

Occupational Health Statement regarding the shortage of Hepatitis B Vaccine

You may be aware that there is currently a global shortage of Hepatitis B vaccine. We have been monitoring the situation closely and have been ordering as many vaccines as possible over the past few months to build up stock prior to the start of the 2017 academic year. However, at present it is unlikely that we will have enough vaccines to administer at least two doses of vaccines to all students before the end of October.

We do not know when the supply situation will be resolved and the two vaccine manufacturers (Glaxo Smith Kline and MSD) are unable to provide a timeframe for restocking.

Occupational Health colleagues in Universities across the UK have been discussing this issue within the HEOPS (Higher Education Occupational Health Physicians/Practitioners) forum over the past few weeks. The consensus is that it would be appropriate to prioritise student and staff groups according to degree of risk. Our intention therefore is to run all clinics as planned for initial assessment and screening however initial vaccination will be given to students and staff according to the following priority groups. We hope to administer at least 1 dose of vaccine to students in groups 1. Students and staff in groups 2 and 3 will be vaccinated when stocks return to normal.

Group 1

Midwifery

Group 2

Nursing

Medicine

Laboratory staff and students

Group 3

Physiotherapy

All other groups at occupational risk

In the event of a splash or sharps injury in a partially immunised or non-immunised student or employee we would conduct an initial risk assessment by telephone within an hour of injury. We would direct the individual to Accident and Emergency at QMC or Derby to obtain immunoglobulin if indicated. Immunoglobulin is very effective in preventing transmission in high-risk injuries but must be administered as close to the time of injury as possible. Injuries must be reported by phone to the OH department on 0115 951 4329 during hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday). Out of hours please go direct to A&E.

We will write to you again when we have further information on supplies.

Public Health England - Hepatitis B vaccination in adults and children: temporary recommendations from 4 August 2017

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/635669/Hepb_vaccine_temporary_recommendations_August2017.pdf

Public Health England - What to do if you have to wait for a dose of hepatitis B vaccine: advice for patients

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/636079/Hepb_vaccine_advice_for_patients.pdf

Action by School/Department contacts (SSOs):

Please can you forward this to the relevant persons within your school and ensure that anyone who does not have the full course of treatment is aware of the short term emergency actions and this is reflected in your risk assessments.

Please do not hesitate to contact either Louise Cupitt, University Biosafety Officer (louise.cupitt@nottingham.ac.uk) or OH Works directly on 0115 951 4329 if you have any queries,