

South West Public Health

Section 7a Screening & Immunisations Bulletin



Issue 130: 20th March 2023

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ICARS Newsletter

Please find this week's ICARS newsletter attached to this email.

ICARS Reminder

We would like to remind you about ICARS – our immunisations clinical advice response service. Through this service we can support you with queries and incidents related to all vaccines included in the routine programmes. The service is available between 09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). We aim to respond within 2 working days. We can be contacted on england.swicars@nhs.net.

Below is a list of areas we can support with, though this is not exhaustive so please get in touch and we will be happy to help.

- Eligibility
- Safety (i.e. presence of significant health conditions or medications)
- Scheduling
- Incidents, including but not limited to:
 - o Administering a vaccine twice
 - o Administering a vaccine early or late
 - o Administering the wrong vaccine
 - o Administering expired vaccines
 - o Cold chains

Shingles Programme Changes

We can now confirm that following the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisation (JCVI) recommendation, NHS England has received a formal policy decision from DHSC to

implement changes to the NHS Shingles Vaccination Programme from 1 September 2023. The agreed changes, which were set out in the Commissioning Intentions 2023/24 and included in the [2023/24 GP Contract](#), are:

- replacement of Zostavax with the 2-dose Shingrix vaccine across the entire shingles vaccination programme.
- expansion of the immunocompromised cohort to offer Shingrix to individuals aged 50 years and over, with no upper age limit and a period between doses of 8 weeks and 6 months.
- expansion of the immunocompetent cohort to offer Shingrix routinely to individuals aged 60 years and over, remaining an opportunistic offer up to and including 79 years of age, with a period between doses of 6 months and 12 months.

Please note that the GP contract letter refers to the gap between doses in weeks and not months at the upper end in error.

The expansion of the immunocompetent cohort will be implemented over two five-year stages as follows:

- **First five-year stage (1 September 2023 to 31 August 2028):** Shingrix will be offered to those turning 70 and those turning 65 years of age in each of the five years as they become eligible.
- **Second five-year stage (1 September 2028 to 31 August 2033):** Shingrix will be offered to those turning 65 and those turning 60 years of age in each of the five years as they become eligible.

Any Zostavax remaining in the system after 1 September 2023 should be offered to anyone aged 70 to 79 years of age that was eligible *before* this implementation date. Once all stocks of Zostavax are exhausted, these individuals can be offered Shingrix if they have not been given a shingles vaccine.

General practice call/recall for the immunocompromised and immunocompetent cohorts, as they become eligible for the programme, will be implemented from 1 September 2023, as well as catch-up call/recall for the newly eligible immunocompromised 50-69-year-old cohort.

For Information: Changes to the GP contract 2023/24

Please refer to the attached letter that advises changes to the GP Contract for 2023/24. Apologies for any cross-posting as this has been widely shared directly and via ICBs.

It has also been published on the NHSE website:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/investment/gp-contract/>.

Further Information

Back issues of these bulletins and attachments are available on the NHS website [here](#). If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please contact the Integrated Public Health Team at england.swscreeningandimms@nhs.net