

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS170)

Department of Health and Social Care

Written Statement made by: **Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Prevention (Mrs Sharon Hodgson)** on 01 Jul 2026.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus vaccination for at-risk groups

I am today announcing that the year-round Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccination programme will be extended to include more adults at risk of severe illness. From 1st September 2026, individuals aged 65 to 74 years with specific chronic respiratory diseases (excluding well controlled asthma) or immunosuppression due to disease or treatment will become eligible for RSV vaccinations on the NHS.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that circulates each winter, but its impact is generally less well understood than other respiratory infections like COVID-19 and flu. While many people who catch RSV only have mild, cold-like symptoms, it also causes more serious chest infections including pneumonia and bronchitis. RSV can cause major complications in infants and older adults, particularly those with certain underlying health conditions.

The decision to expand RSV vaccinations was based on the latest independent expert advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). In February 2026, the JCVI supported offering vaccination to people aged 65 to 74 who have chronic respiratory disease (excluding well controlled asthma) or are immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment, as new evidence showed these groups are at equivalent risk to older adults already eligible for vaccination.

His Majesty's Government has accepted the JCVI's advice, and work is underway to ensure that people in these groups can get vaccinated from 1st September 2026. This decision follows the Government introducing new RSV programmes for people aged 75 to 79 and pregnant women on 1st September 2024, and the expansion of the older adult programme on 1st April 2026 to also include adults aged 80 and older and all residents of care homes for older adults.

Individuals in these groups will be able to get vaccinated at their GP practice, or at a community pharmacy in some parts of England. The most recent analysis of the older adult programme by the four UK public health agencies, published in The Lancet's European health journal, shows that a single dose of the vaccine cuts your risk of being admitted to hospital for RSV lung infection by 75%.

As with all programmes, the Department will consider any potential future advice provided by the JCVI, once it has reviewed new data on the impact and cost-effectiveness of vaccination in other

specific groups with underlying health conditions.