

Special Bulletin

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Death of Bristol Teenager from Suspected Meningitis

Public Health England (PHE) is investigating the sad death from suspected meningococcal disease in a teenager who attended Orchard School, Filton Road, Bristol. The teenager was treated at University Hospital Bristol.

Results from tests to ascertain the cause of death are expected on 10 October and the media have been notified of the death in order to help circulate messages in the community about the signs and symptoms of meningitis. Once the cause of death has been confirmed, PHE will reassess its communications strategy and inform all local partners of next steps.

All close contacts of the case have been followed up and given antibiotics as a precaution. PHE are seeking to reassure parents and students that there are no known links to the previous cases associated with St Brendan's Sixth Form College in Bristol.

This case may cause concern and anxiety across the wider Bristol school community and GP practices, the ambulance services and A&Es may receive additional calls, as a result of heightened interest following the previous cases.

PHE's priority at this time is that students protect themselves by getting vaccinated for groups ACW and Y. You will be aware that the Men ACWY vaccine for teenagers was introduced in 2015. Since then this has been offered to pupils in Year 9 in schools, with a catch up campaign being rolled out for older pupils (Years 10 – 13) and university 'freshers'. If students are in these age groups and are unsure if they have had the vaccine, we are encouraging them to contact their GP surgery. If a student is eligible for this vaccine and contacts you for advice please could you encourage them to make an appointment to have the vaccine as promptly as possible.

There is an on-going campaign to improve Men ACWY vaccination uptake for all eligible young people and your support with this wider campaign is also appreciated. We will shortly be sending GP practices uptake data which will enable them to assess the number of unvaccinated Year 13 students linked to specific surgeries and plan any further call recall required for them.

PHE are also reminding parents and students of the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease as outlined below.

Meningitis

Septicaemia

- Fever
 - Vomiting
 - Severe headache
 - Stiff neck
 - Dislike of bright light
 - Joint/muscle/limb pain
- Fever
 - Vomiting
 - Bruising rash
 - Rapid breathing
 - Cold hands and feet

Please also be aware that in some cases individuals have displayed symptoms similar to those associated with gastroenteritis. If you require further health protection advice or information, please contact PHE's Acute Response Centre on 0300 3038162 Option 1 Option 2 or for advice on any aspect of the MenACWY vaccination programme contact england.southwestscrimms@nhs.net

Questions: Where can I direct people for more general information/support?

Answer: Further information is available from:

- The Meningitis Research Foundation: www.meningitis.org, 0808 800 3344 (9am – 5pm Monday – Friday)
- Meningitis Now: <https://www.meningitisnow.org> , 0808 80 10 388 (9am – 5am Monday – Friday)

If you have any questions please call the Health Protection Team on 0300 303 8162

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