

Immunisation Service
Children and Families Clinic
Dyke Building
Brighton General Hospital
Elm Grove
Brighton
BN2 3EW

www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/imms

Dear Parent or Guardian

Beating Cervical Cancer
HPV School Based Vaccination Programme 2018/2019

The HPV vaccine is offered routinely to all girls from year 8 onwards as part of the national programme for vaccination of children and young people.

In the UK this consists of two doses of the vaccine for girls who start the course before their 15th birthday. All girls will be offered dose 1 in year 8 and a second dose a minimum of 24 weeks later; this may not be in the same academic year. Girls who have not had their first dose by the time they are 15 years old will be offered the three dose schedule.

Please take this opportunity to check that all their routine vaccinations are up to date. You can check with your GP Practice or on www.nhs.uk for the vaccination schedule.

By having this vaccination girls are protected against the commonest cause of cervical cancer for many years to come. On the back of this letter, there is useful information about the virus and the vaccination. For information on some of the positive benefits of having the HPV vaccination visit: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/nov/10/hpv-jab-slashes-number-of-smear-tests-needed-over-study-cervical-screenings>

More information is available on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk (search for HPV), as well as links to other useful websites. If you have any questions you can also contact the Immunisation Service or your School Nurse.

Please complete and submit the consent form for the HPV vaccinations by visiting this link:

www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/es-hpv-consent.htm

*If you require a paper version of the consent form to complete, please contact us on:
01273 696011 ext. 8101*

Should you change your mind after you have submitted the consent form, please put this in writing stating student's name, date of birth, school name and the change you wish to make. Give this to the school reception marked 'Urgent for the attention of the Immunisation Service'.

Dates of Immunisation sessions in schools will be available on the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust website. If the vaccinations are not given on the day, a letter detailing the catch up clinics the Immunisation Service run will be sent home via the school. Catch up dates can also be found on the trust website.

We hope that the information provided helps you to make a positive decision about the vaccination and the protection it offers.

Yours sincerely

Rosanna Raven
Immunisation Clinical Service Manager – Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust



Excellent care at the heart of the community

Information for parents and young people

What is cervical cancer?

Cervical cancer affects the cervix (the entrance to the womb). It is caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV), which is spread from one person to another during sexual activity. There are over 100 types of HPV but only thirteen of these cause cervical cancer and just two – types 16 and 18 – cause over 70% of the cases.

What is the HPV vaccine?

The HPV vaccine stops the human papilloma virus from developing in the body and so prevents cervical cancer (in 70% of the cases). It will also protect you against most cases of genital warts. The vaccine does not protect against all of the other cancer-causing types of HPV, so it's vital that women still go for routine cervical screening tests when they are older.

For more information visit <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033>

Why is the vaccine given at 12 or 13 years of age?

The virus that causes cervical cancer is spread by someone having sex or being sexually intimate with another who has the virus. Whilst most girls don't start having sex until they are 16 or over, it has been shown the vaccine provides the best protection if it is given at 12 – 13 years of age as the immune response is better. It is still important to have the vaccine even if a girl is sexually active as it can provide protection against any of the HPV types in the vaccine they have not been exposed to.

Why two doses not three?

Recent research shows the antibody response to two doses is as good as with three doses in girls under the age of 15.

Can older girls be vaccinated too?

Girls under the age of 16, who would now like to have the vaccine, can contact the Immunisation team - contact details for each area are overleaf. If they are over 15 years of age, they will have to have the three dose schedule. If they are aged 16-18 years please contact your GP.

How will I know when the vaccination is being given in school?

The date for the 1st dose has been arranged with the school and they will inform girls nearer the time of the session or publish the date on their website. The 2nd dose of the vaccine will be given after a minimum of 24 weeks and possibly in the next academic year. This date will be arranged with the school in due course. Should they miss a vaccination due to absence there will be the opportunity to attend a catch up session either at school or in a community clinic. Information about these clinics will be given to you via the school, advertised on the school websites and on our website.

On the day of vaccination

Wear uniform that would allow the nurses to access the top of the arm, such as a short sleeved shirt. They should have breakfast as usual in the morning and ensure that they have plenty to drink throughout the day.

What if she wants the vaccination but, as her parent / guardian, we'd rather she didn't have it?

The decision is legally hers as long as she understands the issues in giving consent, but the nurse would much rather have your permission as well. It is important for you to understand that having the vaccination now will protect her from the most common causes of cervical cancer for many years to come. If you would like to discuss this with the Immunisation Service, call us on one of the numbers overleaf.