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Dear Colleague,

**Re: Opportunistic offer of HPV catch-up vaccinations in specialist Sexual Health Services**

The HPV vaccination programme in England has been shown to have dramatically lowered rates of harmful infections and cervical cancer in vaccinated women, with the strongest effects seen in those vaccinated at younger ages. Data also show dramatic reductions in incidence of genital warts.

Uptake for the routine adolescent HPV programme in England had been consistently high since its introduction in 2008. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic HPV vaccine uptake fell and is not yet back to pre-pandemic levels. There has been a significant amount of catch-up activity delivered by NHS-commissioned School Aged Immunisation Service (SAIS) providers targeting these cohorts. Eligible individuals who missed out on the routine offer of HPV vaccines through the school programme can catch up through their GP practice until their 25th birthday.

UKHSA notes that some of the highest risk, eligible individuals may be more likely to attend specialist sexual health services (SHS) rather than their GP practice. We understand there is appetite among some clinicians to offer HPV vaccination opportunistically to eligible individuals in these settings given the established public health benefits of the vaccine.

**Therefore, eligible, unvaccinated individuals can be offered the HPV vaccine opportunistically when they attend specialist SHS services. This is in addition to existing routes through which the HPV vaccine is offered and can help mitigate inequalities in vaccine uptake and cervical screening. Nationally procured vaccine stock is available for use in this way and can be ordered via ImmForm.**

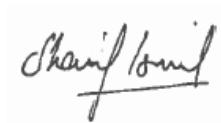
As there is already a national catch-up service commissioned for people up to the age of 25 years through General Practice, no additional payment will be made to specialist SHS who opt to provide the vaccine to eligible individuals at this time. There may be some exceptions to this in regions where local arrangements are in place, hence providers are advised to speak to their NHSE Public Health Commissioner to confirm.

Where clinical judgement is used to vaccinate this cohort opportunistically in specialist SHS outside of a commissioned service, providers must ensure that they use an appropriate legal mechanism for the administration of the vaccine, noting that the nationally developed HPV vaccine for GBMSM Patient Group Direction (PGD) template does not currently include this cohort. Providers are advised to use Patient Specific Directions (PSD) to support delivery to eligible individuals in the first instance.

A single dose of HPV vaccination is now recommended for all eligible young people. In view of constraints regarding data sharing between specialist SHS and primary care, assessment of vaccination status should be based on patient recall. [HPV vaccination record cards](#) can be provided to patients to give a personal record of dose administration and are available for services to order, free of charge, through the [Health Publications website](#). Where patients give consent for information on HPV vaccine administration in specialist SHS to be shared with their GPs, services are encouraged to communicate this information to their registered primary care providers so that HPV vaccination status can be recorded on their clinical records (to inform both vaccination and screening activity in primary care).

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sharif Ismail', written in a cursive style.

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