

Briefing for general practice teams – the Community Pharmacy Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and Pertussis Vaccination Service

This Community Pharmacy England Briefing provides information for general practice teams on the Community Pharmacy RSV and Pertussis Vaccination Service, which has been commissioned from selected pharmacies by NHS England.

Introduction

Following the introduction of the RSV vaccination in September 2024, selected community pharmacies have been commissioned to provide both RSV and pertussis vaccinations. This follows the initial commissioning of around 50 early adopter pharmacy sites who provided an RSV vaccination service in the East of England.

This service will be supplemental to the core offer through general practice or NHS Trusts and is being commissioned in areas where local need has been identified by the NHS.



The service aims to maximise access to, and uptake of, RSV vaccinations and pertussis vaccinations and will be provided by an appropriately trained and competent pharmacist or pharmacy technician.

Who is eligible for the service?

In line with vaccinations provided by general practices, the commissioned pharmacies will be able to provide *RSV vaccination* to the following patients:

- Those who are at least 75 years of age and have not yet reached 80 years of age at the date of administration of the vaccination; or
- Those who are 79 years of age on 31st August 2024 who can be vaccinated up until 31st August 2025; and
- Those who are pregnant and from 28 weeks of pregnancy until delivery.



As part of the service, commissioned pharmacies will also be able to provide a *pertussis vaccination* to further assist with optimising vaccine uptake in pregnant women. This will be offer to those who are pregnant and from 16 weeks of pregnancy until delivery.



Q. Can GP practices make referrals to pharmacies for the service?

Yes. General practice colleagues can signpost or make referrals of patients to the service in circumstances where they are unable to provide any of these vaccines to a patient. There is no set formal process to make such referrals.

Q. Will a patient's general practice be notified of the vaccination at the pharmacy?

Yes. The patient's general practice will be electronically notified on the day of provision or on the following working day.

Q. How will the pharmacist or pharmacy technician confirm the vaccine status of the patient to avoid vaccine duplication?

The pharmacist or pharmacy technician will confirm the patient's vaccine status with the patient and will have access to the patient's National Care Record (with patient consent) where the patient is unsure. The patient's vaccine status can additionally be confirmed by referring to their maternity record where the patient is pregnant.

Where a vaccine status cannot be confirmed, the patient will be referred to their general practice for assistance.

Q. Can the pharmacy vaccinate other patients against RSV or Pertussis outside the identified eligible patient cohorts?

No.

Q. General practices provide these vaccinations as part of their Essential service provision. Why has community pharmacy been commissioned as well?

The service has been commissioned as a National Enhanced Service. NHS England is commissioning some community pharmacies, as a supplementary option, to provide additional access and to help increase vaccine uptake where local population need is identified due to lower uptake.

Further information on the service can be found at [cpe.org.uk/RSV and Pertussis Vaccination Service](https://cpe.org.uk/RSV-and-Pertussis-Vaccination-Service).