# Immunisation throughout the lifespan promoted in Immunisation Week 2018

[xxx] is marking Immunisation Week by promoting the importance of immunisation throughout the lifespan, including shingles and influenza immunisation for those aged 65 and older, and immunisation for all pregnant women.

Immunisation Week (30 April - 6 May) is celebrated worldwide. The theme of Immunisation Week 2018 is immunisation throughout the lifespan*.*

Older people are more vulnerable to a number of diseases that can be prevented through immunisation, particularly influenza, shingles and tetanus. Influenza immunisation is free and recommended every year for those aged 65 and older. Shingles immunisation is now free at age 65, and until 31 March 2020, anyone aged 66 to 80 is also eligible for a free dose of the vaccine. Combined tetanus and diphtheria immunisation is recommended at age 65.

[xxx] says whooping cough is a serious disease for young babies, and immunising pregnant mothers can protect babies from the disease until they are old enough to be immunised themselves.

“Whooping cough spreads easily through coughing and sneezing, and we are currently experiencing a national outbreak of the disease. Since the beginning of 2018, more than a thousand cases of whooping cough have been notified to the Ministry of Health and 72 people (including 31 babies) have been hospitalised.”

Babies who are sick with whooping cough may not be able to feed or breathe properly. They can become very ill and may need to be cared for in hospital.

[xxx] encourages all pregnant women to get immunised against both whooping cough and influenza. Getting immunised during pregnancy helps protect babies as some of the mother’s immunity will be passed to her baby. Whooping cough immunisation is free to any woman who is between 28 and 38 weeks pregnant. Influenza immunisation is free for pregnant women at any stage during influenza season (late autumn and winter).

Ends