HTA of the addition of shingles vaccination to the adult vaccination programme

Health Information and Quality Authority
An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

What has HIQA done?

We have published our health technology assessment (HTA) of shingles (herpes zoster) vaccination for adults, following a public consultation that took place from 19 March to 30 April. We assessed the impact of providing shingles vaccination for adults aged 50+ and for those aged 18+ who are at increased risk due an immunocompromising condition or treatment.

Our HTA was requested by the Department of Health following a clinical recommendation from the National Immunisation Advisory Committee.
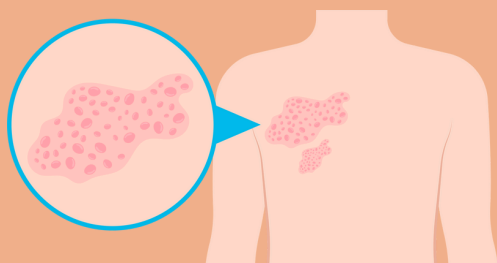
What did we find?

- the vaccine is safe and effective, but its benefit decreases over time
- at the current price, adding shingles vaccination to the routine immunisation schedule for those aged 50+ would not be an efficient use of HSE resources.

What is shingles?

Shingles is a viral infection caused by the same virus as chickenpox. It causes a painful, blister-like rash. For most people, symptoms clear up within a month. However, some people experience severe disease and pain for months, or even years.

The incidence and severity of shingles increases with age, with most cases occurring in people over the age of 50 years.

People who are immunocompromised are also at increased risk of shingles and experiencing more severe symptoms.

Feedback received

Responses to our public consultation highlighted the major impact shingles can have on people who experience longer-term complications. We are grateful to all who participated. This input was carefully considered in our final assessment, and is reflected throughout the report.

Thank You

What is next?

Shingles vaccines are available in Ireland, but the HSE does not currently provide free vaccination. Our HTA will be provided as advice to the Minister for Health to inform a decision on whether to include shingles vaccination as part of the adult immunisation programme.