

MENINGITIS B VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Courtyard Surgery is not legally allowed to offer the Meningitis B vaccination privately.

Any parents who are anxious to get children outside the cohort age vaccinated may be able to find a Private Clinic.

NHS England says “When our nationwide MenB vaccination programme was introduced last year, England became the first country to protect our babies from this devastating disease. All children who are now aged up to 9 months should have been offered the vaccine.

When any new immunisation programme is introduced, there has to be a cut-off date to determine eligibility. We recognise that parents of babies who narrowly fall on the wrong side of the cut-off date will naturally feel disappointed at this, but there is no other way of realistically starting new programmes.”

Background

The Department of Health is advised on immunisation matters, including the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of new vaccines by the independent expert body, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation>. The JCVI advised that the Meningococcal B vaccination programme should aim to protect infants before they reach five months of age because this is when the risk is greatest. The vaccine is first offered to children from 2 months of age.

MenB immunisation was introduced from 1 September for those babies who are due to receive their primary immunisations starting at 2 months of age on or after 1 September 2015 (i.e. those born on or after 1 July 2015), with a one-off catch-up programme for those infants born from 1 May 2015 to 30 June 2015.

There is sufficient stock of the MenB vaccine to vaccinate the infants as per the NHS Immunisation programme schedule. This cohort is the priority, to protect infants before they reach five months of age because this is when the risk is greatest. As the number of children vaccinated will continue to increase as the programme grows, by next year, one year olds and many two year olds will also be protected by the vaccine.

Vaccine production is a complex process and rightly subject to high quality control . GSK is the only manufacturer producing Bexero®- the licensed vaccine for MenB in the UK and they have noted that **they do not expect a significant new stock to be made available before the summer.**

Meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia is a serious and potentially life-threatening condition but there are a number of other strains that cause it apart from the Men B strain. We use this to increase awareness for vaccinating children and young children with the other meningitis vaccine , MenC (for babies) and MenACWY (for teenagers and adolescents).