



Shingles vaccination programme awareness campaign

Communications plan

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Introduction

The Lancashire and South Cumbria Screening and Immunisation team have requested a communications campaign to support raising awareness of the shingles vaccination programme.

They have noted that in recent years there has been a downward trend in people receiving the vaccination. This trend is consistent across the whole of Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Table 2.0 Shingles Vaccine Cumulative Uptake by CCG 2017-18 (Ambition target 60%)

Cohort	CCG	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Trend	
70 year old cohort	BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN CCG	62.8	62.1	57.1	53.8	30.3		
	BLACKPOOL CCG	61.3	58.0	53.4	44.8	31.7		
	CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE CCG	61.1	60.2	57.6	53.9	34.3		
	EAST LANCASHIRE CCG	61.5	61.5	55.0	50.2	33.9		
	FYLDE & WYRE CCG	58.5	61.1	52.2	45.6	29.9		
	GREATER PRESTON CCG	54.7	50.8	49.7	47.4	28.3		
	MORECAMBE BAY CCG	68.6	67.1	56.8	46.2	27.9		
	WEST LANCASHIRE CCG	65.4	64.7	58.2	52.7	33.2		
78 year old cohort	BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN CCG		63.2	56.1	56.7	28.3		
	BLACKPOOL CCG		58.9	54.9	45.6	34.0		
	CHORLEY AND SOUTH RIBBLE CCG		57.2	56.6	50.8	32.4		
	EAST LANCASHIRE CCG		61.4	57.7	49.7	31.1		
	FYLDE & WYRE CCG		60.4	54.3	46.1	23.9		
	GREATER PRESTON CCG			51	52.5	47.6	28.4	
	NHS MORECAMBE BAY CCG		66.5	56.9	47.9	28.2		
	WEST LANCASHIRE CCG		64.7	55.0	56.2	29.1		

data source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#shingles-vaccine-uptake>

This regional communications plan is aligned with a national communications plan being implemented for shingles vaccine awareness.

Background

The shingles vaccination programme aims to reduce the incidence and severity of shingles disease, including complications, in older people. People between 70-79 years are eligible for the vaccination once during their life time.

A recently published study in the Lancet shows the programme to be highly effective, estimating that GP visits for shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN) reduced by 35% and 50% respectively, in those aged 70 during 2013 to 2016. An estimated 17,000 GP visits for shingles were avoided amongst the 5.5 million individuals who were given the vaccination in the first 3 years of the programme across England.

The problem

Since the start of the vaccination programme in 2013, there has been a 13% national decline in people aged 70 taking up the vaccine and an 8.4% decline in people aged 78 years vaccinated.

In Lancashire and South Cumbria current uptake figures are 49.2% for 70 year olds and 49.6% for 78 year olds. These low figures are of concern given the impact on older people's health and morbidity, including quality of life, and the subsequent avoidable pressure on primary care services.

Though figures are low in our region, they are above the England average and we acknowledge the efforts of practice teams to improve uptake amongst the eligible patient cohort. We're aware that some CCG areas are already planning supporting activities in cooperation with their local Screening and Immunisation Co-ordinators.

There is some confusion among the public and healthcare professionals around eligibility for the vaccine and the rationale for the vaccine being offered this way.

To clarify, the vaccine should be offered to:

1. patients aged **70 years, on or after their 70th birthday**
2. patients aged **78 years, on or after their 78th birthday**
3. patients who were **eligible for immunisation in the previous programme years but have not yet been vaccinated against shingles**. These are anyone in their 70s who was born on or after 02/09/1942 and 79 year olds (until their 80th birthday).

Communications objectives

To implement a comprehensive communications approach that:

- First and foremost, focuses on clarifying **patient eligibility in simple terms**. The public will be encouraged to take responsibility for checking if they are eligible **before** contacting GPs to request the vaccine. Those not currently eligible can be assured they will be eligible in the future.
- Focuses on opportunistic vaccination. Older people are likely to be in regular contact with GPs, so there will be a focus on encouraging the public to ask about vaccination at their next routine appointment. Similarly, GPs will be encouraged to vaccinate opportunistically. This should assist in managing demand to GP practices.
- Aims to tackle confusion around eligibility for shingles vaccination, both among the public and healthcare professionals. We will do this by using the simple wording on page 1 of this plan, using new resources made available nationally for this purpose and directing to the [NHS shingles vaccination online eligibility checker](#) for anyone who remains unsure. In addition, explaining the rationale behind the eligible cohorts.
- Asks GP practices to use available resources to:
 1. *Raise awareness of all practice staff to be alert and check for prompts for eligible patients;*

