



**TO: DDG: Chief of Operations**  
**CHIEF DIRECTORS: MHS, RHS, STRATEGY**  
**DIRECTORS: EMS, FPS, SPC, HIA, Clinical Service Improvement, Medicine**  
**Management, Substructures, Districts**  
**Heads of Institutions**  
**Director: City Health**

**CIRCULAR NO.:.....H116...../2022**

**RE: HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS VACCINATION (HPV) CAMPAIGN ROUND 2: 2022**

## **1. PURPOSE**

This circular is intended for circulation to all Facility Managers, Pharmacists, Nurses, and other Health Care Professionals to be updated on important facts for consideration to the HPV Campaign Round 2: 2022.

The circular should be read in conjunction with Circular H10/2022 (Round 1).

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The Human Papillomavirus is an extremely common virus, and it is estimated that approximately 80% of women will be infected with the virus sometime during their life. The virus is responsible for 99% of all cervical cancer cases. Incidence of cervical cancer in South Africa is 1 in every 26 women with a high fatality rate. The HPV vaccine was introduced in South Africa in 2014 as part of the Integrated School Health Programme. Two HPV injections are administered a minimum of 5 months apart. The campaign is dependent on a conditional grant with specific directive as per approved Service Level Agreement (Act No 2 of 2013: division of Revenue Act, 2013).

Since 2014 to 2020 an annual average of  $\geq 85\%$  first dose cover was maintained by the Western Cape. As a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, subsequent absenteeism and vaccine hesitancy following the myths spread with the roll-out of the Covid vaccines, a drop in cover was experienced. A 72% first dose cover was achieved during Round1: 2022. Despite the challenges, 1,100 ( $>80\%$ ) schools were reached during Round 1: 2022.

The NDoH agrees with the WHO recommendation to expand the services offered as school-based interventions. During the campaigns, in addition to the HPV vaccine, deworming of quintile 1-3 (Q1) primary school learners and Td (tetanus and diphtheria) vaccine boosters for grade 5 learners are provided.

### 3. ADJUSTMENT AND DETAILS TO CONSIDER FOR THE 2022 HPV CAMPAIGN

#### 3.1 2022 Campaign Dates

Round 2: 2022 is scheduled from 2 September to 31 October 2022. Of note is the school holiday 3 to 7 October 2022.

#### 3.2 Deworming

School children are dewormed through the National School Deworming Programme launched in 2016 in collaboration with the Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) and the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Permission was granted by the Medicines Control Council, in terms of section 36 to allow Educators and Community Health Care Workers to administer deworming medication (mebendazole 500mg) under indirect supervision of a nurse. Mebendazole tablets were donated by the WHO for the purpose of deworming Grade R-7 learners in quintile 1-3 schools during the first round of the 2022 campaign. The provincial Department Basic Education is responsible for recording of data and submission of reports and Department of Health is responsible for the stock control.

Although the focus is aligned to NSNP, there are continuous request for deworming to be delivered outside of the recommended Q1-3 schools. These are learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds in schools registered as Q4-5 or NGO funded private schools. Where there are capacity, stock and support from DBE, the deworming may continue beyond the first round.

#### 3.3 Tetanus and Diphtheria Boosters

Since 2020 a Td (tetanus and diphtheria) vaccine booster was provided to grade 5 learners (boys & girls) over the age of 9 years. The objectives of providing Td during the HPV campaigns as a Grade-Based-Campaign are to improve Td cover, prevent pockets of diphtheria outbreaks, improve, and sustain the school-based vaccination programmes and contribute towards the elimination of tetanus and control of diphtheria. The HPV Grant is used to strengthen additional resources for the provision of the Td vaccines during the HPV campaign (i.e., staffing, transport, Social Mobilisation), while the Td vaccines are funded by the facilities. The national proposal for 2022 is that these boosters be provided during the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of 2022, however services are not restricted to these rounds.

#### 3.4 HPV Vaccination Campaign Cohorts Round 2: 2022

*(The vaccinations are only eligible with signed consent from parents or legal guardians.)*

- Eligible grade 5 girls who did not received their 1st dose during round 1: 2022,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> dose provided to girls in grade 5 and special schools who received their 1st doses during Round 1: 2022,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> dose provided to eligible girls who received their 1st doses in 2021.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that all the **school-based interventions** (inclusive of Td boosters and deworming) be packaged and delivered during the campaigns as service resources allow to

maximize resources and reduce the frequency of school visits. (E.g., deworming outside of Q1-3 schools where there is a willingness from DBE counterparts to participate with administering of tablets & data collection or provision of Td boosters in either round 1 or round 2 / both rounds.)

The Communications Department will once again run a media campaign to raise awareness and increase the demand for HPV vaccines in the eligible population.

The ongoing efforts of all the service providers are highly appreciated, especially in this trying times.

Yours sincerely

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*A. D. Groenman*

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**Chief Director: ECSS**

**Date:** 19/8/2022

