

Dear Colleague

## DETAILS OF THE SHINGLES (HERPES ZOSTER) VACCINATION PROGRAMME 2022/23

1. We are writing to provide information on the 2022/23 shingles vaccination programme which will run from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023.

### Background

2. The shingles vaccination programme was introduced in Scotland in 2013. A catch up programme for those aged 70 to 79 years old was also introduced at this time, which was rolled out over a number of years.

### 2022/23 Programme

3. This year, eligibility for the 2022/23 programme is as follows:
  - Routine vaccination of 70 year olds (defined by the patient's age at 1 September 2022).
  - Active call and recall of 71–79 year olds who have not previously been vaccinated (defined by patient's age at 1 September 2022). People in this age group who were not vaccinated due to contraindication to the live vaccine should be identified from their clinical records and offered the Shingrix® vaccine.
  - Vaccine should not be offered to anyone aged 80 years and over, even if they have previously been eligible (defined by patient's age at 1 September 2022).
4. Vaccination can be administered at any time of the year. Vaccination teams can deliver this vaccination at a later date, if they need to protect their workforce capacity. If vaccination teams plan to offer the shingles vaccine at the same time as the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine, please consider the contraindications for the vaccines, as they are different. In the absence of any safety data for co-administering shingles, it is recommended that a seven day interval should ideally be observed between a COVID-19 vaccine and any shingles vaccines.

From the Chief Medical Officer  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer  
Professor Sir Gregor Smith  
Professor Alex McMahon  
Professor Alison Strath

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31 August 2022

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#### Addresses

##### For action

NHS Board Immunisation Coordinators  
General Practitioners  
Practice Nurses  
Primary Care Leads,  
NHS Board Medical Directors  
Nurse Directors,  
Directors of Public Health  
Infectious Disease Consultants  
CPHMs

##### For information

NHS Board Chief Executives  
Directors of Pharmacy  
Consultant Physicians  
Public Health Scotland  
Chief Executive, NHS Health Scotland  
NHS 24  
Scottish General Practitioners' Committee

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#### Further Enquiries to:

Policy Issues  
Vaccination Policy Team  
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Medical Issues  
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Pharmaceutical and Vaccine Supply  
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## Zostavax® Vaccine

5. **Zostavax® contains a live, attenuated virus derived from the Oka/Merck strain of varicella zoster virus. This vaccine is contraindicated in some patients (e.g. immunosuppressed). Health Boards should continue to offer Zostavax® to eligible patients who are not contraindicated to the vaccine.**

6. **The vaccine must not be given intravascularly.** The Zostavax® vaccine can be administered by intramuscular (IM) or subcutaneous (SC) injection, preferably in the deltoid region of the upper arm. Intramuscular injection is the preferred route of administration, as injection-site adverse reactions have been 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.

## Shingrix®

7. Shingrix® is a recombinant sub-unit (non-live) vaccine and contains varicella zoster virus. **Shingrix® should be offered to those who are eligible for shingles vaccination but are clinically contraindicated to receive the live vaccine Zostavax® due to their immunocompromised status.**

8. **The vaccine must not be given intravascularly.** The Shingrix® vaccine should be administered by intramuscular (IM) injection, preferably in the deltoid region of the upper arm. **Subcutaneous administration is not recommended.** Shingrix® should be given with caution to individuals with a bleeding disorder since bleeding may occur following intramuscular administration.

9. Shingrix® requires a 2 dose schedule, with the second dose administered a minimum of 2 months from the first dose. **Health Boards should invite patients for their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose as there is not going to be any national call/recall for the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose.**

10. We are very grateful for your continued support and hard work in delivering the Scottish Immunisation Programme to the people of Scotland.

11. Further information is included in the Annexes set out below.

Yours sincerely,

*Gregor Smith*

*Alex McMahon*

*Alison Strath*

Professor Sir Gregor Smith  
**Chief Medical Officer**

Professor Alex McMahon  
**Chief Nursing Officer**

Professor Alison Strath  
**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**

## 2022/23 SHINGLES (HERPES ZOSTER) VACCINATION PROGRAMME

### Screening tool for contraindications to shingles vaccine

1. To support the shingles vaccination programme, an easy to use screening tool for contraindications to the live vaccine Zostavax® and eligibility for Shingrix® has been created for use by healthcare practitioners.

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/screening-tool-for-contraindications-for-shingles-vaccine/screening-tool-for-contraindications-for-shingles-vaccine-version-120/>

### Immunisation against Infectious Disease (The Green Book)

2. The shingles chapter (chapter 28a) within Immunisation against Infectious Disease (The Green Book) can be found at: [Shingles \(herpes zoster\): the green book, chapter 28a - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a)

### Vaccination uptake rates for 2022/23

3. It is important that every effort is made to ensure vaccination uptake is as high as possible. The benefits of shingles vaccine should be communicated and vaccination made as easily accessible as possible for those eligible.

