

UKHSA encourages all those eligible to take up HPV vaccine



The data includes HPV vaccine coverage for dose 1 in adolescent females and males in school year 8, as well as HPV vaccine coverage for dose 1 and 2 in adolescent females and males in school year 9.

Vaccine coverage for HPV dose 1 in:

- year 8 females was 76.7% and for year 8 males was 71.0% in the 2020 to 2021 academic year
- year 9 females was 81.8% – a 22.6% increase from the reported coverage of 59.2% for the same cohort when they were in year 8 in the previous academic year
- year 9 males was 77.3% – a 22.9% increase from the reported coverage of 54.4% for the same cohort when they were in year 8 in the previous academic year

Children and young people who missed out on their HPV vaccines should contact their school nurse, school immunisation team or GP surgery to arrange a catch-up – eligibility remains until their 25th birthday.

Although HPV vaccine coverage in 2020 to 2021 has improved significantly from the low levels reported for the 2019 to 2020 academic year, it is still not back up to pre-pandemic levels.

A recent study published in *The Lancet* found that cervical cancer rates were 87% lower in women who were offered the HPV vaccine, when they were aged 12 to 13 years, than in previous generations in England. This shows that the HPV vaccination programme works and will save lives. Overall, the study estimated the HPV programme has prevented about 450 cancers and 17,200 pre-cancers.

Dr Vanessa Saliba, Consultant Epidemiologist at the UK Health Security Agency, said:

The school-aged HPV immunisation programme was delivered throughout England despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many young people who missed out in the 2019 to 2020 academic year have already been caught up, but more work needs to be done to ensure all those eligible are vaccinated.

We urge everyone who is eligible to take up this potentially life-saving vaccine when offered.

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[IMF Article IV Press Conference](#) [Opening Remarks -Chancellor of the](#) [Exchequer, Rishi Sunak](#)

Good morning.

Let me start by welcoming Kristalina Georgieva, the Managing Director of the IMF, and her fantastic team.

I'm grateful for their hard work in providing independent and informed scrutiny of our economic plan and financial stability.

The IMF's report comes against the uncertain backdrop of the new Omicron variant.

The most important thing we can do to safeguard the economic recovery and protect the British people's lives and livelihoods, is for everyone to get boosted now.

Doing so will save lives and avoid more stringent restrictions later on.

Now I know this is an uncertain time for many.

That's why our £400bn Covid support package will continue to help businesses well into spring next year...

...through a set of measures the IMF has today recognised as "impressive, coordinated" and "strong".

And although the IMF have rightly pointed out that the UK does face real challenges in the months to come, they have also said that:

Our economy is “resilient”; our recovery has been “faster than expected”; and our actions throughout the crisis have “protected jobs and firms”.

New statistics published just this morning show that, compared to before the pandemic, there are now nearly half a million more people in work.

Our economic plan goes further in three crucial areas: to help working people with the cost of living; to stabilise our public finances; and to invest in our future growth.

First, I know people are worried about inflation as they see prices rising in the shops.

So to help with the cost of living, we’re increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 from April – a pay rise for 2 million people.

Freezing Fuel Duty for the twelfth year running, saving car drivers £15 every time they fill up compared to pre-2010 plans.

And giving nearly 2 million families an extra £1,000 a year through the cut to the Universal Credit taper and increased work allowances.

Second, we’re acting responsibly to put the public finances back on a sustainable path.

The IMF has strongly endorsed the new fiscal rules I set out at Budget, saying they have “anchored fiscal policy well”.

Thanks to the difficult decisions we’ve taken, our deficit is expected to stabilise and our national debt to fall.

And their comments on our fiscal policy are a crucial reminder: we must stick to the Government’s existing public spending plans.

And third, I’m pleased that the IMF has welcomed our Plan for Growth, calling it “comprehensive” and backed by “significant amounts of funding”.

We’re making this country a science superpower with a commitment to spend £20bn on R&D by 2024-25.

Investing over £130bn in economic infrastructure like roads, railways, broadband and mobile networks.

Increasing spending on skills to £3.8bn including the PM’s lifetime skills guarantee for 11m adults.

And helping hundreds of thousands of people get good, well-paid work through our Plan for Jobs.

It’s always been clear that the road to recovery from such an unprecedented economic shock was never going to be smooth.

The IMF have rightly reminded us of some of the dangers that lie ahead.

But people should be reassured that the IMF have also said we are entering this period of uncertainty with a resilient economic foundation.

And that we have the right plans in place to help families and businesses with the cost of living;

Get the public finances back on track;

And invest in the things that will grow our economy over the long term.

So thank you again to the IMF team.

Let me hand over to Kristalina, for her remarks and to take your questions.

[FCDO launches new approach to improving global health](#)

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has today (14 December) launched two papers that reaffirm the UK's commitment to improving health around the world through development, diplomacy and research.

The [Ending Preventable Deaths Approach Paper](#) sets out how the UK will work with partners to address the reality that every six seconds, a pregnant woman, newborn baby or child dies somewhere in the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this situation into sharp relief. Recent estimates suggest that there have been more than two maternal and child deaths for every official COVID-19 death in low-income countries. Most of these deaths are preventable.

The FCDO's work will be focused on tackling barriers that stand in the way of protecting the lives of mothers, babies and children – such as poor-quality health services, lack of nutrition, unsafe water and inadequate sanitation. Work will also address deeper inequalities that drive these deaths, whether through a lack of choice and access for women and girls, or through inadequate services for people who are disabled.

Strengthening health systems is at the heart of the UK's approach. When health systems are stretched, mothers are forced to give birth alone, babies do not get the essential care they need, and children miss out on life-saving immunisations. Strong health systems are the foundation for achieving better health and wellbeing for everyone, including women and girls, and for making societies more secure and prosperous.

The second strategy, the [Health Systems Strengthening Position Paper](#), sets

out how the FCDO will work with international partners to build strong, resilient and inclusive health systems able to cope with unexpected shocks such as COVID-19 and climate change, while at the same time delivering quality, inclusive, equitable and accessible health services that people need and trust.

Together, these papers set out a comprehensive approach to helping achieve the health-related Sustainable Development Goals agreed at the United Nations and the role the UK will play both as a willing partner to other countries and an actor on the global stage to leave no one's health behind.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Minister Wendy Morton said:

We are committed to working with our partners to end the preventable deaths of mothers, babies and children by 2030. With the right care, most of these tragic deaths are avoidable.

Working with countries and our partners to build a foundation of strong, resilient and inclusive health systems around the world will be at the heart of what we do. This will not only help to end preventable deaths but strengthen our health security and our resilience to climate change as we learn the lessons from COVID-19 and deliver on our COP26 commitments.

[£1.02 million research funding awarded for robotic chemist project](#)

News story

Dstl (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) is pioneering the use of autonomous mobile robotics within the scientific research laboratory.



To continue to deliver critical analytical capability for chemical,

biological and explosives analysis, Dstl is working with industrial and academic partners to develop the application of mobile robotic platforms in laboratory (lab) environments. The majority of the £1,020,000 funding for this 2 year project is provided by the Defence Innovation Unit, with support from Defence Equipment and Support, and the Department for Transport.

Robots have been used in a range of industries for a number of years and fixed systems have even found some use within lab environments.

Dstl is driving forward the application of fully mobile, autonomous systems within its highly regulated high-hazard laboratory environments. Such systems could perform routine and repetitive tasks increasing the value of its human counterparts who would be able to focus on more complex analytical activities. Furthermore, the use of a robot to collect data will have positive implications on reproducibility and repeatability for some tasks and would increase capacity during periods of high demand.

Following a competitive tendering process Dstl has let a contract with the University of Liverpool and its start-up company Gearu Robotic Research. The purpose is to identify the optimal robotic solution to conduct 2 chemical processes, one related to the analysis of environmental samples and the other to the analysis of explosives, to define a follow on contract to complete the project.

Challenges for the robot in the workflow process and in the regulatory environment have already been identified but are being overcome collaboratively. The first report on the scope of what is possible is currently being reviewed by Dstl staff and this will help shape when colleagues can expect to see the mobile robotic system working at Dstl Porton Down.

David Groves, a Fellow in the Counter Terrorism and Security Division and the instigator of the project said:

This is an exciting opportunity to be at the forefront of the application of such technology, which has the potential to significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of our chemical analysis services for the benefit of all of our Defence and Security customers.

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Record £1 billion in child support

New figures reveal:

- a record £1 billion has been collected and arranged for British children in the last year by the Child Maintenance Service
- nearly 800,000 children are now covered by a child maintenance arrangement
- record-breaking results prove strength of vital service to separated parents and children

The huge sum was collected and arranged on behalf of children of separated parents, helping single-parent households get the financial support they need.

Child maintenance and family-based payments lift around 120,000 children out of poverty each year. Over the last year, more payments than ever have been collected and arranged to ensure children living in separated families are covered by a maintenance arrangement between their parents – with nearly 800,000 children now supported by the service.

The service is a vital part of tackling poverty and helping to level up opportunity for children whose parents have separated, ensuring they get the best start in life.

DWP Lords Minister and Minister for Women Baroness Stedman-Scott said:

We are securing significant sums for children who might otherwise have gone without, in turn helping to lift 120,000 children out of poverty every year.

Whether parents use us as a go-between or as an enforcer when money isn't being handed over, this service is changing the lives of children around the country.

Tougher powers given to the service in 2019 have strengthened the consequences for parents who refuse to pay, including taking money directly from bank accounts. Ramped-up enforcement activities this year have helped restore maintenance payments to above pre-pandemic levels, with new figures today showing a 19% increase in liability orders to the court, on the last quarter.

Sanctions including warnings of prison sentences, passport confiscations and driving licence seizures, have helped the CMS recoup a total of £1.8 million

in the year up to September 2021.

In one recent case, the CMS made a sanctions application to withdraw a non-paying parent's driving licence. This court action proved to be a wake-up call for the parent, as they now make £100 weekly payments to the parent with full-time care – covering both arrears and ongoing maintenance. They also now see their child more regularly at the weekends.

The parent with full time care of the child thanked the CMS for their action, believing it encouraged the other parent to do the right thing for their child, saying:

This was all I wanted, which was worth more than the money itself.

The CMS also continues to work hard on historic cases. In a recent example a £28,000 lump sum was secured for a single parent after the sale of the non-paying parent's property, which CMS placed a charging order against.

The CMS caseworker described the moment she phoned the receiving parent to tell them the news.

The CMS caseworker said:

To phone a parent to tell them about such a life changing amount, is an amazing feeling.

I spoke to her again recently to find out how she is and she said the money has helped her immensely.

Reacting to both cases, Baroness Stedman-Scott said:

These are just two of many cases where our action has changed lives.

We know most parents want the best for their children, but there are parents out there who refuse to take responsibility. My message to them is that we will not just stand by – we will help every child we can get the best start and support in life.

Media enquiries for this press release –

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