2. *Opportunistically offer shingles vaccination to eligible unvaccinated patients that present to their surgery;*
 3. *Print and display the posters and leaflets below in their surgery to promote the vaccination;*
 4. *Follow [@PHE NorthWest](#) on Twitter and retweet shingles advice to followers during the campaign*
- Ensures GP surgeries and other community contact points (pharmacies, leisure centres and libraries, for e.g) have appropriate materials to implement the campaign at local level, in partnership with Screening and Immunisation Teams (SITs).
 - Promotes first evidence from the evaluation of the shingles immunisation programme, which demonstrates a marked impact on GP consultations for shingles and post herpetic neuralgia (PHN) in those individuals eligible for vaccination, and therefore emphasises the importance of the programme – both for those eligible and GP practice workloads.
 - Targets other demographics to encourage sons, daughters and grandchildren of eligible groups to encourage parents and grandparents to check their eligibility, with family support.
 - Secure positive digital coverage for the vaccination programme, and demonstrates our reach to the various target audiences through digital channels and relevant stakeholders. Support digital communications by securing broadcast and print media wherever possible.
 - Ensure our messages about the benefits of the programme are reflected and more prominent than any criticisms which could surface around eligibility.
 - Encourages other professional stakeholders, such as LAs, to support the campaign and reinforce messages about the importance of the shingles vaccination programme.
 - Promotes new public information materials made available by PHE (see [here](#) for Vaccine Update shingles special edition), supported by additional materials made available by vaccine manufacturers.

Key stakeholders

Campaign partners:

- Public Health England (PHE) North West
- NHS England
- Local CCGs
- Local Authorities
- LMCs in Lancashire and South Cumbria
- NHS professionals with a close interest (PHE screening and immunisation teams, immunisation co-ordinators, PHE health protection teams, GPs and practice nurses etc)

Additional stakeholders:

- Directors of Public Health
- Pharmacies
- Charities such as Age Concern
- MPs/Peers
- NHS Choices

Key target groups

The national communications campaign will target the following groups:

- Eligible people and their family members
- GPs and other healthcare professionals including pharmacists
- Professional stakeholders including NHS staff

Key messages (based on national campaign messaging):

Public messages

- Are you, or your parents or grandparents, entitled to a free shingles vaccination?
- Anyone who has their 70th birthday this year is eligible. There is a catch up programme for people who turn 78. If anyone has been offered the vaccine but missed out they can get it up until their 80th birthday - *this is anyone in their 70s who was born on or after 2/9/1942, and 79 year olds (until their 80th birthday).*
- Check the [NHS shingles vaccination online eligibility checker](#) to see if anyone in your family needs the vaccine from their GP.
- If you're eligible, you can have the vaccine all year round and any time you go to your GP – when you're in the doctors, ask about it or phone up to book an appointment.
- Getting the vaccine when you're eligible is the best way to protect against shingles.
- Shingles is really serious and can be very painful and sometime lead to complications- nearly everyone has the potential to get it.
- Everyone is at risk of shingles as nearly every person will have had chicken pox at some point in their lives. People who think they've not had chicken pox are more likely to have had a weak version of it and would not have known.
- Since the start of the vaccination programme in 2013, there has been a 13% national decline in people aged 70 taking up the vaccine and an 8.4% decline in people aged 78 years vaccinated.
- In Lancashire and South Cumbria, current uptake figures are 49.2% for 70 year olds and 49.6% for 78 year olds. These low figures are of concern given the impact on older people's health and morbidity, including quality of life, and the subsequent avoidable pressure on primary care services.

Primary care messages (in addition to above)

- Shingles vaccine should be offered all year round to eligible patients at every opportunity
- Over 50,000 cases of shingles occur in people aged 70 years and over each year in England and Wales with approximately 50 cases resulting in death. 14,000 go on to develop PHN and over 1400 are admitted to hospital because of it.
- About one in five people who have had chickenpox go on to develop shingles.
- You can get recurrent episodes of shingles – if you've had it once it doesn't mean you're immune

Communication Channels

Organisations and groups who we can work in partnership with to reach our target audiences:

- Print, online and broadcast media (regional and local)
- Social media, eg, Twitter @NHSEnglandNorth / @PHE_NorthWest
- Communications through community outlets – GP surgeries, pharmacies, libraries etc
- Stakeholder social media platforms

Internal Communications

It is vital that screening and immunisation leads and key colleagues in the regional PHE / NHS England Centre, as well as other partners in the health system, are fully aware of our communications plans to raise awareness of the shingles vaccination programme and their role in delivering it locally. Existing bulletins and newsletters to professional groups will be utilised where possible.

