

# HPV vaccination campaign launches in Western Cape schools

Kicking off this month through to October, Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness officials will visit public- and special schools to administer HPV vaccines. Parents and guardians are urged to provide consent for the second vaccine doses.



Source: Supplied.

A total of 1,129 young girls were vaccinated against the HPV from 4 September to 8 September as part of the Western Cape Government's (WCG) school immunisation programme.

"In order for your Grade 5 learners to receive a free HPV vaccine, we need a signed consent form. The vaccine is safe and can prevent cervical cancer - one of the most common cancers in women. But it should be given early, from age nine," said Sonia Botha, co-ordinator of the Expanded Programme on Immunisations for the Western Cape.

During the first round of HPV vaccinations earlier this year, a total of 1,044 schools were visited and 76% of eligible girls received their first dose. The department's HPV vaccine programme forms part of global efforts by the World Health Organization (WHO) to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health threat by 2030.

The first step towards this goal is to have 90% of girls fully vaccinated against HPV by the age of 15.

With wide vaccination coverage of girls over the age of nine, it is possible to eliminate HPV as a human pathogen.

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