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Dear Colleague

## CHANGES TO THE CHILDHOOD PNEUMOCOCCAL CONJUGATE VACCINE (PCV13) SCHEDULE FROM 6 APRIL 2020

1. We are writing to provide information on the forthcoming changes to the childhood pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) programme.
2. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recommended a revised schedule for childhood PCV vaccination. Currently two priming doses are given at 8 and 16 weeks, with a booster at 12-13 months. From 6 April 2020 the childhood PCV schedule will change to a single priming dose at 12 weeks and a booster dose at 12-13 months.
3. This change has been recommended by the JCVI due to the PCV programme having been highly successful, with large and sustained decreases in PCV13 serotype disease across the population. High vaccine uptake in the UK combined with good vaccine effectiveness provided the UK with an opportunity to move to an alternative schedule.
4. The JCVI's minutes from June 2018 (pages 12-16) recommending the change to the childhood PCV programme is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation#minutes>
5. Further information for healthcare professionals about the revised PCV schedule is set out in **Annex A**. Information on communications materials and educational resources can be found in **Annex B**.
6. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all involved for their ongoing support and continued hard work to deliver vaccination programmes in Scotland which bring great benefits to the health of the whole population.

Yours sincerely,

*Catherine Calderwood*     *Fiona McQueen*     *Rose Marie Parr*

**Chief Medical Officer**

**Chief Nursing Officer**

**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**

**From the Chief Medical Officer**  
Dr Catherine Calderwood  
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### **For action:**

Practice Managers  
Practice Nurses  
General Practitioners  
Directors of Public Health, NHS Boards  
Directors of Nursing and Midwifery, NHS Boards  
Primary Care leads, NHS Boards  
Immunisation Co-ordinators  
Consultants in Public Health Medicine  
Health Visitors  
Directors of Pharmacy, NHS Boards  
Directors of Finance, NHS Boards

### **For information:**

Scottish General Practitioners Committee  
Health Protection Scotland  
NHS 24  
Infectious Disease Consultants  
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### Pharmaceutical and vaccine supply issues

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## GUIDANCE ON IMMUNISATION OF CHILDREN WITH PNEUMOCOCCAL CONJUGATE VACCINE (PCV13)

1. This guidance is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the UK's independent advisory committee of immunisation experts. Full guidance is available in the pneumococcal disease chapter (chapter 25) included in the 'Green Book' (Immunisation against infectious disease) available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pneumococcal-the-green-book-chapter-25>.

### Timing

2. The PCV13 vaccine will continue to be offered to all children.
3. Children presenting before 6 April 2020 should remain on the previous schedule of 2+1 (primary doses given at 8 and 16 weeks, and a booster dose given at 1 year old).
4. From 6 April 2020, infants presenting for their routine vaccinations will follow the new 1+1 schedule.
5. The revised routine schedule for PCV13 from 6 April 2020:

Age	Dose and Vaccine
12 weeks	One dose – PCV13 vaccine (primary)
12-13 months	One dose – PCV13 vaccine (booster)

6. As the immunogenicity of a single dose of PCV13 is lower when given at a younger age, any dose given before 12 weeks of age will not be counted and another dose should be given once the infant reaches 12 weeks of age, allowing at least 4 weeks between the two PCV13 doses.
7. The minimum time between the primary dose and the booster dose should ideally be 8 weeks. This can be reduced to a 4 week interval if the primary dose is not given until 11 months of age so that immunisations due at 1 year of age are not delayed.
8. Children who start the immunisation schedule after their first birthday should be given a single PCV13 dose.
9. All unimmunised or partially immunised children remain eligible for PCV13 up to their second birthday. Routine immunisation with PCV13 is not offered after the second birthday unless the individual is at increased risk of pneumococcal disease.
10. Children and adults in at-risk groups as outlined in table 25.2 of the pneumococcal chapter of the Green Book (chapter 25) may require additional protection against pneumococcal disease. The vaccine(s) and schedule used will depend on the age at presentation, their routine vaccination status and the nature of the underlying condition. See table 25.3 of the pneumococcal disease chapter (chapter 25) of the Green Book for details.