Screening and Immunisation teams based locally have excellent stakeholder relationships with NHS primary care and individual GP surgeries and these can also be utilised to keep stakeholders abreast of the campaign plans and messaging.

Communications Tactics

We will promote the shingles vaccination awareness campaign by:

- **Regional and local media stories**
We will run stories featuring key messages about the risks of shingles and the importance of eligible people taking up vaccination, making use of local case studies wherever possible.
- **Partnerships**
Partnerships with influential stakeholders and their leaders will be crucial for raising awareness among eligible cohorts. We will provide them with the information they need to encourage uptake of the vaccination in the relevant target group.

- **Publications such as leaflets and infographics**

We will work with national colleagues to make use of newly published information materials to promote the shingles vaccination programme. Wherever possible, these will be produced in electronic format and printed locally.

- **Digital communications**

NHS Choices is recognised as the site where the public go to find information about immunisations, particular conditions or NHS services. PHE colleagues nationally are working alongside NHS Choices to make shingles vaccination advice more prominent during the campaign. We will direct to NHS Choices in all digital communications.

- **Social media**

We will use social media channels such as @NHSEnglandNorth and @PHE_NorthWest and stakeholder platforms to reach a wide and varied audience and actively encourage partners. We know that sons, daughters and grandchildren of eligible people are avid users of social media and we will be using Twitter to engage these audiences specifically.

For maximum reach, for the regional campaign we will use the same hashtags as the national @PHE_uk campaign and encourage partners to do the same.

- **Internal communications from our partners in the health system**

We will work closely with partners to ensure that colleagues within the health system are fully aware of our plans and their role in delivering them locally.

The Screening and Immunisation team will issue a letter to GP surgeries to request their support to the campaign as outlined on page 3 of this plan (*communications objectives*).

Existing bulletins and newsletters to professional groups will also be utilised where possible.

Evaluation

Media monitoring will measure media coverage progress and web analytics social media. Evaluation will be ongoing throughout the campaign and in line with the Government Communications Service (GCS) Evaluation Framework.

Annexes: Annex 1 - Communications activity timeline

Activity	Deadline	Lead
Phase 1: Internal and stakeholder engagement		
Consultation with LMCs	Complete	Diana Cooper
Development of GP letter	Complete	Diana Cooper
Mention of campaign in SCRIMMS bulletin		Diana Cooper
Distribution of letter to GP surgeries	Complete	Diana Cooper / CCG Comms
Distribution of letter to pharmacies	Complete	Diana Cooper
Newsletter copy provided to NHS CCG communications leads for inclusion in staff bulletins	w/c 8 October	NHSE Comms
Letters to DsPH and LA comms teams to request support to the campaign (linking to available resources, posters leaflets etc).	w/c 8 October	NHSE Comms
Phase 2: Media launch and public engagement		
Liaise with key partners such as NHS and LA to seek their support to campaign	w/c 8 October	Diana Cooper / Philippa Rowley
Discussions with online older people's platforms to seek support – e.g. Age Concern / Age UK	TBC	Philippa Rowley / Stacy Gibbs
Development of media release	TBC	Philippa Rowley / Stacy Gibbs
Development of regional info graphics for use on social media (to include current regional uptake data)	Complete	Philippa Rowley / Stacy Gibbs
Communications to healthcare professionals through existing NHSE and LA bulletins	w/c 8 October	Philippa Rowley / Stacy Gibbs
Launch of campaign - Launch social media, blogs and infographics	w/c 8 October	Philippa Rowley / Stacy Gibbs Karen Kinder / Sean Fell

2. Final letter to GPs

**To General Practices in
Lancashire and South Cumbria**

Public Health Commissioning Team
NHS England North (Lancashire and South Cumbria)
Preston Business Centre
Watling Street Road
Preston
PR2 8DY

england.lancshiresit@nhs.net

Dear Colleague,

Shingles vaccination campaign

As part of supporting the prevention of shingles in Lancashire and South Cumbria, the local NHS England Public Health Commissioning Team are running a campaign for patients unimmunised against shingles. This is in line with national patient eligibility guidance and is aimed at addressing poor uptake in shingles vaccination rates across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Recent data shows that in the first 3 years of the shingles vaccination programme, GP consultations were significantly reduced for both shingles and post herpetic neuralgia. Local data indicates a decline in uptake of the shingles vaccine that is mirrored nationally. Increasing shingles vaccine uptake is a priority area for the NHS England Lancashire and South Cumbria Public Health Commissioning Team in 2018/2019.

