

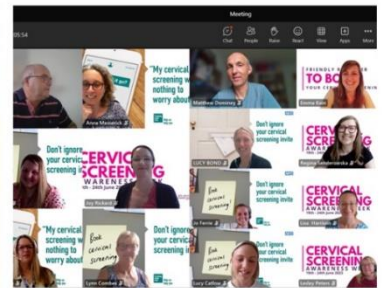
South West Vaccination & Screening Bulletin



South West Collaborative
Commissioning Hub



Issue 167: 22nd December 2023



Merry *christmas*

FROM THE NHSE SW VACCINATION
AND SCREENING TEAM

As we see out another year, we would like to take the opportunity to reflect on the achievements and hard work of everyone who has supported and delivered Screening and Immunisation services across the region in 2023. Our wonderful Team South West includes nurses, pharmacists, midwives, allied health professionals, doctors, operational teams, community health care teams, communications teams, administrators, cleaners, volunteers and many more.

We would like to thank each and every one of you for your contributions. Your dedication does not go unnoticed and the impact you make to the wellbeing of our population, especially our most vulnerable, is incredible.

Wishing you all a peaceful, safe and joyful festive period and a special thank you to those who are working during this period.

Please share this message with your teams.

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SCREENING:

National Update on Cervical Screening Letters

From Thursday 14 December 2023, new invitation, reminder, results and ceasing letters are being used by our Cervical Screening Administration Service (CSAS). These letters were reviewed and ratified by the Cervical Screening Programme Board on 23 August 2023.

A review of the letters was prompted resulting from complaints and feedback we've had from participants who are confused with the structure and the huge amount of information in the letters. We've received feedback from and consulted with service users through work with Ipsos Mori, Royal Mail and Jo's Trust to gain insight into the accessibility of current cervical screening correspondence, ensuring that correspondence is user friendly and contains the relevant information for individuals to make an informed choice.

NHS Screening Helpdesk Closing at End of January 2024

On behalf of Andrew Barton, Senior Communications Manager:

As part of transition work in NHS England, the NHS Screening Helpdesk will close from end of January 2024. Any queries from healthcare professionals working in screening, that were previously directed to the helpdesk should be directed through routine business channels as follows:

- **Commissioning/contract** queries from provider services should continue to be directed to the NHSE regional team as they are now.

- **Queries around interpretation of screening guidance**, should be directed to the relevant local NHS Screening Quality Assurance Service (SQAS).
- **Incident reporting** should continue to be in line with existing local reporting arrangements including reporting screening incidents to the local commissioner and SQAS teams.
- **Public queries:** While the NHS Screening Helpdesk is a system facing service rather than a public facing service, any public queries should be dealt with as they are now by local services. Any public queries for NHS England nationally should be directed to the NHS England Customer Contact Centre: [NHS England » Contact NHS England](#)
- **MP queries:** Any queries from MPs should be directed to mpinbox@nhs.net. The Parliamentary Team will direct to the national programme or NHSE regional teams, as appropriate.

A reminder that the process for **NHS complaints** is set out here: [NHS England » Feedback and complaints about NHS services](#)

National NHS Screening Guidance and system facing information, including public facing leaflets for healthcare professionals continues to be available on the screening section of www.gov.uk: [Population screening programmes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Public requests for screening information in accessible formats not available on gov.uk, should be directed to the NHS England Customer Contact Centre.

The NHS website also includes key information on NHS Screening at: [NHS screening - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

VACCINATIONS:

School Aged Immunisations Pathways

Please find attached the pathway documents outlining eligibility and where children of school age should receive their vaccinations.

Please be reminded that GP's can and should administer flu vaccinations for children classed as 'at-risk' if this is requested. This programme runs until the end of March 2024.

The school based flu programme is now finished, however school immunisation providers can still provide flu vaccines for those children who are eligible for vaccination through the school programme and have not received it this flu season. If this is requested by parents, please direct them to the SAI team who will be able to book them in to a suitable clinic slot.

From January 2024, school immunisation providers will be running the adolescent immunisation programmes.

Pertussis Update

UKSHA SW have informed us of an increase in diagnosis of cases of pertussis in the SW over the past few weeks, and may expect for this trend to continue moving into winter.

Vaccinating pregnant women against whooping cough is highly effective in protecting young babies until they can have their first vaccination when they are 8 weeks old. Please take the opportunity to encourage uptake of this vaccine among pregnant women.

Please notify the UKHSA SW Health Protection Team (HPT) on 0300 303 8162 if you diagnose pertussis in any of your patients. This can be based on a clinical or a lab diagnosis.

