



Travel health update

Travel health can be complicated and advice for health professionals is ever-changing. Jane Chiodini seeks out and presents the latest advice to help you keep your practice up to date

NEEDLES SAFETY

We've had safer sharp devices in my surgery of late and I was interested to read a piece on this subject in Issue 240 of Vaccine Update. Guidance in 2013 from the Health and Safety Executive, Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013, Health Services Information Sheet 7 can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis7.pdf>. The regulations require that use of sharp devices is avoided where possible. However, as the Vaccine Update clearly outlines most vaccines are injectable and in most cases, sharps remain an unavoidable part of immunisation. Where using a sharp is unavoidable, HSE guidance is, where practical, to use safer sharps with features that reduce the risk of accidental injury. The Vaccine Update goes on to discuss the fact that where a manufacturer has supplied a syringe and detachable needle, these are likely to form part of the license or Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) and the expectation is that those needles will be used to administer the vaccine. If considering using needles other than those supplied by the vaccine manufacturer, the Vaccine Update says advice should first be sought from your medicines management team and the vaccine manufacturer. I have to say I've occasionally selected additional needles and to my knowledge we've had no communications from our Medicines Management Team. Of late I've tried the safer needle on for example 'Revaxis' which comes without a needle supplied, but I found great care needs to be applied



with attaching the needle as the fit isn't always very good. Without the use of a safer needle device, I would always be careful following administration of a vaccine not to recap the needle, and I find having a sharps box on a trolley close up to where I'm vaccinating allows immediate disposal. Details of the vaccine batch number and expiry date are noted before vaccine administration. I'd welcome your feedback on this subject – I don't think it's an aspect we've considered greatly in travel health. The relevant Vaccine Update can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/499099/PHE_9671_VU_240_January_2016_10.pdf

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR YOUR CONSULTATIONS

Here are some new items which may help you with your travel consultations. 1. Bite avoidance is not only key for prevention of malaria, but Zika, dengue, chikungunya and similarly transmitted diseases so a new *Mosquito bite*

avoidance for travellers leaflet published by Public Health England in conjunction with National Services Scotland, Health Protection Scotland and NaTHNaC will be useful. It can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mosquito-bite-avoidance-for-travellers>. 2. The International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) is now used officially not only for yellow fever but also as a temporary measure for polio vaccine for some countries. NaTHNaC have produced a helpful video explaining the ICVP, how to complete it, how to obtain copies and addressing many other queries that healthcare practitioners have regarding the ICVP. Review at <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/nathnac-yellow-fever-certificate-instructions-2016/> 3. GSK have published their Meningitis ACWY vaccine record sheet online, complete with Arabic translation at https://hcp.gsk.co.uk/content/dam/global/hcpportal/en_GB/therapy-areas/vaccines/pdfs/meningococcal-acwy-certificate.pdf.

NECTM OPPORTUNITIES

The Northern European Conference of Travel Medicine is fast approaching and the exciting programme is now available at <http://nectm.com/programme/>. It is being held at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in central London 1 – 4 June 2016. Two additional day workshops have been included on expedition medicine and repatriation medicine. But of particular interest to practice nurses is a pre-conference event - The Travel Medicine Essentials Course. This is a half-day pre-conference session featuring interactive workshops on: The importance of communication skills; Immunisation for travel; Malaria; and Risks for pregnant travellers and children. Further details can be found at <http://nectm.com/programme/travel-health-essentials-pre-conference-course/>

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