



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Acting Chief Medical Officer

**Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination –
Changes under the National Immunisation Program from February 2023**

Key points:

- From 6 February 2023, the routine two dose HPV vaccine schedule provided to young people aged 12-13 years through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) will become a single dose schedule using the same Gardasil®9 vaccine.
- The ongoing NIP funded catch-up program for young people who missed HPV vaccination has also been extended to include those up to and including 25 years of age (increased from 19 years of age).
- Young people (except those who are immunocompromised) who receive a single dose before 26 years of age are now considered fully vaccinated and will not need further doses.
- State and Territory health departments will be communicating the changes to parents of young people eligible for the HPV vaccine at school in 2023.

Dear Colleague

HPV is an important public health concern due to its causative role in many cancers, especially cervical cancer and other conditions that lead to serious health consequences in people of all genders. Vaccination is a highly effective way to protect against HPV infection.

I am writing to inform you that from 6 February 2023, there will be changes to the HPV vaccine dose schedule for young people under the NIP.

Following a positive recommendation from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) the routine HPV vaccine dose schedule provided to adolescents aged approximately 12-13 years will change from two doses to a single dose.

This means that most young people who receive a single dose before 26 years of age are considered fully vaccinated and will not need further doses. Immunocompromised people should still receive the recommended three doses of the HPV vaccine which are all funded under the NIP before 26 years of age.

The change is based on advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) who have considered the latest international scientific and

clinical evidence, which shows a single dose gives comparable protection against HPV infection in healthy young people.

While the HPV vaccine (Gardasil®9) is primarily delivered through school immunisation programs, you may see patients presenting to your clinic for primary vaccination or to receive missed vaccination, as well as parents seeking further information about HPV vaccination.

Further information

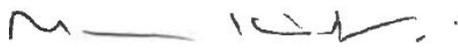
To assist you in implementing and communicating these changes, please find attached a factsheet *HPV vaccine: Changes under the National Immunisation Program in 2023*, which outlines these changes in further detail.

For the latest clinical advice and recommendations, refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook at www.immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au.

While HPV vaccination coverage of young people has improved since the introduction of the vaccine on the NIP, there is more we can do to improve coverage including in hard-to-reach population groups such as First Nations Peoples, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, and rural and remote communities. I encourage you to consider the HPV vaccination needs of your patients, particularly those who will now be funded under the NIP to catch up HPV vaccination up to and including 25 years of age.

Please share this information with others in your networks, including practices that administer or prescribe vaccines.

Yours sincerely



Professor Michael Kidd AM
Acting Chief Medical Officer

January 2023