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Shingles vaccine coverage report, England, February to May 2018

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This report presents cumulative herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine coverage data to the end of May 2018, and compares cumulative vaccine coverage estimates with the same time point in the 2016/17, 2015/16, 2014/15 and 2013/14 programmes [1].

In the fourth year of the shingles vaccination programme (1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017) shingles vaccine was routinely offered to adults aged 70 years old on 1 September 2016 (born between 2 September 1945 and 1 September 1946) and to a catch-up cohort of adults aged 78 years old on 1 September 2016 (born between 2 September 1937 and 1 September 1938). However, since April 2017, eligibility criteria were revised so that adults become eligible for the routine and catch-up programmes when they turn 70 or 78 years of age respectively, and remain eligible until their 80th birthday [2].

GPs may continue to offer immunisation to anyone who was eligible for shingles vaccine in the first three years of the programme but has not yet been vaccinated, up until their 80th birthday. This includes people aged 71, 72, 73, 74 or 78, 79 on 1 September 2017 [3,4,5,6].

PHE are continuing to monitor shingles vaccination coverage through monthly cumulative data collections via automatic upload of GP practice data. From September 2018, a new quarterly collection will evaluate coverage of adults who have become eligible under the revised criteria since April 2018.

As a live viral vaccine, the shingles vaccine is contraindicated for immunosuppressed individuals. It is essential to assess the eligibility of individuals prior to offering the shingles vaccine and ensure that those who can benefit are not excluded. Further information on shingles vaccine eligibility is available in the “Immunisation against infectious disease” book (the [Green Book](#)) [7].

Key points

- Provisional cumulative vaccine coverage estimates up to the end of May 2018 show 41.0% coverage for the 70 year old routine cohort and 42.0% coverage for the 78 year old catch-up cohort. Compared with May 2017, coverage is 5.0% lower for the routine and 4.5% lower for the catch-up cohort. This decrease can be partly explained by the change in eligibility criteria in April 2017 (see below)
- By the end of May 2018, 10.2% of those aged 69 years old on 1st September 2017 had received shingles vaccine (compared to 1.5% of 69 year olds at the end of May 2017). Most of these individuals will have received the vaccine under the revised eligibility criteria, being offered it as they reached their 70th birthday between 1st September and 31st May 2018. Similarly, by the end of May 2018, 11.4% of those aged 77 years old on 1st September 2017 had received vaccine (compared to 2.1% of 77 year olds at the end of May 2017).
- It is therefore likely that part of the decrease in coverage evaluated in May 2018 is a data artefact related to the change in eligibility criteria as a proportion of those eligible under the new criteria for routine and catch-up vaccination are in the 69 and 77 year old cohorts respectively. After taking this into account, this suggests that coverage has increased compared to that achieved at the end of May 2017, possibly reversing the downward trend seen in previous years.

Methods

GP practice-level shingles vaccine coverage data are automatically uploaded via participating GP IT suppliers to the ImmForm* website on a monthly basis. These data are then validated and analysed by PHE to check data completeness, identify and query any anomalous results and describe epidemiological trends. The automated monthly surveys measure vaccine coverage as the total number of patients aged 70 or 78 years on 1 September 2017 who have ever received the vaccination (numerator) as a proportion of the number of patients registered aged 70 or 78 years on 1 September 2017 (denominator).

*ImmForm is the system used by Public Health England to record vaccine coverage data for some immunisation programmes and to provide vaccine ordering facilities for the NHS.

This report describes vaccine coverage of each eligible cohort for England and by NHS England Local Team (LT). Vaccine coverage estimates by Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and former Area Team (AT) for trend analysis, are published [here](#).

Participation and data quality

These cumulative data are provisional and should be interpreted with caution.

All four GP IT suppliers provided data for February to May 2018. In total 6,843/7,134 (95.9%) GP practices reported shingles vaccine coverage data in May 2018. This ranged by LT from 89.2% of practices in NHS England North (Greater Manchester) to 99.0% of practices in NHS England North (Yorkshire and Humber): see table.

Results

- Overall coverage of the shingles vaccination programme was 41.0% in May 2018 for the routine 70 year old cohort and 42.0% for the 78 year old catch-up cohort. This was lower than in previous years at the same point in time for the 70 year old cohorts (46.0% in May 2017, 51.0% in May 2016, 52.8% in January 2015 and 56.5% in January 2014) and 78 year old catch-up cohorts (46.5% in May 2017, 51.1% in May 2016 and 52.5% in May 2015*) (see figures 1 and 2).
- By the end of May 2018, 10.2% of those aged 69 years old on 1 September 2017 had received shingles vaccine (compared to 1.5% of 69 year olds at the end of May 2017) (figure 1). Most of these individuals will have received the vaccine under the revised eligibility criteria, being offered it as they reached their 70th birthday between 1 September and 31 May 2018. Similarly, by the end of May 2018, 11.4% of those aged 77 years old on 1 September 2017 had received vaccine (compared to 2.1% of 77 year olds at the end of May 2017) (figure 2).
- Coverage by LT ranged from 37.5% (London and Greater Manchester) to 43.8% (Yorkshire and Humber) for the routine 70 year old cohort and from 37.8% (London) to 45.5% (Wessex) for the 78 year old catch-up cohort (table). Decreases in coverage between May 2017 and May 2018 have been observed across all LTs (ranging from 1.3% to 9.3% decrease for the routine cohort, 2.7% to 9.6% decrease for the catch-up cohort).