## Vaccine Supply

11. The same vaccine that is currently used for the infant programme (Prevenar 13®) will continue to be used.
12. Locally held stocks of PCV13 (Prevenar 13®) should be carefully reviewed before ordering more vaccine to take account of the revised schedule and to ensure vaccine is not ordered unnecessarily.

## Health Information Systems (SIRS and GPIT)

13. SIRS will be adapted to discontinue invitations for the PCV13 doses currently given at the 8 week and 16 week appointments and an invitation added for the PCV13 dose to be given at 12 weeks.
14. GPIT systems will also be adapted to accommodate the revised PCV13 vaccine schedule.

## Contractual Arrangements

15. The Directions which provide the legal framework for Directed Enhanced Services in Scotland are available at: <http://www.scot.nhs.uk/publications/>.

## Patient Group Direction (PGD)

16. An updated national specimen Patient Group Direction (PGD) for administration of Prevenar13® will be available on the Health Protection Scotland website at: <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/publications/patient-group-directions/>.

## Green Book (Immunisation against Infectious Disease)

17. The **updated chapter on pneumococcal disease** in the Green Book, **should only be used from 6 April 2020 onwards**. It is available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/857267/GB\\_Chapter\\_25\\_pneumococcal\\_January\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/857267/GB_Chapter_25_pneumococcal_January_2020.pdf).
18. Please note that in Scotland, we are using 6 April 2020 as the date of change to the new schedule, rather than date of birth. For further information, please see NHS Education for Scotland materials (See Annex B, paragraph 4).
19. Prior to 6 April 2020, the previous version of the pneumococcal disease chapter should be referred to. It is available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/674074/GB\\_Chapter\\_25\\_Pneumococcal\\_V7\\_0.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674074/GB_Chapter_25_Pneumococcal_V7_0.pdf).

## Personal Child Health Record (The Red Book)

20. Arrangements are being made for the Red Book record of childhood vaccinations to be amended to reflect the change to the childhood pneumococcal schedule. It is important that information about vaccinations that have been given are recorded in the Red Book. Further information on the details to be recorded is given in Chapter Four of the Green Book, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immunisation-procedures-the-green-book-chapter-4>.

## **Reporting and management of cases of pneumococcal disease, disease surveillance, vaccine uptake data collection**

21. Health Protection Scotland will continue to monitor the epidemiology of invasive pneumococcal disease in the same way via the Scottish Pneumococcal Invasive Disease Enhanced Reporting (SPIDER) scheme (<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/pneumococcal-disease/>).
22. Uptake rates for the PCV13 vaccine will continue to be recorded at 12 and 24 months.

## COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

### Communications materials

1. The existing core public information leaflet 'Protect your child against serious diseases' and the Routine Childhood Immunisation Schedule poster will be updated to include the revised childhood pneumococcal vaccination schedule. These will be available for ordering for local Board resource officers by 31 January 2020. Please ensure existing leaflets and posters are recycled and the updated leaflet and poster are used when the change is introduced. They will be available at:  
<http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/6016.aspx> and  
<http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/1459.aspx>.
2. The leaflet is available in a range of other languages (including Polish, Mandarin and Arabic) and alternative formats (British Sign Language, audio and easy read) at [www.nhsinform.scot/menB](http://www.nhsinform.scot/menB) (under 'Further Information'). NHS Health Scotland is happy to consider requests for other languages and formats. Please contact 0131 314 5300 or email [nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net).
3. Further information about the full range of immunisations and vaccines in Scotland is available on the public information website <https://www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation> and NHS Health Scotland's immunisation Twitter account: @NHSImmuniseScot.

### Workforce educational resources for registered healthcare professionals

4. NHS Education for Scotland in partnership with Health Protection Scotland and the Scottish Health Protection Network has developed educational resources for registered healthcare practitioners to take account of the amended PCV13 schedule. These resources (including a slide set and information sheet) will be available at:  
<https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-theme-initiative/public-health/health-protection/immunisation/pneumococcal.aspx>.