



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQs 91754 & 91755

Rhys ab Owen MS  
Senedd Regional Member South Wales Central

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2 May 2024

Dear Rhys

Thank you for your Written Questions asking what I am doing to encourage the uptake of the HPV vaccine in young people who are able to receive it free of charge, in light of Human Papillomavirus Awareness Day that took place on 4 March and what has been the uptake of the HPV vaccine in Wales since the shift to single-dose vaccinations in September 2023.

The HPV vaccine was introduced to the vaccination schedule in 2008 for girls in school year 8. The programme was expanded in 2019 to include boys in school year 8. Since it was introduced the HPV vaccine has been proven to be highly effective in preventing a range of cancers, including cervical and head and neck cancers.

Following recommendations from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, a new one dose schedule has been introduced for the HPV vaccine from the current academic year.

As health board school nursing services are responsible for deploying the influenza vaccination programme in the autumn term, the change to the one dose schedule began at the start of the spring term (January 2024).

To support the change to the one dose schedule and to raise awareness of the importance of taking up the offer of the HPV vaccine, Public Health Wales launched a communications campaign at the start of the year, aimed at eligible young people and their parents.

Uptake rates for this programme will be reported by Public Health Wales in the summer, after this year's programme has been delivered in every health board area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol