Association of British Paediatric Nurses
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Committed to promoting the development of children's nursing through evidence based information about practice and education

Press release – embargoed until 00.00hrs on 24th April

World Immunisation Week, 24th-30th April 2026

This week the world marks World Immunisation Week, led by the World Health Organization (WHO), to champion the life-saving impact of vaccines across every stage of life. This year's theme — "For every generation, vaccines work" — highlights the extraordinary legacy of immunisation in protecting families, communities and future generations.

At the heart of this global effort are children's nurses, whose expertise, advocacy, and compassionate care underpin the continued success of vaccination programmes.

According to WHO[1], vaccines have saved more than 150 million lives over the past 50 years, equivalent to six lives every minute—a testament to the consistent decisions made by parents, caregivers and health workers to protect children from preventable diseases. These collective choices have contributed to a 40% improvement in infant survival, safeguarding millions from illnesses such as measles, diphtheria, pertussis and polio.

World Immunisation Week 2026 aims to celebrate these achievements and remind communities that immunisation continues to protect us across the lifespan — from infancy to older adulthood.

Children's nurses play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of immunisation programmes by delivering vaccinations safely and effectively, often acting as the first point of contact for families navigating the immunisation schedule; communicating with clarity and compassion, addressing questions and supporting parents who may feel hesitant or overwhelmed; building trust within communities, ensuring families feel informed, confident, and empowered when making vaccination decisions and promoting equitable access, identifying and supporting children who may otherwise be at risk of missing life-saving vaccines.

WHO emphasises that this year's objectives include equipping health workers with skills and tools to communicate confidently and compassionately, strengthening public understanding of vaccine safety, and reinforcing trust through transparency

[1] https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-immunization-week/2026

and shared responsibility. These priorities reflect—and depend on—the day-to-day work of children's nurses across the UK and beyond.

As the global community reaches the midpoint of the Immunization Agenda 2030[2], World Immunisation Week 2026 serves as an urgent call to continue strengthening public confidence, providing accurate information, and ensuring equitable access for all families.

"As children's nurses, we stand at the forefront of vaccine delivery and vaccine confidence. Our relationships with families, our expertise, and our ability to communicate with empathy are vital to ensuring every child receives the protection they deserve. This week celebrates the ongoing commitment of all children's nurses across the UK to safeguarding the health of future generations."

Nicola Fielding – ABPN Member and Children's Nurse

The ABPN believes that

- Every child and young person has a right to have their specific needs recognised and addressed[3,4]
- Infants, children and young people should receive care from nurses that have the child specific and specialist knowledge, skills and competencies to meet their unique needs in age-appropriate facilities, at home or closer to home in community as appropriate[5]
- Child field specific pre-registration undergraduate education programmes, as well as specific post registration education is crucial to equip nurses to meet the needs of children and young people across all settings, including at home or closer to home in community[6,7]

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[2] https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/immunization-agenda-2030-a-global-strategy-to-leave-no-one-behind

[3] See ABPN Position statement on Children and Young People's rights abpn_position_statement_children_and_young_peoples_rights.pdf and ABPN Background briefing on Children and Young People's Rights abpn_background_briefing_children_and_young_people.pdf

[4] UN Declaration of Human Rights 1948 see https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/

[5] See ABPN Position statement on Workforce planning and nurse staffing abpn_position_statement_workforce_planning_and_nurse_staffing-final_nov_2024.docx and ABPN Background briefing on workforce planning and nurse staffing abpn_workforce_planning_and_nurse_staffing_background_briefing_paper-final_nov_2024.docx

-[6] See ABPN Position Statement on Children's Nurse Education abpn_position_statement_nurse_education_final_24_november_2024.pdf

[7] See ABPN Background Paper on Children's Nurse Education abpn_cn_education_background_paper_final_22nd_november_2024.pdf-

The Association of British Paediatric Nurses call on the government to give urgent and careful consideration to expanding the Meningitis B vaccine programme to teenagers and young adults, particularly in light of the recently reported outbreak in Kent.

Notes for editors

The term child refers to infants, children, young people and young adults up to 25 years of age

The ABPN recognises that primary and community services, as well as child public health and mental health services, including school nurses and health visitors also have a key role in supporting children, young people and families.

The ABPN is the oldest children's nursing association in the world, established in 1938. Our wide membership includes experts in clinical practice, education, leadership and research.

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