



NHS North East
Riverside House
The Waterfront
Goldcrest Way
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NY

To: Parents

1 October 2009

Dear Parent

HPV IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME

Following the tragic news of the death of a young girl in Coventry on Monday, we are writing to provide reassurance of our commitment to the HPV immunisation programme.

Preliminary results from the autopsy on the young girl from Coventry who sadly died on Monday confirm that she had a rare and grave underlying medical condition that was likely to have caused her death.

Before this was known, the manufacturer of the HPV vaccine voluntarily initiated a recall of the batch of vaccine related to this tragic case. This was a purely precautionary measure and all stocks relating to this particular batch were withdrawn with immediate effect across NHS North East.

In light of this, some parts of the region may experience minor interruptions to their school immunisation programme as more supplies of the HPV vaccine are ordered to replace any withdrawn stock. This is a temporary situation following the precautionary batch recall and the national HPV immunisation programme will continue as planned. Within Sunderland, the school based HPV vaccination programme will go ahead as planned from **Monday, 5 October 2009**.

It is important to remember that the HPV vaccine has passed the rigorous safety testing needed for it to be used in the UK and other European countries.

In the UK, about 3000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year and about 1000 die from it. Being able to protect young women against the future development of this disease is a tremendous development.

The vaccine has an excellent safety record. Nine million doses of the vaccine have been given around the world, and more than 1.4 million doses have now been given in the UK. Most people don't experience any side effects whatsoever.

If you are concerned about the safety of any vaccine you should speak to your GP to discuss their concerns, visit NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk or call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47

Full information about all vaccinations routinely given to children and young people is available at www.immunisation.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely



Dr Maureen Crawford
Director of Public Health
Sunderland



Dr Tricia Cresswell
Deputy Medical Director
NHS North East