



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, HSE SOUTH
(CORK & KERRY)

IMMUNISATION FOCUS

MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION: FIGURES DOWN

2011 has again seen a decrease in cases of meningococcal disease in Cork and Kerry, with 11 cases compared to 15 in 2010. This is the lowest number of cases in the last 20 years. The peak (95 cases) was recorded in 1995.

Of the 11 cases in 2011, 10 were confirmed – 9 Group B and 1 Group C. The Group C case occurred in an unvaccinated adult. There were no deaths.

The production of a broad-coverage vaccine against Group B meningococcal diseases has proved technically difficult and no such vaccine is currently available. Clinical studies are underway on a Multicomponent Meningococcal Serogroup B Vaccine (4CMenB) and initial results are encouraging. The availability of an effective vaccine against Group B meningococcal disease would be a huge step forward in the prevention of this disease.

We still need high levels of uptake of the MenC vaccine to protect against the re-emergence of Group C disease. The continued low uptake of the final doses of MenC and Hib vaccine at 13 months is a cause of concern. For Quarter 3, 2011 the uptake of these vaccines at 24 months was only 85% compared to 97% for the 6 in 1 and 94% for MMR. We again ask all GPs, practice nurses and public health nurses to encourage parents to follow the current recommended schedule and to attend for immunisation at 12 **AND** 13 months.

THE FIRST YEAR OF HPV VACCINATION PROGRAMME HAS 82% UPTAKE

The National Immunisation Office has recently published figures from the HPV vaccination programme showing that the programme has been very well received with an uptake rate of 82% in its first year.

These are excellent figures for the first year of the programme and are equal to or greater than those achieved in the first year of programmes in other countries such as the UK and Australia and are a great credit to the staff of the vaccination teams.

In 2010/2011 the programme targeted almost 60,000 schoolgirls in first and second year of second level schools as well as those attending special schools or home schooled.

The vaccination programme involved the administration of 3 doses of HPV vaccine scheduled at 0, 2 and 6 months. The programme aimed to achieve 80% uptake for the completed course of 3 doses of vaccine and has achieved this in the first year.

From September 2011 the routine HPV vaccination programme for first year girls continues and in addition there is a catch up programme for all sixth year girls which will continue for the next 3 years.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH - NEW ADDRESS

The Department of Public Health, Sarsfield House, Wilton, **AND** the Infectious Diseases Unit, South Ring Business Park, have amalgamated and have now relocated to:

Floor 2, Block 8, St. Finbar's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork.

Telephone No. (021) 4927601 Fax. No. (021) 4923257

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UPDATED IMMUNISATION GUIDELINES

In September 2011 the National Immunisation Advisory Committee issued updates to a number of chapters of the Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland. The updated guidelines are available on line on the National Immunisation Office website (www.immunisation.ie) in the health professional section. The updates include the following:

Rotavirus Chapter: A new chapter on rotavirus has been issued. Rotavirus vaccination is not included as part of the routine childhood immunisation schedule. However, parents may choose to have their healthy children immunised.

Rotavirus vaccines are indicated for the prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis when given to infants aged between 6 and 32 weeks. This new chapter reviews the epidemiology of rotavirus disease and provides information on the rotavirus vaccines currently available.

Meningococcal Infection Chapter: A conjugate meningococcal quadrivalent (ACW_{135Y}) vaccine (Menveo) was newly licensed in Ireland in 2011. The conjugate vaccine is likely to provide longer lasting protection than the polysaccharide quadrivalent vaccine which was previously recommended for travel to high risk areas and for those at increased risk of meningococcal disease.

The updated chapter contains information and indications for use of the following meningococcal vaccines:

Men C - routinely recommended at 4, 6 and 13 months.

Conjugate meningococcal quadrivalent (ACW_{135Y}) vaccine (Menveo) - indicated for certain at risk groups and for travel. This conjugate vaccine is preferred to the polysaccharide quadrivalent (ACW_{135Y}) vaccine due to its longer lasting protection, especially in young children.

Polysaccharide meningococcal quadrivalent (ACW_{135Y}) vaccine is an alternative vaccine for travel in those aged 5 and over.

Human Papillomavirus Chapter: Advice on vaccine interchangeability has been added:

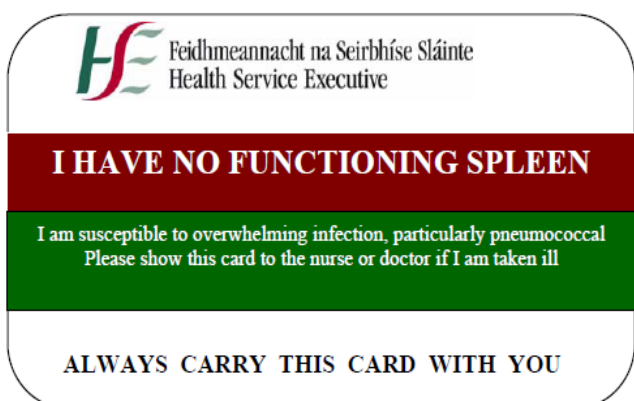
“The same HPV vaccine should be used for the 3-dose vaccination series. However, if the previously administered HPV vaccine is unknown or unavailable, either vaccine can be used to complete the series to provide protection against HPV 16 and 18. Less than 3 doses of quadrivalent vaccine might provide less protection against HPV 6 and 11 than a complete 3-dose course of quadrivalent vaccine. Due to lack of information, no recommendation regarding the administration of vaccine to a person previously fully vaccinated with bivalent vaccine can be given. The reactogenicity of more than 3 doses of HPV vaccine is unknown.”

Asplenia and Hyposplenism

Recommendations for patients with asplenia and hyposplenism have been updated. These patients are recommended to have Pneumococcal, Meningococcal, Hib and Influenza vaccines. Full information is available in the individual chapters of the Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland (2008) available for download at <http://www.immunisation.ie/en/HealthcareProfessionals/>.

We are including in the mailing a summary table of the recommendations for patients with asplenia and Hyposplenism. We hope this will help in identifying what vaccines these patients should be offered.

We have also updated a patient information leaflet and a credit card size alert/vaccine record card, which you may find useful to give to patients. If you would like copies of the leaflet or card please contact Angela Murphy at (021) 4927601.



The image shows a vaccine record card form with a white background and rounded corners. It contains several fields for patient information: 'Name', 'Address', 'GP', 'Hospital', 'Tel:', and 'Tel:'. Below these fields is a table for recording immunisations. The table has three columns: 'IMMUNISATIONS:', 'DATE FIRST DOSE', and 'SUBSEQUENT DOSE:'. The rows are for 'Pneumococcal', 'Hib', and 'Meningococcal'. Each row has two blank lines for recording the date of the first dose and subsequent doses.