

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – MENINGITIS VACCINATION

I write in response to your request for information in relation to Meningitis vaccination in NHS Lothian.

Question:

1. Please can you tell me what the strategy is to protect students and children in Scotland?

Answer:

There are two meningococcal vaccinations offered in Scotland. The Meningitis B vaccination programme is a routine childhood immunisation with doses for babies at 8 weeks and 12 weeks, and a booster at 12-13 months. Children who miss doses can receive it up to the age of 2 years. More information can be found on NHS Inform here: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation/meningococcal-b-menb-vaccine/>

The Meningitis A, C, W and Y vaccination is a routine immunisation offered to S3 pupils through a school based vaccination programme. There is a peak of incidence of meningococcal disease in older adolescents and young adults, and the programme aims to provide broader protection for the population. People who have missed their adolescent dose, including those who are new to the UK, remain eligible to receive it until their 25th birthday and it is recommended that they catch up on the vaccine, especially before starting university or college. More information can be found on NHS Inform here: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation/meningococcal-acwy-menacwy-vaccine/>

Question:

2. Can you tell me where my teenage children can get vaccinated?

Answer:

The MenACWY vaccination is available in every high school across NHS Lothian and is offered to S3 pupils during the second school term. Any children who have missed vaccinations can contact the Community Vaccination Team (CVT) to attend a vaccination clinic.

Contact details for CVT:

Email: [loth.cvtschools@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.cvtschools@nhs.scot) or by calling  
Telephone: 0131 446 4082.

Information on routine and missed childhood vaccinations can be found on the following link: <https://www.nhslothian.scot/vaccinations/childhood-vaccinations/#school-vaccinations-anchor>

Question:

3. People need two shots a month apart to gain full protection so is there rapid rollout planned to save lives?

Answer:

Currently, there are no plans to offer the Meningitis B vaccine routinely to anyone other than infants as part of the children's vaccination schedule. People in Scotland can be assured that there is no evidence of increased risk of Meningitis B or other meningococcal diseases at this time. If this situation changes, new national guidance and information will be provided, and NHS Lothian will respond accordingly.

Question:

4. Are there plans to ensure students can be given antibiotics quickly should the strain reach Scotland?

Answer:

The NHS has a comprehensive system in place for the prevention, prophylaxis, and treatment of meningococcal disease. East Region Health Protection Service has notification and monitoring arrangements in place which allow us to identify and respond quickly to cases and to determine when specific actions are required. In the event of an incident there are established plans in place to hold an Incident Management Team (IMT) which would decide on the public health actions required.

When IMT assessment indicates that antibiotics are the appropriate intervention at a given point this would be implemented promptly and in line with established guidance with the support of partners including universities and the NHS.

Question:

5. I need to know where students returning to University can get the vaccine.

Answer:

The Meningitis ACWY vaccination is offered to students who meet the below criteria:

- are attending further education in Scotland
- are aged up to 25 years old
- have not had the MenACWY vaccination previously

To book an appointment, contact NHS Lothian Vaccination enquiries helpline on 0300 790 6296 where students can self-refer for vaccination.

Information on all student vaccinations can be found here:  
<https://www.nhslothian.scot/vaccinations/student-vaccinations/>

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at <https://www.foi.scot/appeal>. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the reviewer at the address at the top of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhslothian.scot/FOI>

Yours sincerely

**ALISON MACDONALD**  
**Executive Director of Nursing Midwifery and AHPs**  
Cc: Chief Executive