

#Vaccineswork Primary Care (GP's and Practice Nurses) Email

World Immunisation Week, 24-30 April 2019 - The World Health Organisation is launching World Immunisation Week to promote the crucial role of vaccines in preventing serious diseases and protecting life.

In support of this campaign, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are launching a local social media awareness campaign, #VaccinesWork, to promote the safety and effectiveness of vaccinations and to encourage parents and carers to make sure their children are fully up to date with their vaccinations.

Local evidence shows that the uptake of some childhood vaccinations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are below the national target of 95%. This includes the pre-school vaccinations given at approximately 3 years and 4 months, which protect against a number of serious illnesses such as measles, mumps and rubella.

Parents and carers are being encouraged to check their personal health record (red book) and make sure their child is up to date with their vaccinations. Appointments for missed vaccinations should be made with the child's GP surgery.

The first 1000 days of life, from conception to age two, are now recognised as a critical period in which the future health and social outcomes for a child may be affected. A child's health and development may be influenced during this time by parental choices regarding health; including whether or not a child is vaccinated. General Practitioners (GP's) and Practice Nurses are in an ideal position to assist parents and guardians with early decisions about their child's health, and to discuss and promote immunisation.

Primary Care often represents a regular and trusted point of contact for health-related matters for many families. GP's and Practice Nurses are therefore also ideally placed to identify un-vaccinated and under-vaccinated children and to work with families to encourage immunisation. In particular there may be the opportunity to support families or groups where poorer rates of immunisation may be seen, such as looked after children, large families or single parent households, and certain ethnic groups including some Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups and Traveller communities.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council would like to ask all GP surgeries to support this campaign and help reach parents and carers of unvaccinated or under-vaccinated children, by sharing our key messages on your own social media channels using our forthcoming #vaccineswork. We will be promoting these messages from Wednesday 24 April 2019.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Katie Johnson, Consultant in Public Health, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council on katie.johnson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or 01223 699 266.