



29 June 2016

NHS England Gateway number: 05354

PHE Gateway number: 2016-100

Dear Colleague,

Shingles immunisation programme from 1 September 2016

This letter provides information about the fourth year of the shingles immunisation programme.

From 1 September 2016 shingles vaccine should be offered to:

- patients aged 70 years on 1 September 2016
- patients aged 78 years on 1 September 2016

In addition, patients who were eligible for immunisation in the first three years of the programme but have not been vaccinated against shingles remain eligible until their 80th birthday. These cohorts are:

- patients aged 71 to 73 on 1 September 2016
- patients aged 79 on 1 September 2016

Until 31 August 2016, GPs should continue to offer shingles vaccine to all those who were aged 70 or 78 on 1 September 2015.

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 reflects the recommendation^[1] made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation for the shingles immunisation programme.

Vaccine supply

Zostavax® [can be ordered online via the ImmForm website](#) and, it is recommended that practices hold no more than two weeks' worth of stock. Unused stock on 31 August 2016 may, of course, be used to immunise those requiring immunisation from 1 September 2016 if the vaccine remains in date. Please make sure that stocks of vaccine are rotated in fridges so that that wastage is minimised.

^[1] Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (2010) Statement on varicella and herpes zoster vaccines 29 March 2013. [internet] accessed 24 June 2015
webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/ab/JCVI/DH_094744

Detailed [clinical guidance](#) on administering shingles immunisation is contained in Immunisation against infectious disease (the Green Book).

The [arrangements for paying GPs](#) for undertaking shingles immunisation have been updated.

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

For the 2015/16 programme, by the end of March 2016 just under half of eligible 70 and 78 year olds had been vaccinated against shingles. This represents a significant achievement and one that we can improve on. A continuing reduction in the number of cases of this debilitating and painful condition needs ongoing efforts to identify and vaccinate all eligible individuals.

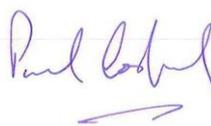
We want to build on these achievements over this next year and make 2016/17 the best year yet for shingles vaccine uptake. Please help us in achieving this by taking every opportunity to offer shingles vaccination to eligible patients to help to protect as many elderly people as possible from this devastating illness. This applies both in the remainder of this shingles year (i.e. up to 31 August), and next year.

We are grateful for your continued support in implementing this important programme.

Yours faithfully,



Professor Sir Bruce Keogh
National Medical Director
Operations
NHS England



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