* No comparative data for 78 year olds in May 2014 are available as the catch-up cohort in 2013/14 was those aged 79 years on 1 September 2013

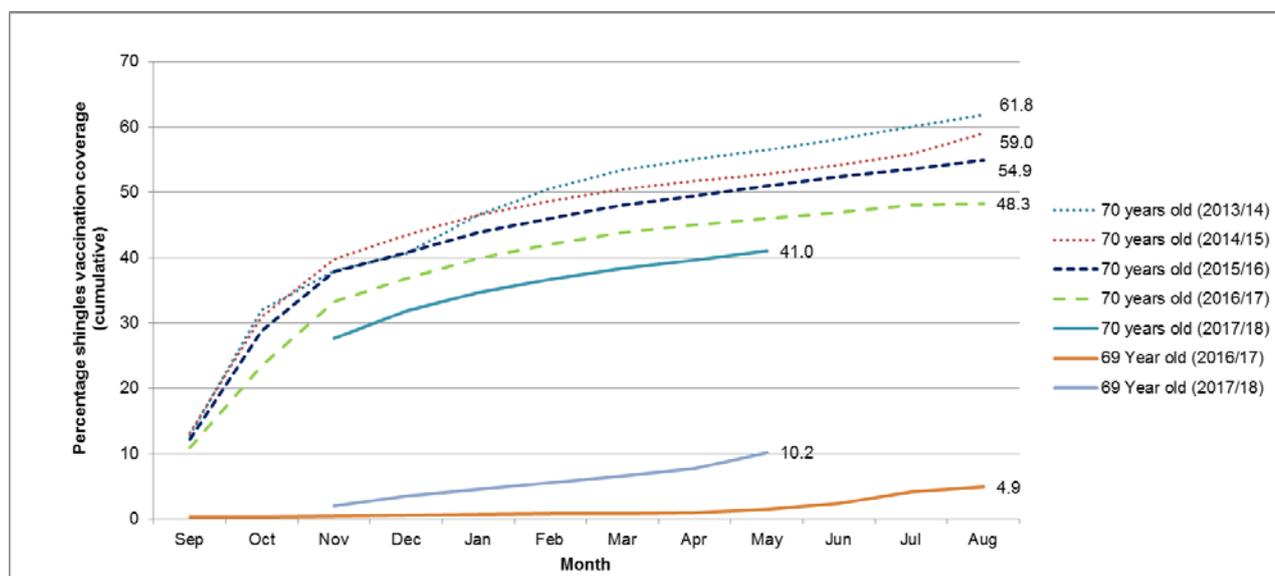
Discussion

Provisional cumulative shingles vaccine coverage estimates to the end of May 2018 show decreases of 5.0% and 4.5% for the routine and catch-up cohorts respectively compared to May 2017. However coverage among 69 and 77 year olds, which includes individuals eligible under the new eligibility criteria, has increased by 8.7% and 9.3% respectively. It is therefore likely that most of the decrease in coverage evaluated in May 2018 is a data artefact related to the change in eligibility criteria. After taking this into account, this suggests that coverage has increased compared to that achieved at the end of May 2017, possibly reversing the downward trend seen in previous years [7] (figures 1 and 2).

Previous cohorts remain eligible for vaccination, and longer term vaccine coverage data has shown increases in coverage in these cohorts in subsequent years [7]. It is important that GPs continue to offer the shingles vaccine to eligible patients from the current and previous cohorts in order to prevent the significant burden of disease associated with shingles among older adults in England.

PHE are continuing to monitor shingles vaccination coverage through monthly cumulative data collections via automatic upload of GP practice data until August 2018 using an extraction criteria based on age (70 or 78 years) on 1 September 2017. From September 2018, a new quarterly collection will evaluate coverage of adults who have become eligible under the revised criteria since April 2018.