This letter comes with a resource support pack. In the folder you will find a shingles programme checklist, 2 eligibility posters, examples of a patient leaflet and a postcard which can be ordered free of charge at www.orderline.dh.gov.uk. Completion of the checklist will help you to identify areas for improvement in your practice.

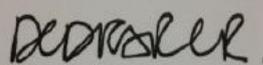
Also contained in the pack is recently published guidance including the Vaccine Update: shingles special edition, and Shingles vaccination: guidance for healthcare professionals. In addition, we are planning to enhance this campaign by sending the shingles postcard to eligible patients across Lancashire and South Cumbria and we will update you further as this project progresses.

We thank you for your continued support in protecting our local population and if you have any further questions please contact england.lancshiresit@nhs.net.

Yours sincerely,



Tricia Spedding
Head of Public Health



Dianne Draper
Screening and Immunisation Lead

3. Final letter to Pharmacies

**To Pharmacies in
Lancashire and South Cumbria**

Public Health Commissioning Team
NHS England North (Lancashire and South Cumbria)
Preston Business Centre
Watling Street Road
Preston
PR2 8DY

england.lancashiresit@nhs.net

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Shingles vaccination campaign

As part of supporting the prevention of shingles in Lancashire and South Cumbria, the local NHS England Public Health Commissioning Team are running a campaign for patients unimmunised against shingles. This is in line with national patient eligibility guidance and is aimed at addressing poor uptake of the shingles vaccination across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Recent data shows that in the first 3 years of the shingles vaccination programme, GP consultations were significantly reduced for both shingles and post herpetic neuralgia. Local data indicates a decline in uptake of the shingles vaccine that is mirrored nationally. Increasing shingles vaccine uptake is a priority area for the NHS England Lancashire and South Cumbria Public Health Commissioning Team in 2018/2019.

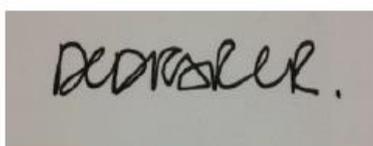
This letter comes with examples of promotional materials which can be ordered free of charge at www.orderline.dh.gov.uk. Please will you display these resources within your pharmacy and signpost eligible individuals to their GP surgery to access this vaccination.

We thank you for your support in this campaign and if you have any further questions please contact england.lancashiresit@nhs.net.

Yours sincerely,



Tricia Spedding
Head of Public Health



Dianne Draper
Screening and Immunisation Lead

3. Click below to view this edition of Vaccine Update in full.



Shingles vaccine? – all year round!

CONTENTS

- Use the shingles calculator
- Use our new checklist
- Vaccine supply
- Inadvertent vaccination of immunosuppressed individuals
- Importance of healthcare professionals
- Web links

The shingles immunisation programme: evaluation of the programme and implementation in 2018.

We have developed a new checklist and an improved portfolio of patient facing materials to help you to implement the shingles programme and administer the vaccine to your eligible patients.

The first evidence from the evaluation of the shingles immunisation programme⁽¹⁾ demonstrates a marked impact on GP consultations for shingles and post herpetic neuralgia (PHN) in those individuals eligible for vaccination, and therefore emphasises the importance of this programme.

Patients can now be offered the shingles vaccine (Zostavax®) as soon as they reach eligible age (70 or 78). Previously in 2017/18, in order to ensure sufficient vaccine supply, practices were asked to maintain the existing approach with the majority of patients being immunised in the autumn months during the flu season. However, the shingles vaccine should now be offered to patients throughout the year as they become of eligible age, preferably from April onwards to align with increased central vaccine availability.

⁽¹⁾ Amirthalingam, G., et al. Evaluation of the effect of the herpes zoster vaccination programme 3 years after its introduction in England: a population-based study. *Lancet Public Health*. 2017 Dec 21. pii: S2468-2667(17)30234-7. doi: 10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30234-7. [Epub ahead of print].



Subscribe to Vaccine Update [here](#). Order immunisation publications [here](#).
For vaccine ordering and supply enquiries, email: vaccinesupply@phe.gov.uk

4. Shingles resources and tweets



As you get older shingles can be very painful and really affect your quality of life.

