



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

WEDNESDAY, 06 SEPTEMBER 2023

SECOND PHASE OF HPV VACCINATION UNDERWAY TO PROTECT GIRLS AGAINST CERVICAL CANCER

The Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) wishes to remind parents, caregivers and legal guardians that the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination second leg drive is currently underway in all public primary schools and Special Schools.

The vaccination drive which aims at protecting girls from developing cervical cancer later in life started on 04 September 2023 and will continue until 31 October 2023.

HPV is a common virus that can infect both males and females and could eventually cause cervical cancer (cancer of the mouth of the womb) later in life.

There are over 200 types of HPV viruses and research has shown that HPV types 16 and 18 accounts for more than 70% of cervical cancer cases. The Cervarix HPV Vaccine is very safe and effective in preventing the HPV infection caused by these two HPV strains (type 16 and 18).

“We would like to call on parents, caregivers and legal guardians who have not yet signed the consent form to do so in order to ensure that their children do not miss out on the HPV vaccination drive. The vaccine is administered on school girls that are in Grade 5, aged 9-years and above.

“In February 2023 to March 2023 during the first dose of the vaccination drive, a total of 72 880 grade 5 girls out of 90 492 (80.5%) were vaccinated with HPV 1st dose vaccine. All these girls are due to receive their 2nd HPV vaccine dose. Those girls who were not yet 9-years-old and are still in grade 5 or were absent during the first round will also be given their HPV first doses”, said MEC for Health and Wellness, Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko.

During this period, the school health teams will also be administering a booster dose of Tetanus Diphtheria (Td). The Td vaccine is a booster dose, and it does not replace either Td given at 6 years or 12 years.

“Tetanus and Diphtheria vaccination is given to prevent Td disease outbreaks in the community, among adolescents and to increase the Td immunisation coverage among school going adolescents. It is safe to give Td simultaneously with the HPV vaccine,”

“A consent form that was signed at the start of the year is used for routine comprehensive Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) and is valid for the whole year. ISHP includes school health screening (deworming, eye health, hearing, oral assessment) and onsite health services. No child will be screened or vaccinated without a signed consent form, however, children aged 12 and above can sign and ascent for themselves,” added the MEC.

Ends/

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health

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