

September 2007

Dear Parent / Guardian:

**Re: Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination for Grade 8 Female Students in Ontario**

On August 2, 2007 the provincial government announced funding for public health units in Ontario to offer the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine free of charge to grade 8 females at school based vaccination clinics. HPV is a common virus that can cause cancer of the cervix and genital warts. In 2006, there were an estimated 500 cases of cervical cancer with 140 deaths in Ontario. The HPV vaccine (Gardasil®) can prevent the HPV infections that cause the majority of the cervical cancer and genital warts in Canada.

The HPV vaccine is given in three shots. Nurses from York Region Health Services will be at your daughter's school three times over the current school year to offer this series of needles. If your daughter does not receive her first dose at the first clinic of HPV immunization, she is eligible to receive it at no cost by attending a HPV immunization community clinic. If there is a medical reason your daughter may be advised to receive the vaccine from her family practitioner. If she has not started the series by January 2008, and completed the series by the end of this school year, she will not be eligible to receive it free of charge from this program the following school year.

Grade 8 females will only be offered vaccine free of charge at school based clinics. If you would like your child to be vaccinated by your physician, the cost of the three shots is between \$400 and \$500. This cost may be covered by some health insurance companies.

The decision to receive the vaccine is voluntary. You and your child have the opportunity to review the attached fact sheet and decide whether or not to receive the vaccine. In Ontario, the Health Care Consent Act requires that appropriate consent be obtained before a medical treatment, such as an immunization, is provided. A person does not have to be a certain age in order to be considered capable of providing his or her own consent. In fact, the law states that a person is capable of consenting to a medical treatment if she is able to understand the information regarding the medical treatment, and the consequences of consenting or not consenting to the treatment. The responsibility for determining if a person is capable of consenting to a medical treatment rests with the health professional providing treatment. **If you would like your daughter to receive this vaccine, please sign the consent form with your daughter and return it to the school no later than October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007.**

If you have any questions, please call Vaccine Preventable Diseases information line:  
1-877-794-1880, press 9.

Sincerely,



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