

What did we assess?

We looked at the impact of:

- immunising infants against RSV during their first RSV season
- vaccinating older adults against RSV.

Why did we do this?

This assessment was requested by the Minister for Health to inform a long-term policy decision on RSV immunisation for infants and older adults in Ireland.

What is RSV?

RSV is a common virus that causes respiratory infections. RSV can result in serious illness, particularly in infants, young children, and older adults.



What issues does RSV cause?

RSV places a huge burden on patients, families and the healthcare system. On average, it leads to 1,800 hospitalisations each year in children aged less than two years and 120 hospitalisations in older adults.

What did we find?



RSV immunisation is safe and effective. Over five years, immunising infants would cost the HSE €15.6 million to €58.5 million depending on the strategy chosen. Immunising adults aged 80+, the adult age group most at risk of RSV-related hospitalisation and death, would cost an additional €70.6 million over the same period.

What is our advice?



RSV immunisation would lead to significant reductions in hospitalisation, with the greatest benefit in infants because the burden of disease is highest in this age group. While it would reduce winter overcrowding, it is very expensive. RSV immunisation has the potential to be cost effective, particularly in infants, if the HSE can secure substantial price reductions.