A leaflet for pregnant women and people is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/resources-to-support-whooping-cough-vaccination> and further patient information available here <https://vaccineknowledge.ox.ac.uk/pertussis-vaccine-in-pregnancy>

A short information video for healthcare professionals about the pertussis vaccine is available on our Futures site (registration is required but free) <https://future.nhs.uk/SWVaccinationsScreening/view?objectID=181598437>

Influenza Update

The CMO has declared that flu is now circulating in England and that flu antivirals can be prescribed on an FP10 in the community [CEM_CMO_2023-003.pdf](#).

UKHSA SW is now seeing an increasing number of flu outbreaks in care homes. Please consider flu when you are asked to assess acute respiratory illness in adult social care settings and report any suspected or confirmed outbreaks to the UKHSA SW Health Protection Team (HPT) Tel: 0300 303 8162.

ICBs have commissioned certain primary care providers to assess and prescribe for these outbreaks, in collaboration with the Health Protection Teams. Please be aware that the commissioned service should prescribe both treatment (for symptomatic residents) and prophylaxis (for residents at risk). The commissioned provider should inform the registered GP of any care given to their patient/s.

Eligible patients presenting late should continue to be offered vaccination. This is particularly important for patients newly at-risk and pregnant women who may not have been pregnant at the beginning of the vaccination period. Late vaccines can also provide some protection into the following season.

Protecting Yourself This Winter: Flu and COVID-19 Vaccinations for Frontline NHS Colleagues

On behalf of Katie Porter-Smith, Partnerships Manager:

Dame Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England, has written a [blog](#) reminding frontline NHS colleagues of the benefits of getting their flu and COVID-19 vaccinations this winter.

Eligible frontline professionals include those who have direct contact with patients even if they are not directly involved in patient care. If this includes you, please speak to your employer for more information on how to access both vaccines.

Help keep yourself and the people you care for safe this winter by getting your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.

ICARS Service Scope

We would like to take the opportunity to remind immunisation staff that we offer an Immunisation Clinical Advice and Response Service (ICARS). If you have any section 7a or COVID-19 vaccination queries or incidents, please e-mail us using the following e-mail address: england.swicars@nhs.net.

We provide a service from Monday – Friday between the hours of 09:00 – 17:00 (excluding bank holidays). Please note that over Christmas, the ICARS service will run as follows:

Friday 22nd December – open
 Monday 25th December – closed
 Tuesday 26th December – closed
 Wednesday 27th December – open
 Thursday 28th December – open
 Friday 29th December – open

Monday 1st January – closed
 Tuesday 2nd January - open

Below is a table outlining the types of immunisation queries/incidents we are able to assist with, and those that we not able to advise upon:

In Scope	Out of Scope
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine eligibility queries for Section 7A / COVID vaccines • Scheduling (When is this patient eligible for a vaccine and which vaccines can they receive?) • Safety (e.g. presence of underlying health conditions or medications) • Vaccine contraindication queries • Receiving a duplicate vaccine (double dosing) • Receiving a vaccine early or late • Expired vaccine administered • Incomplete dose of vaccine given • Incorrect vaccine administered • Incorrect/missing recording of a vaccination event • Vaccine given to the wrong patient • Incorrect vaccine reconstitution • Cold chain queries and incidents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccinations outside Section 7a (e.g. travel vaccines, tetanus following injury or animal bite) • Vaccine ordering on behalf of settings • Other logistical queries (e.g. provision of PPE) • Staffing queries or staffing shortages • Infection control advice • Clinical waste issues • Call and recall issues • Data reporting issues • Needlestick injuries that affect staff (refer to occupational health – provider may wish to contact UKHSA health protection) • Reported side effects / adverse events (refer to vaccine SPC data and report as a yellow card incident to MHRA) • Translation of immunisation histories

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vaccine delivery or supply issues impacting section 7a vaccination programmes.• Signposting of where to order S7A vaccines.• Needlestick injuries that affect patients (as well as ensuring it is reported to the health protection team at UKHSA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of individuals immunisation histories (refer to CHIS to obtain if the patient is under 19 years old)• Vaccine administration (IoS) payment issues (e-mail england.swcqrs@nhs.net) |
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UKHSA Vaccine Update

The latest edition of the Vaccine Update is available (please see link below). This issue has a special focus on pregnancy.

[Vaccine update: issue 344, November 2023, pregnancy special - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccine-update-issue-344-november-2023-pregnancy-special)

COVID-19:

No Items

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please contact the SW Vaccination and Screening Team at england.swvast@nhs.net. 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 Bulletin will not be circulated.**