

National Immunisation Advisory Committee

MEETING DETAILS	
Date (Venue)	29.05.2023 (Hybrid – Duns Library No.6 and online via MS Teams)

ITEM	SUMMARY
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies. • Goodbye and thanks to Chair/Interim Clinical Lead Professor Karina Butler. • Goodbye and thanks to Medical Secretary, Professor Patricia Kearney. • New Chair, Dr Siobhan O’Sullivan introduced herself and acknowledged exceptional work and contribution by the former Chair and advisors.
Statement of Interests	No conflict of interest declared.
SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall trend in Ireland and Europe is for decreasing hospitalisations, ICU admissions and deaths. Outbreaks have 3-4 cases per outbreak. SARS-CoV-2 viral load in wastewater surveillance remains stable in most areas. • Influenza and RSV numbers are also very low. Influenza season is over.
Meningococcal Disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 invasive meningococcal disease to date in 2023 with one death – serogroup not reported. In 2022 five deaths were reported, four attributable to SgB and one unknown serogroup. • Epidemiology was reviewed previously following 3 deaths secondary to MenB – discussion as to the threshold for review. • No new cases of MenC since Jan 2021. 77.2% of cases in unvaccinated. • New vaccine (ABCWY) is being developed.
Varicella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in hospitalised cases in 2023 – significant increase compared to previous years (very little circulating in 2020/2021). Up to week 21; there were 76 cases. Most cases were in those aged <9 years. There have been 28 outbreaks – 15 in congregate settings – this presents a new challenge.
Influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on ongoing work on HCW vaccine uptake – focus groups with RCFs to identify barriers and develop lessons learned. Updated data is now being obtained. Workshop to be held in mid-June will develop action plan. HSE staff uptake (covax and HR data) is approximately 43.6% and is highest in medical and dental staff (54%). In-depth analysis of uptake rates will assess the effect of different strategies.

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	<p>The Peer vaccination programme will provide influenza vaccination only (local arrangements can be made to add COVID-19 vaccine). There has been some loss of peer vaccinators – research is ongoing to understand this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to assess uptake in pregnant women due to lack of denominator data.
Hepatitis A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epidemiology update. There were 82 cases in 2021, 16 cases in 2022 and 15 cases to date in 2023. To date in 2023, 5 cases were associated with travel to 5 different countries. One case had ethnicity reported as Irish Traveller; with different strain to 2021 outbreak. • Sequencing is undertaken only if requested.
RSV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in hospital admissions. Median stay for infants of 5 days in paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) with 81% less than one year of age. • Currently palivizumab is recommended for high risk infants and administered monthly during RSV season. • Overview provided of different options including replacement of palivizumab with nirsevimab (advantage of one dose with similar adverse events), timing of universal nirsevimab (at birth/shortly thereafter), maternal vaccination uptake, population (very preterm/preterm/universal). • Timing of any change to be considered in context of RSV season. HPSC anticipate early RSV season this year (i.e., August). • Discussion of whether the use of these drugs is treatment or vaccination. The NIO does not have a remit for the procurement of other Monoclonal antibodies. • Consideration of use in older adults to prevent severe disease – no recommendation on use in adults at present.
Herpes Zoster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping umbrella review is ongoing, assessing vaccination in those >50 years and those with immunocompromise. HIQA are conducting a HTA and have requested a nominee from NIAC. NIAC will provide a representative to HIQA Herpes Zoster HTA.
Chapter Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5a has been updated since the last meeting. Chapters 3, 5, 10 and 22 are in the process of being updated. Once complete, work will begin on updating Chapters 2, 4, 12, 14 and 20. • A question was raised about the updating schedule for immunisation guideline chapters. It was noted that SOPs are being developed which will outline when and how chapters are scheduled for update.
Vaccine Injury Redress Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited progress has been made to date.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awaiting update on this scheme from DOH – CMO will convene a meeting shortly to discuss. Chair of NIAC will be invited to join this meeting.