### Eligibility

4. The Zostavax® vaccine should be routinely offered to people aged 70 years. Health Boards should actively call/recall those aged 71-79 years who have not previously been vaccinated with Zostavax®.

5. Individuals who are eligible for shingles vaccine (adults aged 70-79 years), but who are contraindicated to the receipt of the live vaccine should be offered Shingrix® instead.

6. It is important that Shingrix® is given only to those who are clinically contraindicated for Zostavax® (i.e. those with severe immunosuppression) in order to have sufficient supply for those who need to receive it.

7. Health Boards should identify those people not previously offered the vaccine due to contraindication to the live vaccine and actively invite them for vaccination using the Shingrix® vaccine. This is defined by the patient's age on 1 September 2022.

8. The shingles vaccine should not be offered to anyone aged 80 years and over, even if they have previously been eligible. This is defined by the patient's age on 1 September 2022. Where an individual has turned 80 years of age following their first dose of Shingrix®, a second dose should be provided to complete the two-dose schedule.

9. Health Boards 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

10. Central vaccine supply of Zostavax® and Shingrix® must only be used for those in the eligible cohorts.

## Call and recall

11. There will be no centralised letter inviting eligible people for the shingles vaccination programme. We encourage all Health Boards to put in place call and recall arrangements by way of letter. An updated template invitation letter and leaflet will be available from 1 September 2022 to help with this (see [Shingles vaccine resources - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)). Hard copies of leaflets and posters will also be available during September.

12. Patients should be directed to <https://www.nhsinform.scot/shingles> for further information about the vaccine and eligibility.

## Vaccine usage

13. Full details on use, dosage, administration, concomitant administration with other vaccines, contraindications, consent and reporting of adverse reactions with Zostavax® and Shingrix® is set out in chapter 28a of the Green Book. This is available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a>.

## Patient Group Direction (PGD)

14. National specimen Patient Group Directions (PGD) for administration of Shingrix® and Zostavax® are available on the Public Health Scotland website at: [https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/?q=&fq=phs\\_publication\\_type%3APatient+Group+Direction%23](https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/?q=&fq=phs_publication_type%3APatient+Group+Direction%23)

## Supply

15. Shingrix® and Zostavax® should be ordered through NHS Board Vaccine Holding Centres. Health Boards and Vaccine Holding Centres must liaise closely to ensure sufficient vaccine is available prior to the scheduling of vaccination appointments. Health Boards should ensure that stock with the shortest expiry date is used first to preserve vaccine supplies.

## Vaccine stock management

16. Please ensure sufficient fridge space is available for the vaccine. Each site holding vaccine is asked to review current stocks of all vaccines. No more than 2 to 4 weeks of stock is recommended and higher stock levels should be reduced to this level. A review of available fridge space will be necessary to ensure adequate storage capacity at the start of the programme.

17. Effective management of vaccines throughout the supply chain is essential to reduce vaccine wastage, including the use of appropriate cool boxes/bags for transporting the vaccine during home/care home visits. Local protocols should be in place to keep vaccine wastage to a minimum. These vaccines are very costly and even small percentage reductions in vaccine wastage have a major impact on the financing of vaccine supplies.

## Reporting of adverse reactions

18. Suspected adverse drug reactions (ADR) to vaccines should be reported via the Yellow Card Scheme ([www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard)). Chapter 9 of the Green Book gives detailed guidance about which ADRs to report and how to do so. Additionally, Chapter 8 of the Green Book provides detailed advice on managing adverse events following vaccination. Information on the side effects of Shingrix® and Zostavax® is available in

Chapter 28a of the Green Book. These chapters are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/series/immunisation-against-infectious-disease-the-green-book>

**Action**

19. Health Boards are requested to action this guidance and ensure that their vaccination teams are aware of it.

## **COMMUNICATIONS - INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS AND EDUCATION RESOURCES FOR REGISTERED HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS**

### **Communication materials for patients**

1. Information leaflets and posters are available to Health Boards to support this vaccination programme to help inform the general public. Online information for the public can be found within the shingles vaccine page on NHS inform at:

[www.nhsinform.scot/shingles](http://www.nhsinform.scot/shingles)

2. These materials, along with template shingles vaccination invitation letters are available to order and download online from

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/shingles-vaccine-resources/>

3. The leaflet will also be available in Arabic, Urdu, simplified and traditional Chinese and Polish, and in Easy Read, BSL and audio formats at [www.nhsinform.scot/shingles](http://www.nhsinform.scot/shingles) (under 'After the vaccine' section). Public Health Scotland is happy to consider requests for other languages and formats. Please contact 0131 314 5300 or email

[phs.otherformats@phs.scot](mailto:phs.otherformats@phs.scot)

### **Workforce education resources for healthcare practitioners**

4. NHS Education for Scotland, in partnership with Public Health Scotland, will produce educational resources for healthcare practitioners. These resources are available at

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