

MMR vaccination campaign

Briefing newsletter

March 2024



The Public Health Agency (PHA) is running a campaign to promote uptake of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination for anyone aged 1 up to and including 25 years who missed out on one or both doses of the MMR vaccine. The campaign is running throughout March 2024 and will include mass media advertising, public relations and organic social media activity.

Current landscape

The uptake of MMR vaccination has seen a decline in recent years. In Northern Ireland, the uptake rate for two doses of MMR is currently sitting behind the World Health Organization recommendation that at least 95% of children should be fully vaccinated for diseases in order to prevent outbreaks. Northern Ireland has also seen its first cases of measles since 2017.

MMR vaccine catch-up arrangements

The PHA is running a mass vaccination drive with Health and Social Care Trusts and GP practices for anyone aged one to 25 years who missed getting one or both doses of their MMR vaccine. First and second doses of the MMR vaccine are being offered until 31 March 2024.

GP practices will be offering vaccination for children aged one year up to and including five

years (anyone with a date of birth between 1 April 2018 to 1 December 2022), who have not received both doses of the MMR vaccine as part of the routine schedule. Your GP practice will contact you if your child is identified as needing one or two doses of the MMR vaccine.

Health and Social Care Trusts are running an MMR vaccine catch-up campaign for those aged six up to and including 25 years of age (anyone with a date of birth between 31 March 2018 to 1 April 1998). You will receive information if you are in this age group and have not received two doses of MMR.

If you are in this age group and think you may need one or both doses of the MMR vaccine, you can get it at your local Health and Social Care Trust vaccination clinic. You can make an appointment or just turn up. You do not need to wait to receive a letter.

Those who are pregnant, or think they could be pregnant, cannot get vaccinated. They are advised to contact their GP or midwife after they have had the baby.

Target audience

The target audience is parents and guardians of children from one year and over, and young adults up to and including 25 years.

Campaign aim

To encourage uptake of the MMR vaccine for anyone aged one up to and including 25 years who has missed either one or both doses.

Key messages

- Measles cases are rising in the UK.
- Measles spreads easily and a fall in vaccination rates is leaving more people vulnerable to infection.
- Measles is more than just a rash – it can make you or your child seriously ill.
- The MMR vaccination is the safest and most effective way to protect against measles, mumps and rubella.
- You need two doses to be fully protected.
- For anyone aged one up to and including 25 years who hasn't had one or both doses, catch-up vaccination is available until 31 March.
- If your child is between one and five years old and has missed one or both doses of the vaccine, they can get it from your GP surgery. The GP surgery will send you an invitation to make a vaccination appointment. If you are unsure if your child is vaccinated, check their 'red book' or contact your health visitor or GP practice.
- Health and Social Care Trusts are offering catch-up at MMR vaccine clinics for those aged six up to and including 25 years of age. You can make an appointment or just turn up.
- To get more information on the MMR vaccine and the catch-up programme, visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/MMR

Mass media advertising

The campaign is running in March 2024 across multiple channels.

Radio: Cool FM, Downtown, Downtown Country, Greatest Hits Northern Ireland, Q Radio and U105.

Digital radio and podcasts: DAX and Instream stations.

Outdoor: malls, large format 48 sheet and Adshel Live province wide.

Digital: Google search, programmatic display, YouTube, Belfast Live advertorial and social media advertising.



Resources

Social media resources can be found at www.pha.site/MMR-resources

Publications for measles and MMR can be found at www.pha.site/MMR-publications



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