



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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Deputy David Cullinane
TD
Dail Eireann
Kildare Street
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PQ10051/21: To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons eligible each year for the HPV vaccination programme in schools since 2015; the number who took and did not take this opportunity, respectively; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

The above PQ has been sent to my Department for direct response to you on same.

Background

Following a recommendation from the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC), that human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine should be given to 12 year old girls, a routine Health Service Executive (HSE) school HPV vaccination programme began in May 2010 for girls in the first year of second level school and age equivalent in special schools and home schooled. The aim of the programme is to protect girls from their future risk of developing cervical cancer. The HPV vaccine does not protect against all cervical cancers, so regular cervical screening is still needed.

A HPV catch-up campaign for girls in sixth year of second level schools and their age equivalents in non-second level schools (ie special schools, home schooled, Community Training Centres and Youthreach) was added in the academic year 2011/2012 and continued during the academic years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014.

Quadrivalent HPV vaccine, which protects against HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18 associated with 70% of cervical cancer, was used in the school vaccination programme until 2018/2019. Prior to 2014/2015 a schedule of three vaccine doses given over a six month period was recommended. A schedule of two vaccine doses given at least six months apart was recommended since the academic year 2014/2015 for girls aged <15 years. This change is based on more recent data which showed that the immune response to two doses of the vaccine in 9-13 year old girls is comparable to a three dose course. In the 2019/2020 academic

year the programme was extended to boys and HPV 9-valent vaccine was introduced for both boys and girls in in the first year of second level school and age equivalent in special schools and home schooled.

Here the uptake of HPV vaccine, provided through the school immunisation programme and recorded on the Schools Immunisation System (SIS), is reported.

Data

The numbers offered the vaccine, the numbers vaccinated/unvaccinated and the uptake are shown in Table 1. Uptake of two doses of HPV vaccine was 87.4% in the 2014/15 academic year, but declined to 56.3% in 2016/17 and has improved to 76.2% in 2019/20.

Following the declines in 2015/16-2016/17 the HSE undertook substantial public health communication efforts to improve the uptake.

Table 1

Academic Year	First years in second level schools and age equivalents in special schools and home schooled. Except HPV data prior to 2019/20 are for girls only and prior to 2014/15 are for first year girls in second level only.									
	Denominator	Not Immunised			Immunised			% Uptake		
		HPV at least at least stage 1	HPV at least stage 2	HPV at least stage 3	HPV at least stage 1	HPV at least stage 2	HPV at least stage 3	HPV at least stage 1	HPV at least stage 2	HPV at least stage 3
2009/10/11	59235	9456	10608	10734	49779	48627	48501	84	82.1	81.9
2011/12	29603	3644	3802	4280	25959	25801	25323	87.7	87.2	85.5
2012/13	29832	3895	4093	4692	25937	25739	25140	86.9	86.3	84.3
2013/14	30289	3434	3699	4491	26855	26590	25798	88.7	87.8	85.2
2014/15	30838	3111	3883		27727	26955	96	89.9	87.4	0.3
2015/16	31376	5238	7732		26138	23644	124	83.3	75.4	0.4
2016/17	32135	13231	14033		18904	18102	287	58.8	56.3	0.9
2017/18	31985	10502	11076		21483	20909	48	67.2	65.4	0.2
2018/19	31826	7749	8361		24077	23465	54	75.7	73.7	0.2
2019/20	69621	12541	16577		57080	53044	26	82.0	76.2	0.0

Notes to data above

1. HPV uptake is for girls only prior to 2019/20 and all children since 2019/20
2. Since 2014/15 HPV is a two dose course for those <15 years of age, previously was a three dose course
3. HPV uptake presented here for 2011/12 to 2014/15 is for girls in first year in second level only and from 2014/15 includes age equivalents in special schools and home schooled. A HPV catch-up campaign for girls in sixth year of second level schools and their age equivalents in non-second level schools (ie special schools, home schooled, Community Training Centres and Youthreach) was added in the academic year 2011/2012 and continued during the academic years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014.

The target cohort of girls in special schools, Community Training Centres, Youthreach, and Home Schooled were identified by birth cohort either equivalent to first years or equivalent to sixth years. For operational reasons HSE vaccinating staff did not adhere strictly to these birth cohorts. Many of the vaccinations in these school settings were actually “outside cohort”. The identification of denominator data for the target birth cohorts in these settings was difficult and staff focused on vaccinations rather than defining cohort numbers accurately.

4. Data extracted 04/12/2020 from the Schools Immunisation System (SIS) except 2019/20 data extracted 16/02/2021 and HPV uptake for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 was measured by manual

reports. Reports based on data extracted previously are available on the HPSC website at

<https://www.hpsc.ie/a->

[z/vaccinepreventable/vaccination/immunisationuptakestatistics/hpvimmunisationuptakestatistics/](https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/vaccinepreventable/vaccination/immunisationuptakestatistics/hpvimmunisationuptakestatistics/)

5. At least stage 1 - means a child had a stage 1 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS, this child may or may not have had a stage 2 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS

At least stage 2 - means a child had a stage 2 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS, he/she may or may not have had stage 1 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS.

At least stage 3 - means a child had a stage 3 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS, he/she may or may not have had stage 1 or stage 2 HPV vaccine recorded on SIS.

6. The denominator was defined as the number of girls/children in first year for second level schools and age equivalent in special schools and on the school roll on 30th September when the school census is carried out or registered with the Child and Family Agency Education Welfare Services (TUSLA) as home schooled.

I trust this clarification will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,



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