



**Sussex Community**  
**NHS Foundation Trust**

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**From September 2019 the HPV vaccination  
will also be offered to boys in year 8.**

Dear Parent or Guardian

The HPV vaccine will now be offered routinely to both boys and girls in year 8 as part of the national programme for vaccination of children and young people. These vaccinations will be offered in your child's school setting, by Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust Immunisation Service.

All students will be offered a first dose in year 8 and a second dose a minimum of 24 weeks later; this may not be in the same academic year.

By having this vaccination students are protected against the Human Papilloma Virus that causes some types of cancer and genital warts. The extension of the HPV vaccination programme will help prevent more cases of HPV related cancers in boys and girls such as cervical, head, neck, anal and genital cancers. For information on some of the positive benefits of having the HPV vaccination visit: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-47803975>

On the back of this letter there is useful information about the virus and the vaccination. Further information is available on the NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) (search for HPV), as well as links to other useful websites. Please take this opportunity to check that all their routine vaccinations are up to date. You can check with your GP Practice or look on the above website for the vaccination schedule.

Consent packs and vaccination dates will be **available from your child's school from September 2019**. Dates of Immunisation sessions in schools will be published on the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust website [www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/imms](http://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/imms) from the new school year. 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

**Darrell Gale**  
Director of Public Health  
East Sussex County Council



*Excellent care at the heart of the community*

## Information for parents and young people

### ***What vaccines are being offered and why?***

The Gardasil vaccine is currently used in the HPV routine vaccination programme. The vaccine protects against 4 types of the Human Papilloma Virus which can cause most cervical cancers (more than 70% in the UK), some anal and genital cancers, and some cancers of the head and neck. The vaccine also protects against 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.

The HPV vaccine stops the human papilloma virus from developing in the body which can prevent some types of cancers and genital warts.

For the Patient Information Leaflet and further information visit

<https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/19033>

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

The Human Papilloma Virus is spread by someone having sex or being sexually intimate with another who has the virus. Whilst most young people 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 young person is sexually active as it can provide protection against any of the HPV types in the vaccine they have not been exposed to.

### ***Can older girls be vaccinated too?***

Yes. They can contact the Immunisation Service; contact details for each area are overleaf; if they wish to start or complete the course. If they are 15 years of age or over, they will need to have the three dose schedule. Girls must have already started the course of HPV immunisation before their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday in order to be eligible to be vaccinated by our service. If they are aged 18 years or over please contact your GP.

### ***Can older boys be vaccinated too?***

Public Health England have commissioned HPV vaccination for boys aged 12-13 years old in year 8 only. Evidence suggests boys are already benefiting from the protection that has built up from 10 year of the girls HPV vaccination programme. However, men who have sex with men (MSM) will benefit less from this protection. The HPV vaccine is available through GUM & HIV clinics to MSM who are up to and including 45 years of age.

If a catch up made is available at a later date we will inform parents via their child's school.

### ***What if they want the vaccination but, as a parent / guardian, we'd rather they didn't have it?***

The decision is legally theirs as long as they understand 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 them from a virus that can cause some cancers and genital warts. If you would like to discuss this with the Immunisation Service, call us on one of the numbers overleaf.

### ***Safety***

The vaccine has undergone rigorous safety testing before being licensed for use in the UK. It is a well-established vaccine with a known safety profile, and like all other vaccines unwanted reactions are constantly monitored.