



Public Health
England

NHS
England

14th September 2017

NHS England/Public Health England
2nd Floor, Regatta Place
Brunswick Business Park
Summers Road
Liverpool
L3 4BL

To: Head Teachers
School Nursing Services
Local Authority Directors of Public Health
0-19 Local Authority commissioning leads

Dear Colleagues,

RE: HPV immunisation

The Public Health England Screening and Immunisation Team (Cheshire and Merseyside) is aware that emails, questioning the safety and effectiveness of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine have been circulated to some local authorities and secondary schools. The clear scientific and medical consensus internationally, based on extensive reviews of the evidence around HPV vaccine have concluded that the vaccine has an excellent safety record.

The HPV vaccine for girls aged 12 to 13 years helps protect against cervical cancer. Almost all UK women under 25 and millions of girls worldwide have received the vaccine. There is already evidence from Australia, Denmark, Scotland and England that the vaccine is making a difference. There has been a large drop in the rates of infection with the two main cancer-causing HPV types and the vaccine is already demonstrating longer term protection. We expect it to eventually prevent hundreds of cancer deaths every year in the UK.

Recent emails, questioning the safety and effectiveness of HPV vaccine have also raised concerns about the consent process for the immunisation. Consent is obtained from girls and their parents by providing them with the HPV vaccination leaflet, 'Your HPV vaccination guide' (linked below). This provides readable and evidence-based information on the reasons why vaccination is important and on the known side effects. It also contains links to further information including the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) and Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) provided by the manufacturer. Please contact your School Nursing Service should you have any further concerns; school immunisation teams are happy to discuss any further questions the girls or their parents have.

Further information on HPV vaccine is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628711/HPV_leaflet.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hpv-vaccination-and-cervical-cancer-addressing-the-myths>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hpv-vaccine-beating-cervical-cancer-questions-and-answers>

Yours faithfully,

Hayley Teshome Tesfaye
Screening and Immunisation Lead – Locum, Public Health England/NHS England North (Cheshire and Merseyside)