

Press release

## Families to have better access to childhood vaccinations

A new £2 million pilot will see health visitors reach families facing barriers to vaccines, to ensure more children are protected.

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From: [Department of Health and Social Care](#) (</government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>) and [The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP](#) (</government/people/wes-streeting>)

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- Government to bring vaccines to doorsteps of families who can't make it to the doctor
- New pilot will reach families facing barriers like travel costs, language difficulties or vaccine hesitancy
- £2 million pilot aims to close gap in healthcare inequalities

Health visiting teams will offer vaccinations to children, providing a vital safety net for families who might otherwise miss out.

The new pilot targets families who've fallen through the cracks - including those not signed up with a GP, struggling with travel costs, childcare juggling, language barriers or other tough circumstances that stop them getting to the doctor.

By offering vaccinations during routine health visits, the pilot removes these obstacles and ensures more children can access life-saving protection.

Health visitors are specialist public health nurses who support families with children under 5. They provide advice on healthy child development, feeding and family health through regular home visits and clinic appointments.

The 12 pilot schemes will roll out from mid-January across 5 regions of England - London, the Midlands, North East and Yorkshire, North West and South West - designed to boost uptake and protect children from preventable diseases.

While the scheme isn't designed to replace a GP - families should continue to get vaccinated at their local surgery first - it supports families with children who'd otherwise slip through the net.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Wes Streeting, said:

“Every parent deserves the chance to protect their child from preventable diseases but some families have a lot going on and that can mean they miss out.

“Health visitors are already trusted faces in communities across the country. By allowing them to offer vaccinations, we're using the relationships and expertise that already exist to reach families who need support most.

“Fixing the NHS means tackling health inequalities head-on. By meeting families where they are, we're not just boosting vaccination rates - we're building a health service that works for everyone.”

The year-long trial will be evaluated before rolling it out across the country from 2027.

Health visitors on the pilot will get extra training to tackle tricky conversations with worried parents - including those who have doubts about vaccination - and to give vaccinations safely.

Struggling families will be identified by the NHS using GP records, health visitor notes and local databases.

The pilots form part of the commitment to ramp up vaccination programmes, with over 18 million flu vaccines delivered this autumn - hundreds of

thousands more compared to this time last year - and over 60,000 more NHS staff also getting their jab.

The government is also investing in better digital services to help families track their child's health and vaccinations. Through the new NHS App, parents will be able to monitor their children's health using 'My Children' - a 21st-century digital alternative to the Red Book.

The pilot builds on the government's commitment to Family Hubs and Start for Life programmes, which provide vital support for families during pregnancy and the early years of a child's life, including health visiting services and parenting support.

From 2 January 2026, children will receive the new MMRV vaccine, protecting against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox) in one vaccine. This replaces the current measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine and offers protection against chickenpox for the first time, while making vaccination simpler for families.

The government's 'Stay Strong. Get Vaccinated' campaign also runs throughout the year to promote confidence in vaccination.

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