

19 September 2011

**HPV (Human Papillomavirus Vaccination) Programme 2011**

Dear Principal

The HSE is aware of correspondence being sent to principals of second level schools with concerns that Gardasil, the HPV vaccine used in the national programme is “contaminated with viral DNA”.

The Irish Medicines Board (IMB) which is responsible for the regulation and monitoring of all vaccines in Ireland has stated *“In conjunction with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and other member states, initial evaluations suggest the balance of benefits and risks for Gardasil is unaffected and remains positive”*

HPV vaccine protects girls from high risk types of HPV infection and cervical cancer when they are adults. Each year in Ireland around 250 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 80 die from the disease. At least 7 out of 10 of these cancers are linked to Human Papillomavirus (HPV) types 16 and 18 which are covered by Gardasil vaccine.

Since the HSE began the HPV vaccination programme in May 2011 over 145,000 doses of Gardasil were administered and over 80% of girls who were in First and Second year have completed the three dose schedule in schools.

The 2011 HSE HPV vaccination programme is targeting all First year girls and is also providing a catch up programme for all girls in Sixth year so that these girls can be protected from cervical cancer.

The IMB and EU agencies will continue to monitor Gardasil regarding this and any other issues and any recommendations arising from this will be notified to you. There is no change to the vaccine programme and the benefits of the vaccine remain positive.

Further information is available at [www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie)

Yours sincerely



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Dr Kevin Kelleher  
Assistant National Director Population Health – Health Protection  
Medical Registration Number 19719

23 September 2011

**HPV (Human Papillomavirus Vaccination) Programme 2011**

Dear Principal

Further to my letter of 19 September 2011 the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has reviewed concerns that Gardasil, the HPV vaccine used in the national programme is “contaminated with viral DNA”.

The EMA has concluded that there is no new information about the quality of the vaccine and that Gardasil remains safe and effective.

I enclose a letter for parents with this updated information and would be grateful if you could arrange onward distribution.

The HPV vaccination programme will continue as planned.

Further information is available at [www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie)

Yours sincerely



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Dr Kevin Kelleher  
Assistant National Director Population Health – Health Protection  
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[http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news\\_and\\_events/news/2011/09/news\\_detail\\_001350.jsp&murl=menus/news\\_and\\_events/news\\_and\\_events.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1&jsenabled=true](http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/news_and_events/news/2011/09/news_detail_001350.jsp&murl=menus/news_and_events/news_and_events.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac058004d5c1&jsenabled=true)

23 September 2011

**HPV (Human Papillomavirus Vaccination) Programme 2011**

Dear Parent/Guardian

The HSE is aware of correspondence being sent to principals of second level schools with concerns that Gardasil, the HPV vaccine used in the national programme is “contaminated with viral DNA”.

The European Medicines Agency is responsible for the regulation of all medicines. They have examined these concerns and confirmed that Gardasil remains safe and effective.

HPV vaccine protects girls from high risk types of HPV infection and cervical cancer when they are adults. Each year in Ireland around 250 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 80 die from the disease. At least 7 out of 10 of these cancers are linked to Human Papillomavirus (HPV) types 16 and 18 which are covered by Gardasil vaccine.

Since the HSE began the HPV vaccination programme in May 2011 we have given over 145,000 doses of Gardasil.

All girls in First and Sixth year are now being offered this vaccine to protect them from cervical cancer.

Further information is available at [www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie) and [www.immunisation.ie](http://www.immunisation.ie)

Yours sincerely



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