

Dear Friend

We are pleased to let you know that the Department of Health has approved a new vaccine to combat pneumococcal disease. This is positive news as it means that thousands of lives will potentially be saved in the future.

The Prevenar 13 vaccine, manufactured by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, now protects against 13 strains of the disease, compared to the previous vaccine which covered seven.

The new vaccine will be introduced into the Childhood Immunisation Programme in the spring and will follow exactly the same three dose schedule that is used at present: one vaccination at two, four and 13 months old.

This is another landmark on the road to eradicating meningitis. We hope that this announcement will bring much comfort to you, knowing that we are a step closer to preventing the devastation that meningitis causes.

While the new vaccine will help protect against the majority of disease-causing pneumococcal strains, it remains important to be vigilant and continue to raise awareness of the symptoms. We believe the next milestone in the fight against meningitis will be finding a vaccine for meningitis B – a goal we hope to achieve in the next five to 10 years with your help.

With best wishes



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Registered Charity No: 1076774

