



M word - Issue 14 - MMR catch up Programme update - 8 May 2013

Dear Colleague, Measles - MMR Catch up Programme UPDATE Thank you for all your questions. Here are a few more answers from our GP and practice support team along with some new information covering the following items:

1. Identifying your target cohort for the MMR catch up programme
2. Minimum requirement to claim payment – the letter
3. Model patient invitation letter

4. Important point of clarification regarding the age range of the target group
Please keep your questions and feedback coming on MMR@lmc.org.uk. With all good wishes.

Dr Michelle Drage FRCGP Chief Executive

1. Identifying your target cohort for the MMR catch up programme
Practices in the process of identifying their at risk group for MMR catch up vaccination may find the links to the following data extraction tools helpful:
a) Department of Health
b) Clinical Effectiveness Group (CEG), Barts and the London
c) Setting up data extraction queries on your clinical system to identify your target group:
CEG, based at Queen Mary University in London, are in the process of designing queries that EMIS Web and Vision practices can use to identify their at risk group and have kindly given us permission to make those available to all London practices when they are complete. CEG aim to have those queries ready for publication by the end of this week. We have also contacted TPP for an update and were informed that SystmOne provides a way for each unit to create their own local query to help practices identify their at risk patient group. If SystmOne practices need any help in setting up these queries on their clinical system, they are advised to contact their local helpdesk.

2. Minimum requirement to claim payment – the letter
There has been a lot of disquiet from practices not only in London but also nationally about the requirement in the DES specification to contact patients by letter in order to be able to claim payment under the MMR catch up programme. Practices feel this is a time consuming, resource intensive and inefficient way of contacting patients, when they could be doing this much more quickly and efficiently by telephone or text messaging. We have raised the issue of using more practical ways of contacting patients with the GPC, who have been unable to persuade NHS England that there are better ways of reaching the target population such as a new device called The Telephone, and an innovative idea currently being trialled called a Text Message. That said, NHS England has now confirmed that:
a) A letter sent via email is an acceptable alternative to a letter sent by post
b) Telephone and Text messages are not.
This means that in practical terms practices can contact their target group by telephone or text messaging, but this must be followed up by a letter sent by post or via email in order to be able to claim payment under the scheme.

3. Model patient invitation letter
A number of practices have asked us for a template letter they can use to invite their target group for vaccination. In response to this request we have drafted the letter below, which you may find helpful:

Dear Parent / Carer

Protecting your child against measles – get him/her vaccinated with MMR NOW!

According to our records this named child has not had their MMR immunisation.

We are required by the Department of Health to send out invitation letters – we apologise if you have already received a text message or phone call.

As you may be aware, there has been an increase in the number of measles cases in the UK with some serious outbreaks. This letter is to advise you how to protect your child and others.

Measles is a serious, highly contagious and sometimes dangerous disease.

MMR vaccine provides safe and effective protection against measles, mumps and rubella.

What you need to do now

Because of the high risk of further outbreaks of measles across the country, we strongly recommend that your child be vaccinated. Please contact the surgery to make a routine appointment with [the practice nurse etc] for this.

If our records are mistaken and your child has had the MMR vaccine, please contact the practice so we can correct our records.

Yours sincerely,

Practice name

4. Important point of clarification regarding the age range of the target group

The MMR catch up programme runs until 31 March 2014. NHS England have advised that the target group for the active call/recall are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated children from the age of '10 years and over until the day before their 17th birthday' ie, children who, on or before 31 March 2014, have reached their 10th birthday, but are at most one day before their 17th birthday.

The intention is to get as many unvaccinated children as possible vaccinated by September 2013, to increase herd immunity before schools resume after the summer break, but the programme does not formally end until 31 March 2014.