

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



HSS(MD)9/2017

For Action:

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health & Social
Care Board/HSC Trusts/NIAS
GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board
All General Practitioners and GP Locums (*for onward
distribution to practice staff*)

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: HSS(MD)9/2017
Date: 27 June 2017

Dear Colleague

SHINGLES VACCINATION PROGRAMME – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR 2017/18

ACTION REQUIRED

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all staff involved in elderly care and vaccination programmes, to enable them to respond accordingly.

The HSCB must ensure that this information is cascaded to all General Practitioners immediately.

Important Points to Note

- From October 2017 the vaccine should be given to all patients aged **70 and 78** years on **1 September 2017** (see Annex A for cohort ranges).
- Those individuals now aged 71, 72, 73, 74 or 79 years of age, who had been eligible during the first four years of the programmes, remain eligible to receive the vaccine during 2017/18, if they have not yet received it.
- Those people now aged 80 years of age, who had been eligible during 2016/17, are NOT eligible to receive the vaccine during the 2017/18 programme.
- **The Shingles vaccine is expensive with some stock having an expiry date of 30 November 2017.** GPs should ensure they only order enough vaccine to meet their weekly needs.
- Healthcare professionals should familiarise themselves with the latest guidance in the Green Book before beginning the vaccination programme.

Introduction

1. The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the eligibility criteria for the 2017/18 shingles vaccine programme which will come into effect from 1 September 2017. The 2016/17 campaign continues until 31 August 2017 and we would urge GPs to continue to call those patients in for vaccination, who meet the eligibility criteria for the 2016/17 programme **particularly those aged 79 on 1 September 2016**, irrespective of their age now. After the 1 September 2017 those people now aged 80 years of age, who had been eligible during 2016/17, will not be eligible to receive the vaccine during the 2017/18 programme.

Details of programme during 2017/18

2. During the 2017/18 programme the shingles vaccine should be offered to everyone who is **70 years of age** on the 1 September 2017 (routine cohort) and everyone who is **78 years of age** on the 1 September 2017 (catch-up cohort). See table 1 below for dates of birth.

Table 1 – Cohorts for routine and catch-up shingles programme (1 Sept 2017 to 31 Aug 2018)

Year	Cohort	Cohort definition	Born from date	Born to date
2017/18	Routine	Age 70 on 1 September 2017	02/09/1946	01/09/1947
2017/18	Catch-up	Age 78 on 1 September 2017	02/09/1938	01/09/1939

3. Those individuals now aged 71, 72, 73, 74 or 79 years of age, who had been eligible during the first four years of the programme (i.e were born between 02/09/1942 - 01/09/1946 or 02/09/37 - 01/09/38) and who have not already received the vaccine remain eligible to receive the vaccine during 2017/18.
4. Those people now aged 80 years of age, who had been eligible during 2016/17 (i.e were born between 02/09/1936 - 01/09/1937) are NO LONGER eligible to receive the vaccine during 2017/18. This is because the vaccine is less effective in people aged 80 years of age or more.
5. As per the arrangements last year, while the programme will have a public launch at the start of October 2017, the shingles vaccine can routinely be given at the same time as the seasonal flu vaccine from September onwards, once GPs have received their supply of the vaccines. **The shingles vaccine can and should be given separately, if required, up to the end of August 2018.**
6. GPs should ensure that they will have the fridge capacity to store the vaccine required. The 2017/18 on line order form for Zostavax® vaccine will be issued with the seasonal flu HSS letter which is due to be issued in July.
7. **GPs should only order sufficient vaccine to meet their weekly need.** Effective management of vaccines throughout the supply chain is essential to

reduce vaccine wastage. Local protocols should be in place to reduce vaccine wastage to a minimum. Even small percentage reductions in vaccine wastage will have a major impact on the financing of vaccine supplies.

Funding and service arrangements

8. A payment of £7.64 will be made in respect of each registered patient of the contractor who has received the Shingles Vaccine during the period 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018, who on the 1st September 2017 attained the age of 70 years.
9. In regard to the catch-up service, a payment of £7.64 will be made in respect of each registered patient of the contractor who has received the shingles vaccine during the period 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018, who on the 1st September 2017 attained the age of 78 years.
10. In regard to those individuals who had been eligible during the first four years of the programme but remain unvaccinated, a payment of £7.64 will be made in respect of each registered patient of the contractor who has received the Shingles Vaccine during the period 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018, who on the 1st September 2017 attained the age of 71, 72, 73, 74 or 79 years of age.

Green Book

11. Healthcare professionals should familiarise themselves with the latest guidance before beginning the vaccination programme, particularly the change in guidance on shingles vaccine and immunosuppression which occurred during last year's campaign.

Conclusion

12. Shingles is a significant cause of morbidity in older people. We appreciate that additional work has been brought about by this vaccination programme, but we hope colleagues will recognise the significant benefits the vaccine will bring to their patients and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved in delivering the programme in 2016/17 and for their continuing hard work.

Yours sincerely



Dr Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer

Professor Charlotte McArdle
Chief Nursing Officer

Dr Mark Timoney
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

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This letter is available on the Department of Health website at
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>
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CIRCULATION LIST

Executive Medical Director/Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)

Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency

Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency

Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health & Social Care Board, (*for onward distribution to all Community Pharmacies*)

Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts

Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB

Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health & Social Care Board (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)

Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all relevant staff*)

Directors of Nursing, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses*)

RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)

Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust

SHINGLES VACCINATION

Cohorts for vaccination in 2017/18

Routine programme

Age 70 on 1 September 2017

Birth date range 02/09/1946 - 01/09/1947

Catch-up programme

Age 78 on 1 September 2017

Birth date range 02/09/1938– 01/09/1939

Anyone who was born between 02/09/1942 - 01/09/1946 or 02/09/37 - 01/09/38 and who has not already received the vaccine remains eligible to receive the vaccine