Are you **70-75** or **78-79** years of age?

Then you are eligible for your **shingles vaccination**

Speak to your GP practice today about having your shingles vaccination

immunisation The safest way to protect children and adults



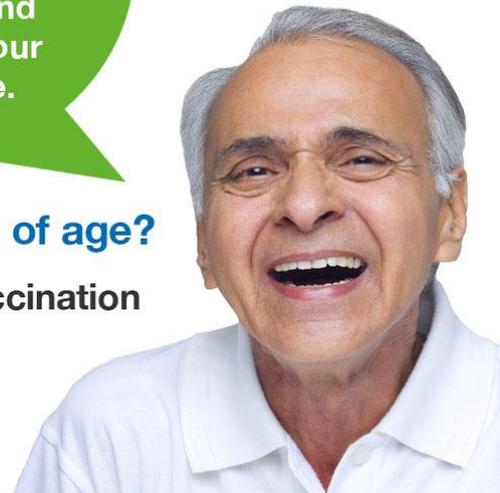
As you get older shingles can be very painful and really affect your quality of life.

Are you **70-75** or **78-79** years of age?

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Speak to your GP practice today about having your shingles vaccination

immunisation The safest way to protect children and adults



- Shingles is more likely to strike in older people. Do you know a family member or friend who is aged 70 or 78? The shingles vaccine is routinely offered on the NHS to people aged 70 and 78, and eligible people who have missed out can catch up until their 80th birthday.
- Over 50,000 cases of shingles occur in people aged 70 years and over each year in England and Wales with approx. 50 cases resulting in death. DO you know someone aged 70 or 78? Let them know they can receive a shingles vaccine on the NHS

5. Bulletin copy

In June, the NHS England Public Health Commissioning Team wrote to all General Practices and Pharmacies across Lancashire and South Cumbria to launch a campaign for patients unimmunised against shingles aimed at addressing poor uptake in shingles vaccination rates across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Can you please share details of the campaign on your practice websites, through your patient participation groups and other patient engagement channels.

6. Website copy

Shingles vaccination

A vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to people in their 70s.

The shingles vaccine is given as a single injection into the upper arm. Unlike the flu jab, you'll only need to have the vaccination once and you can have it at any time of the year.

The shingles vaccine is expected to reduce your risk of getting shingles. If you do go on to have the disease, your symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter.

[Shingles](#) can be very painful and uncomfortable. Some people are left with pain lasting for years after the initial rash has healed. Shingles is also fatal for around 1 in 1,000 over-70s who develop it.

It's fine to have the shingles vaccine if you've already had shingles. The shingles vaccine works very well in people who have had shingles before and it will boost your immunity against further shingles attacks.

Who can have the shingles vaccination?

You are eligible for the shingles vaccine if you are aged 70 or 78 years old.

In addition, anyone who was previously eligible but missed out on their shingles vaccination remains eligible until their 80th birthday.

You can have the shingles vaccination at any time of year, as soon as you turn 70 or 78.

The shingles vaccine is not available on the NHS to anyone aged 80 or over because it seems to be less effective in this age group.

If you are eligible to receive the Shingles vaccination please contact your GP practice to arrange an appointment.

Find out more about shingles [here](#).

7. Stakeholder briefing



Public Health
England



Stakeholder briefing

Campaign launched to increase uptake of shingles vaccination

October 2018

NHS England (Lancashire and South Cumbria) and Public Health England (North West) are working together with general practices and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) across Lancashire and South Cumbria to raise awareness of the importance of the shingles vaccination to those who are eligible to receive it.

The vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to people in their 70s. It is given as a single injection into the upper arm. Unlike the flu jab, you'll only need to have the vaccination once and you can have it at any time of the year.

The shingles vaccine is expected to reduce the risk of getting shingles, but if you do go on to have the disease, your symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter.

You are eligible for the shingles vaccine if you are aged 70 or 78 years old. In addition, anyone who was previously eligible but missed out on their shingles vaccination remains eligible until their 80th birthday.

You can have the shingles vaccination at any time of year, as soon as you turn 70 or 78.

The shingles vaccine is not available on the NHS to anyone aged 80 or over because it seems to be less effective in this age group.

Those who are eligible to receive the shingles vaccination are being encouraged to contact their GP practice to arrange an appointment.

Find out more about shingles [here](#).