

**From the Chief Medical Officer  
Professor Sir Michael McBride**



**HSS(MD)30/2025**

**FOR ACTION**

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/HSC Trusts/NIAS  
Chief Operating Officer, SPPG  
GP Medical Advisers, SPPG  
All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward  
distribution to practice staff)  
OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST**

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Our Ref: HSS(MD)30/2025

Date: 9 September 2025

Dear Colleague

**RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) VACCINATION PROGRAMME**

**ACTION REQUIRED**

**Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all staff involved in the RSV vaccination programme.**

**The Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) must ensure this information is cascaded to all General Practitioners and Practice Managers for onward distribution to all staff involved in the RSV vaccination programme.**

**The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) must ensure this information is cascaded to all Independent Sector Care Homes for onward distribution to all staff involved in the RSV vaccination programme.**

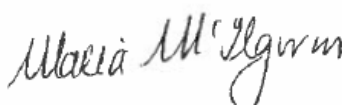
1. This letter provides information about the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccination programme. You will be aware that this programme is routinely offered to older adults turning 75 years of age, and pregnant women from 28 weeks gestation to provide infant protection.
2. When the programme for older adults was introduced in September 2024, individuals aged 76 years old to 79 years old on the 1 September 2024 were eligible as part of a one-off catch-up campaign that was due to end on 31 August 2025.
3. It has now been agreed that in terms of protecting the population, those patients whose eligibility was due to end on 31 August 2025 for the catch-up element of the RSV programme will now remain eligible.

4. There is no expectation on GP practices to once more invite individuals who were eligible as part of the catch-up programme for vaccination, if they have already been invited and had ample opportunity to attend. However, should an individual request vaccination, this should be provided.
5. Should a practitioner want to vaccinate someone in the catch-up cohort after the 31 August 2025, those aged 80 and over will no longer be covered by the PGD. Vaccination however can be provided via a Patient Specific Direction (PSD). A PSD template to assist practices with this will be circulated in due course.
6. Removing the end date for the element of the catch-up programme who would no longer be eligible after the 31 August 2025, will simplify eligibility for the public and those involved in delivery. In addition, it is hoped that uptake rates will improve, while hospitalisations and associated pressure on the HSC can be reduced.
7. Health professionals responsible for all aspects of programme delivery should continue to follow the advice detailed in [chapter 27a](#) of Immunisation Against Infectious Disease (the Green Book) for policy, programme management and clinical guidance.
8. Information on surveillance and reporting, vaccine dosage, storage and disposal and PGD's can be found at [HSS-MD-24-2024.pdf](#).
9. Providers should note that the same Abrysvo® vaccine is used for both the older adult programme and the pregnancy programme, but please be reminded these are separate items on ordering platforms for each programme.
10. The product should be managed independently where possible. GP practices ordering stock should only use the vaccine for older adults. Eligible pregnant women enquiring about how to access RSV vaccine should be directed to their local HSC Trust.
11. No decision has yet been taken in Northern Ireland on implementing the recent [JCVI recommendation to offer vaccination to those aged 80 and over](#), and all care home residents and further advice will follow in due course.
12. There is a significant burden of RSV illness in the UK population which has a considerable impact on HSC services during the winter months. We would like to acknowledge all those involved in the RSV vaccination programmes who have helped reduce RSV-related hospitalisation over the last year, and who will continue to do so.

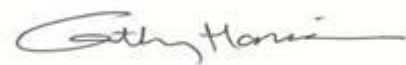
Yours sincerely



**Prof Sir Michael McBride**  
Chief Medical Officer



**Prof Maria McIlgorm**  
Chief Nursing Officer



**Prof Cathy Harrison**  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

## Circulation List

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)  
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency  
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency  
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, SPPG (*for onward distribution to SPPG Pharmacy and Medicines Management Team and community pharmacists*)  
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts  
Director of Social Care and Children, SPPG  
Family Practitioner Service Leads, SPPG (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)  
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads*)  
Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives*)  
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts  
RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)  
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust  
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust  
Professor Kenda Crozier, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB  
Andrea Shepherd, Head of School of Nursing, Ulster University  
Heather Finlay, Head of HSC Clinical Education Centre  
Maurice Devine, Open University  
Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Ulster University  
Professor Gavin Andrews, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB  
Postgraduate Pharmacy Dean, NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB  
Michael Donaldson, Head of Dental Services, SPPG (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)  
Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services, SPPG (*for distribution to Community Optometrists*)  
Trade Union Side  
Clinical Advisory Team  
Louise McMahon, Director of Integrated Care, SPPG  
Dr Camille Harron, NIMDTA  
Prof Pascal McKeown, QUB  
Prof Alan Smyth, QUB  
Prof Louise Dubras, Ulster University  
Dr Kathy Cullen, Director of the Centre for Medical Education at QUB

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>