

STRONG INCREASE IN PRIVATE DEMAND FOR BCG, CHICKENPOX AND MENINGOCOCCAL VACCINES

- **Number of UK parents enquiring about vaccines almost doubles (98%) in the last year**
- **Back to School time brings a surge in communicable diseases**
- **Prevention is best: from thorough hand-washing to reduce chance of catching cold, flu or gastroenteritis, to vaccines for more contagious diseases**
- **Parents are choosing private clinics due to ease of access combined with manageable cost, at an average of £67 per vaccine**
- **Private enquiries for BCG, Chickenpox and Meningococcal vaccines up 214%, 125% and 199% respectively in the last year**

September 16th 2015: More and more parents are choosing to vaccinate their children at private GP clinics for diseases that are not on the routine childhood schedule¹ such as BCG and Chickenpox, according to new figures released by private healthcare search engine, WhatClinic.com, which has seen the number of UK enquiries for vaccines double in the last year.

As children settle back into school, the surge in communicable diseases among the under-18s isn't far behind. Prevention of infections such as the cold, flu and gastroenteritis can often be achieved simply through good hand hygiene but there are a number of other highly infectious diseases where vaccination can be the best option.

Dr. Mariette Grant², a GP at The Laser Clinic Cookham, says that the demand for certain vaccinations can vary depending on where a patient lives. "In my current practice in the Home Counties, the increase has mainly been for Chickenpox and Shingles vaccines, with many parents choosing to vaccinate their child as an added protection as these are only available on the NHS for eligible groups, for example children of parents or siblings who are vulnerable due to low immunity or cancer treatments."

“We also often see higher demand for Meningococcus vaccines at this time of year. Students may not have had the same choice of vaccines that are available today against this deadly disease so before they start or return to university, I’d urge any parent to consider these vaccines as a preventative measure.”

Parents considering vaccinations at private health clinics in the UK have risen significantly in the past year with enquiries for BCG, Chickenpox and Meningococcal vaccines up by 214%, 125% and 199% respectively³. Clinics will charge an average cost of £87 for the BCG vaccine, £92 for the Chickenpox vaccine and £70 for the Meningococcal Vaccine. The average cost of a Children’s Health Consultation is £65 and there are a total of 600 private GPs in the UK listed on WhatClinic.com, 260 of which are also private paediatricians. In the year from September 2014 to September 2015, the number of enquiries to UK GPs made on WhatClinic.com grew to 18,140 from 17,497, an increase of 4%³ in this steadily growing market.

The following table, based on unique prices provided by private GPs listed on WhatClinic.com, highlights the wide variety of prices available across the UK for children’s health.

	National Average Price	Cheapest	UK Location	Most Expensive	UK Location
GP Consultation	£76	£30	Telford	£165	London
Children’s Health Consult	£65	£18	Newbury	£220	Warwick
BCG vaccine	£87	£40	Belfast	£204	Rainham
Chickenpox Vaccine	£92	£45	Bradford	£250	Wilmington
Meningococcal	£70	£35	Portsmouth	£160	Cambridge

Emily Ross, director of WhatClinic.com said that the figures show that an increasing number of parents are opting for preventative measures, rather than risking infection.

“We sometimes take for granted the massive impact access to vaccinations has on the health and welfare of children. A 2015 report¹ from UNICEF shows that the global child mortality rate has dropped by more than half since 1990. Under-fives deaths have dropped from 12.7 million per year in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2015, the lowest figure yet. This is due in no small part to vaccinations, education and sanitation programmes around the world. Thanks to the BCG, TB has been virtually eradicated in the UK.”

“Both BCG and Chickenpox vaccines are only available to groups who are identified as having a particular vulnerability to getting TB or Chickenpox, but more and more are choosing to take up the option of paying privately for their child to receive these vaccines. The feedback we are getting is that parents like the ease of access to private GPs and find the costs manageable.”

“Vaccinations save lives so we’d urge parents to look at what’s available to their children, particularly if they have moved to the UK from overseas where childhood vaccination schedules can vary, and ask their GP about their options.”

- ENDS -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

¹Further information on the NHS Vaccination Schedule is available at:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/pages/vaccination-schedule-age-checklist.aspx>

²**About Dr Grant:** Dr Mariette Grant is a local GP and a member of the Royal College of General Practitioners (MRCGP). After 5 years as a full time GP partner in an NHS practice in Henley, Dr Mariette Grant has moved into private GP care. Her main base is at The Laser Clinic Cookham.

³This data is based on actual patient enquiries made to UK clinics listed on WhatClinic.com during the time range 01.09.14 to 01.09.15 compared to 01.09.13 to 01.09.14.

In the past 12 months, 17.7 million people have visited WhatClinic.com to compare clinics around the world. In this time, 4.3 million of those visits were for UK clinics across all specialties.

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http://www.unicef.org/media/media_83145.html

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About WhatClinic.com: WhatClinic.com is a global healthcare comparison website that enables patients to compare and review clinics across the globe, with online booking and independent price checks. With detailed listings for over 120,000 private healthcare clinics across 135 countries worldwide, WhatClinic.com helps consumers make an informed decision on elective medical treatments as conveniently as possible. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King and is headquartered in Dublin. Since its launch, over 60 million people have visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective medical treatments.