

Unprecedented surge in traffic and enquiries for Meningococcal vaccine over past 24 hours

Thursday 18th February: There has been an unprecedented surge in traffic and enquiries regarding the Meningococcal vaccine to private clinics over the past 24 hours according to clinic comparison site WhatClinic.com. In the past week, traffic increased by 704% with 7,282 visits to the site by those seeking vaccinations, compared to 906 visits the previous week.

Speaking about the increase in enquiries, WhatClinic spokesperson **Emily Ross** said: "We have noticed a considerable spike in enquiries and traffic in relation to Meningococcal vaccines, with thousands of worried patients visiting the site over the past 24 hours to find private vaccination services in light of the recent media coverage and petition to Parliament to give the Meningitis B vaccine to all children, not just newborn babies. At the moment the average price for the vaccination from a private UK clinic is £72*, though it remains to be seen if this changes in response to limited supplies."

The B strain of the Meningitis virus is responsible for 90% of meningococcal infections in young children¹. This vaccine is now part of the NHS vaccination program and is recommended for newborn babies aged two months, followed by a second dose at age four months, and a booster at 12 months. However, as the MenB vaccine was only introduced on the immunisation schedule in 2015 there are many small children who are not vaccinated¹.

Dr. Mariette Grant, GP at The Laser Clinic, Cookham, said: "It is important for parents to be familiar with the symptoms of meningitis and to seek emergency medical attention immediately if they are worried about their child. I urge all parents to consider the MenB vaccine as it really does save lives."

There are over 600 private GPs in the UK listed on WhatClinic.com, and 260 of those are registered paediatricians, though only 48 private clinics are currently advertising the private availability of Meningococcal vaccines. The average price listed for the vaccination is £72. Over the past 12 months enquiries for Meningococcal vaccines have increased tenfold, up 1046%. Traffic to the site for vaccination clinics has revealed 49,822 visits in 2015, versus 24,415 visits during the previous year.

If you are concerned about vaccinating your child, please contact your family GP or visit the NHS website² which has plenty of clear, useful information about vaccines. Meningitis.org is also a good resource for those who want to be better informed.

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Notes to Editors:

* Price based on prices from 35 UK clinics, taken Feb 2016

References:

1. <http://www.meningitis.org/menb-vaccine>
2. <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Meningitis/Pages/Symptoms.aspx>

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. In 2015, over 15 million unique visitors came to the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective medical treatment.