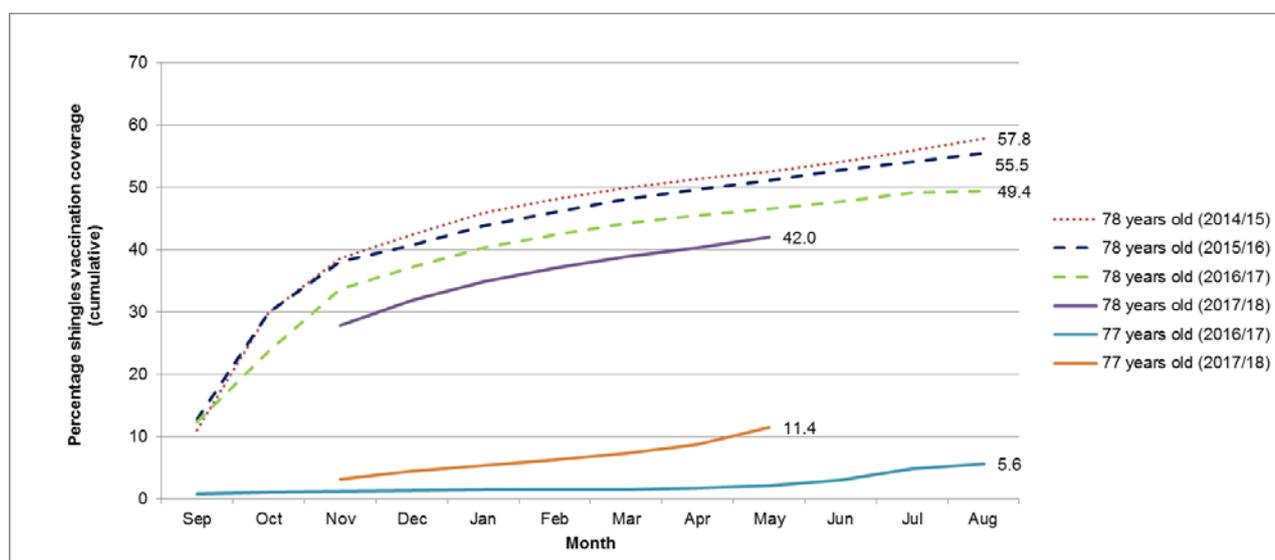
Figure 1. Monthly cumulative shingles coverage for routine cohorts* and 69 year olds, 2013-2018**



*Routine cohorts are individuals aged 70 years old on the 1st September of the year of interest (e.g. 70 years old on the 1st of September 2017 for 2017/18)

**69 years old on the 1st September of the year of interest (e.g. 69 years old on the 1st of September 2017 for 2017/18)

Figure 2. Monthly cumulative shingles coverage for catch-up cohorts* and 77 year olds, 2013-2018**



*Catch-up cohorts are individuals aged 78 years old on the 1st September of the year of interest (e.g. 78 years old on the 1st of September 2017 for 2017/18)

**77 years old on the 1st September of the year of interest (e.g. 77 years old on the 1st of September 2017 for 2017/18)

NB: Coverage for the 2013/14 catch-up cohort are not shown as they were a different age cohort (79 years of age)

Table: Cumulative shingles vaccine coverage to end May 2018 by age cohort and Local Team, England

Local Team	Percent of practices reporting data in May 2018	Percent coverage in routine cohort (70 year olds)	Percent coverage in catch-up cohort (78 year olds)
NHS England London	93.8	37.5	37.8
NHS England Midlands and East (Central Midlands)	96.8	39.1	40.3
NHS England Midlands and East (East)	97.9	39.9	41.2
NHS England Midlands and East (North Midlands)	97.2	43.3	43.7
NHS England Midlands and East (West Midlands)	96.0	40.0	41.8
NHS England North (Cheshire and Merseyside)	98.9	39.5	40.3
NHS England North (Cumbria and North East)	98.2	41.5	42.0
NHS England North (Greater Manchester)	89.2	37.5	38.2
NHS England North (Lancashire)	98.2	38.3	38.0
NHS England North (Yorkshire and Humber)	99.0	43.8	42.9
NHS England South (South Central)	94.9	43.6	44.9
NHS England South (South East)	93.2	41.7	43.7
NHS England South (South West)	97.2	42.2	45.1
NHS England South (Wessex)	98.5	43.5	45.5
ENGLAND	95.9	41.0	42.0

References

1. PHE website. Shingles vaccine uptake:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-uptake#shingles-vaccine-uptake>
2. PHE website. [Shingles vaccination leaflet](#).
3. PHE (2014). [Shingles immunisation programme letter](#).
4. NHS Choices website. [Who can have the shingles vaccine?](#)
5. PHE (2016). [Who is eligible for the 2016 to 2017 shingles vaccine?](#)
6. PHE (2016). [Shingles vaccination for adults aged 70, 78 or 79 years of age: calculator](#).
7. PHE website. *Immunisation against infectious disease* (the 'Green Book'). Chapter 28a: Shingles (herpes zoster):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shingles-herpes-zoster-the-green-book-chapter-28a>
8. PHE (2017). [Herpes zoster \(shingles\) immunisation programme report: September 2016 to August 2017](#) [report for England].

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Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health, and are a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy to advise and support government, local authorities and the NHS in a professionally independent manner.

About Health Protection Report

Health Protection Report is a national public health bulletin for England and Wales, published by Public Health England. It is PHE's principal channel for the dissemination of laboratory data relating to pathogens and infections/communicable diseases of public health significance and of reports on outbreaks, incidents and ongoing investigations.

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