

What's the STORY?

(Serum Testing Of Representative Youngsters)

This information is available at www.whatsthestory.org.uk in the following languages:

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi)

اردو زبان (Urdu)

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नेपाल (Nepalese)

عربي (Arabic)

বাঙালি (Bengali)

Somali

فارسی (Farsi)

Dear parent/legal guardian,

We would like to invite your child to take part in a national survey called 'What's the STORY' to look at the levels of immunity against infectious diseases in England. This study is being led locally by University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust, in collaboration with Public Health England. The study is being funded by the NIHR (part of the NHS) and is sponsored by the University of Oxford. This information will help Public Health England and the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) make decisions on how they manage the COVID-19 pandemic response now and in the future and accordingly has been granted National Public Health Emergency Priority status by the NIHR.

Why has my child been invited to take part?

We are seeking people aged from 0 - 24 years of age to take part in this study. You have been approached because your child is within the age range for the study and you live in Plymouth and the surrounding area. If you have received this invitation through the mail this has been posted to you by either the National Health Applications and Infrastructure Services (who hold the central NHS patient database); or the Child Health Information Service (an equivalent NHS database); or by your GP surgery. Please note that University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust has not been given your name and address.

What's the STORY study about?

The aim of this study is to help understand the STORY of infectious diseases in England. One of the ways our bodies develop protection against infectious diseases is by developing antibodies, either after an infection or following a vaccination. We can measure the antibodies to see how well protected we are from those infectious diseases.

To do this we are working with Public Health England to collect blood samples from a selection of 0-24 year olds from across England. There will be at least 3500 participants.

**What's the STORY?; OVG 2019/01; Parent Invitation letter; REC Ref 19/LO/1040; IRAS 263097 Version 2.2;
Dated 3-ARR -2020**

The diseases we would look at to start with are Group C meningococcus (MenC), diphtheria and novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Looking at antibodies against MenC and diphtheria will help us understand how well the current vaccination programme is working and in particular whether there are any age groups or populations with differing levels of protection. By looking for antibodies against infectious diseases such as COVID-19 we can tell what proportion of the population may have come into contact with the disease in the past. Throughout the course of the study we can see whether this changes over time across England and build up a picture of disease circulation.

We are not actively looking to enrol individuals with known or suspected COVID-19, but instead want a snapshot of the general population. The test will not be able to tell if there is coronavirus present at the time of sampling. *It is important to understand that we will not be providing individual participants (or their families) the results of their test.* Although this might seem unusual, this is an important measure to try and make this study as accurate as possible. Put simply, we do not want to recruit too many people who feel they, or their child, might have had COVID-19 and 'want to check'. This would give us inaccurate information about the spread of COVID-19 and immunity to this virus across the whole population.

What will happen?

There is just one appointment, which will take place at the Lind Research Centre. A study member will take a sample of blood from your child and ask you to complete a questionnaire. We would also like to know which vaccines they have received and details of their medical history e.g. any illnesses or medicines that affect their immune system. We use anaesthetic cream to numb the skin before the blood test and a play assistant will help to distract your child during the appointment. The appointment will take around 45 minutes and you will receive a £20 voucher to compensate for time or expense if you have had to travel to a clinic. If you are going to be seen at home there will be no reimbursement.

Who are the Oxford Vaccine Group (OVG)?

The OVG, part of the University of Oxford, is an independent research team of doctors, nurses, scientists and support staff. We carry out research on topics related to infectious diseases and vaccines for children and adults.

A full study information booklet is available at www.whatsthestory.org.uk or you can contact the study team at 01752 432447 or plh-tr.whatsthestory@nhs.net if you have further questions or would like to register your interest.

Dr Mala Raman
Local Principal Investigator

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