



20 August 2014

NHS England Gateway Number: 02101

PHE Gateway Number: 2014280

Dear Colleague,

Shingles immunisation programme from 1 September 2014

This letter provides information on the second year of the shingles immunisation programme.

Shingles immunisation was introduced on 1 September 2013 for patients aged 70 and 79 on that date.

In time the programme will work towards offering immunisation to all 70 – 79 year-olds, subject to the availability of the vaccine and the capacity of the system to deliver the full range of immunisations which make up the national immunisation programme.

Until 31 August 2014, GPs should continue to offer shingles immunisation to all those who were aged 70 or 79 on 1 September 2013.

Any individual who reaches their 80th birthday is no longer eligible for the vaccination due to the reducing efficacy of the vaccine as age increases. This follows the recommendation made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation for the shingles vaccination programme.

Changes from September 2014 are as follows:

- From 1 September 2014, immunisation should be offered to patients aged 70 for the routine programme, and aged 78 and 79 for the catch-up programme. Eligibility is determined by the patient's age on 01 September 2014.
- From 1 September 2014 GPs may continue to offer immunisation to all those who became eligible as 70 year-olds from 1 September 2013 but have not yet been immunised. NOTE – No Item of Service fee will be applicable.

Vaccine supply

Public Health England has distributed a large volume of the shingles vaccine, Zostavax®, across the NHS and practices should continue to check how much stock they hold before ordering more. It is recommended that practices hold no more than two weeks' worth of stock. Unused stock on 31 August may, of course be used to immunise those requiring immunisation from 1 September 2014 if the vaccine remains in date. Please ensure that stocks of vaccine are rotated in fridges so that that wastage is minimised.

Key points about the changes to the programme

Detailed clinical guidance on administering shingles immunisation is contained in *Immunisation against infectious disease* (the Green Book), available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a>

Supplies of Zostavax® for use in the national programme should continue to be ordered online via the ImmForm website:

<https://www.immform.dh.gov.uk/SignIn.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Care should be taken to estimate the amount of vaccine needed so that over-ordering is avoided.

The arrangements for paying GPs for undertaking shingles immunisation have been updated and can be viewed at:

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Documents/Primary%20care%20contracts/V%20and%20I/V%20and%20I%20Home%20Page/Vaccination%20immunisation%20programmes%2014-15%20guidance%20audit%20requirements.pdf>

A revised information leaflet is being developed to reflect the changes which can be used as part of the consent process.

Vaccine coverage data will continue to be collected via the ImmForm website.

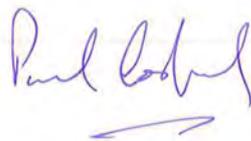
If you have any further queries please email them to immunisation@phe.gov.uk

By the end of July 2014, about 60 per cent of 70 year-olds and 58 per cent of 79 year-olds had been vaccinated against shingles. This represents a significant achievement when account is taken of all the other recent additions and changes to the national immunisation schedule. It will also result in a considerable reduction in the number of cases of this debilitating and painful condition. We are grateful for your continued support in implementing shingles immunisation.

Yours sincerely



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NHS England
Chief Operating Officer and
Deputy Chief Executive



Dr Paul Cosford
Public Health England
Medical Director and
Director for Health Protection

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