are a number of ways in which the new website will be promoted. This includes:

- On-line advertising from Monday 5 April 2010
- All national immunisation leaflets currently being printed or reprinted will carry a reference to the new site, and this practice will continue as relevant printed materials are reviewed and printed. The www.healthscotland.com/immunisation link on existing materials will redirect to the new site.
- The websites of partners, third party organisations and NHSScotland Health Boards will carry links to the new site
- A web banner advert has been developed for those able to display this on their sites
- The Ready Steady Baby and the Ready Steady Toddler sites will carry a link to the new site
- NHS Health Scotland's website will redirect those looking for information on immunisations to the new site
- NHS Board Immunisation Coordinators will be asked to pass on the new website address to their local immunisation teams.

Health professionals

The new site is designed to sit alongside existing on-line information reference sources for health professionals. Health professionals will continue to be able to access links to the Green Book and the latest technical information about vaccines on the NHS Health Scotland website by following the link at www.healthscotland.com/immunisation.

Information about immunisation will continue to be available also from the free **NHS Helpline** on **0800 22 44 88** (Textphone 18001 0800 22 44 88).

We hope that you will find this website a welcome, useful addition to the information resources provided on immunisations in Scotland.

We will be encouraging people seeking information on immunisations to use the site. As this is a web resource it means the content can be accessed at any time of day or night, as many times as people feel they want or need to, and detailed Q&A will provide comprehensive information relevant to patients, parents and carers – information for everyone on protection for everyone.

Should you have any questions about the site or have an opportunity to promote the site through your communications resources such as websites or newsletters, please contact Kenny McDonald at NHS Health Scotland at kenny.mcdonald@health.scot.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely

Harry Burns

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