

HPV vaccine programme for gay men introduced

From 1st April, the human papillomavirus vaccine is being offered to all MSM up to 45 years of age who attend sexual health clinics.

The roll-out comes after the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which provides independent, expert advice to governments across the UK, recommended the introduction of a targeted programme of this type.

HPV infections which persist can lead to some forms of cancers or cause genital warts. The HPV vaccine is very effective in reducing these risks.

Public Health Minister, Rebecca Evans, said:

“A HPV vaccine programme for adolescent girls has been in place since 2008. Vaccinating the majority of girls in the UK, means that their future male partners get some protection too. However boys who become MSM will get far less of this protection.

“I am pleased that a new targeted HPV vaccination programme for gay men up to the age of 45 has been introduced across Wales. Gay men attending clinics for sexual health services will now be offered the vaccine.”

The vaccine is also being offered on a case-by-case basis to people who are considered to be at risk, including MSM who are over 45, transgender men and women, sex workers and HIV-positive men and women.