

## HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS (HPV) IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME FOR MEN THAT HAVE SEX WITH MEN (MSM) 2018/19

**03 AUGUST 2018**

The following document covers NHS England's response to the DHSC announcement on 5 February 2018, and FAQs for the HPV s7a programme. The FAQ section will be updated on a regular basis.

### **DHSC FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT:**

*“Government confirms HPV vaccination for men who have sex with men”*

The government has confirmed that it will be introducing a nationwide HPV vaccination programme for men who have sex with men aged 45 or younger attending level 3 specialist sexual health services (SSHS) / genitourinary medicine (GUM) and HIV clinics in England. NHS England and Public Health England will work together to agree a programme for implementation starting from April 2018

Since 2008 girls aged 11 to 13 have been vaccinated against the HPV virus, and this provides indirect protection to boys. HPV is a virus transmitted through sexual contact, with over 100 different types of HPV. It is most commonly associated with causing cervical cancer in women.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have recognised the increasing evidence of the association between HPV infection and non-cervical cancers, as well as the burden from genital warts on Men who have sex with Men (MSM), who do not benefit from indirect protection from the girls programme.

As a result, a vaccination pilot started in 42 specialist sexual health services clinics from June 2016, to assess the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of a national HPV vaccination programme for MSM delivered through this setting. This pilot was a success: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/hpv-vaccination-for-men-who-have-sex-with-men-year-1-pilot](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hpv-vaccination-for-men-who-have-sex-with-men-year-1-pilot)

The Government has therefore decided to proceed with a phased, nationwide rollout to protect men who have sex with men from some cancers which are caused by HPV as well as genital warts.

Given the phased approach to the rollout, patients should not contact their clinics to request the vaccine. Instead if the vaccine is available patients will be offered it as part of their routine sexual health check-up.

Dr Michael Edelstein, Consultant Epidemiologist at PHE, said:

*“Our evidence shows that men who have sex with men are welcoming a HPV vaccination programme, and it can be delivered successfully through sexual health services. MSM are a group who receive little indirect protection from the adolescent girls vaccination programme. We expect the new programme to reduce the number of cancers that are directly caused by HPV.”*

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS):**

### **For general public:**

#### **When will the HPV vaccination for men who have sex with men (HPV-MSM) vaccination service be delivered in my local clinic?**

The government has confirmed that it will be introducing a nationwide HPV vaccination programme for men who have sex with men aged 45 or younger attending Level 3 Specialist Sexual health services (SSHS)/ genitourinary medicine (GUM) and HIV clinics in England. NHS England and Public Health England will work together to agree a programme for implementation starting *from* April 2018

NHS England will continue to commission the HPV MSM immunisation service from the PHE led [42 pilot sites](#), from 1 April 2018. The service will be offered in other level 3 SSHS/ GUM and HIV clinics gradually, in a phased approach to ensure contracts are agreed with providers, and high quality safe, services can be maintained.

#### **Why is the vaccine only offered to the MSM population that attends level 3 Specialist Sexual health services/ GUM and HIV clinics?**

In all men 80-85% of anal cancers, 36% of throat cancer and 50% of penile cancers are associated with HPV infection. Men who have sex with men (MSM) are at higher risk of HPV related disease compared to heterosexual men, and MSM attend sexual health services/ GUM and HIV clinics are known to be a high-risk group within the MSM population in terms of risk behaviour and STI transmission. Since September 2008, a national HPV Immunisation Programme for girls has been delivered throughout the UK to help prevent cervical cancer. The programme offers vaccination to girls in school year 8 (age 12-13 years) with a catch-up for girls under 18 years of age. The girls' HPV vaccine programme has proved highly successful, with coverage exceeding 85% in the routine cohort. In addition to direct protection to women, the current HPV programme induces population or herd protection, which provides substantial protection to heterosexual boys and men. However, men who have sex with men will not benefit from this population or herd protection.