

South West Public Health

Section 7a Screening & Immunisations Bulletin



Issue 139: 5th June 2023

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ICARS

Please note the ICARS newsletter is now fortnightly.

Shingles Vaccines: Excess Wastage

The results of the 2022 audit on Section 7A vaccine wastage in the South West showed high volume of Shingles vaccines being wasted. These vaccines cost the NHS £99-160 per dose.

Out of £541,377 total value of vaccine wastage in South West over £135,000 was for shingles vaccines (Zostavax and Shingrix).

Healthcare professionals have a responsibility to minimise financial risk and to help sustain supplies.

As these vaccines are very costly even small percentage reductions in vaccine wastage have a major impact on the financing of vaccine supplies. Therefore, careful stock maintenance is very important. Here are some tips to consider so that vaccine wastage is minimised:

1. Frequency of ordering – due to a short shelf life and opportunistic delivery it is recommended that practices hold no more than 2 weeks' worth of Zostavax stock
2. Cold chain – if affected by a cold chain breach follow the procedure / guidance relating to these incidents
3. Please make sure that stocks of shingles vaccine are rotated in fridges
4. 'Catch up clinics' – if 'catch up clinics' are booked, please be very mindful of stock ordering in line with the expected number you would expect to see at a clinic
5. Vaccines should not be disposed of prior to their expiry date without a valid reason

Further information available in [Vaccine incident guidance: responding to vaccine errors](#) and [chapter 3 Green Book](#)

Further Information

Back issues of these bulletins and attachments are available on the NHS England website [here](#). **Please note that if there are no items for your information a GP Bulletin will not be circulated.** If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please contact the Integrated Public Health Team at england.swscreeningandimms@nhs.net.