Public Health England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

VACCINE UPDATE

Issue 299, September 2019

SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION

The start of flu vaccination is upon us!

Every year, flu kills thousands of people. The flu vaccine is the best protection we have against this infection which is why it is offered to those most at risk from the effects of flu and to children to reduce transmission of the virus.

HELP US HELP YOU

STAY WELL THIS WINTER

We have some of the best flu vaccine uptake rates in Europe, although there is always more to be done to improve uptake especially for those in at risk groups. We have a pioneering programme for children and are delighted that for the first time in England, all primary school aged children will be offered flu vaccination this autumn.

This year there is also a wider range of more effective flu vaccines available, offering better protection to the population.

This Vaccine Update special gives details on this year's programme. We are pleased to be able to share with you the details of the marketing campaign, including a new campaign aimed at health and social care workers.

The annual flu vaccination programme saves thousands of lives every year, and reduces GP consultations, hospital admissions and pressure on A&E. We thank you for your support.



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Who is eligible for flu vaccination in 2019/20?

The annual flu letter sets out full details about the programme this year at weblink 1.

In 2019/20 the following are eligible for flu vaccination:

- all children aged two to ten (but not eleven years or older) on 31 August 2019
- those aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers
- those aged 65 years and over
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals



Vaccination is also recommended for frontline health and social care workers and should be provided by their employer as part of the organisation's policy for the prevention of the transmission of flu.

In 2019/20, NHS England will continue to support vaccination of frontline health and social care workers employed by registered residential care or nursing homes, homecare organisations and hospices. Vaccination will be available through community pharmacy or their registered general practice.

This scheme is intended to complement, not replace, any established occupational health schemes that employers have in place to offer flu vaccination to their workforce.

Which flu vaccine should be offered?

This year there are a range of recommended flu vaccines. Providers remain responsible for ordering vaccines directly from manufacturers for all eligible populations apart from children and must ensure they are able to offer the most effective vaccine for each eligible group consistent with national guidance.

Provided a patient is offered a recommended vaccine for their age, providers are not expected to have to offer a choice between vaccines.

This year, the following vaccines should be offered:

- children aged 2 to 17 in an eligible group are offered a live attenuated quadrivalent vaccine (LAIV), given as a nasal spray, unless contraindicated
- adults aged 18 to 64 who are either pregnant, or at increased risk from flu because of a long-term health condition, are offered a quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV). The vaccine offered will have been grown either in eggs (QIVe) or cells (QIVc) – both of which are considered to be equally suitable
- adults aged 65 and over will be offered either an adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine (aTIV) grown in eggs or a cell grown quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVc). Both of which are considered to be equally suitable

Children in at risk groups aged between 6 months and 2 years old and those in at risk groups who are contraindicated to LAIV must be offered an inactivated (injected) vaccine. This year, PHE has purchased the egg-grown quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVe). See NHSE letter about recommended flu vaccines at weblink 2.

Healthcare worker flu vaccination letter

On 16 September, NHS England and NHS Improvement wrote to NHS trusts to ask that plans are in place to ensure high uptake of flu vaccination in frontline healthcare workers. Trusts are being asked to self-assess against a best practice management checklist and are being encouraged to develop a multicomponent approach to ensure high uptake.

This year, the requirements for trusts who have had low uptake rates have increased. Each trust that was in the bottom quartile for vaccination uptake (at 61.7% or below) in 2018/19 will be required to buddy with a higher uptake trust. Working with them will provide an opportunity to learn how to prepare, implement and deliver a successful vaccination programme.

For trusts in this quartile progress will be reviewed weekly during the flu season by regional teams in addition to the monthly reporting that is provided to PHE via Immform.

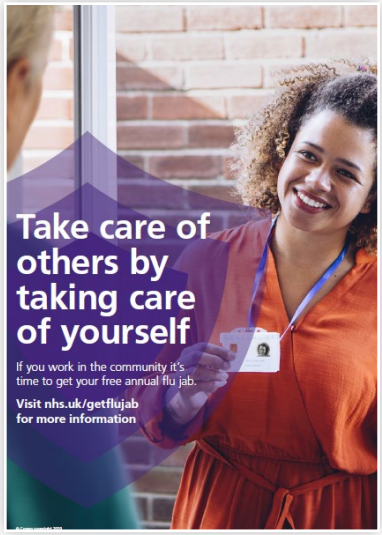
A copy of the letter can be viewed at weblink 23.

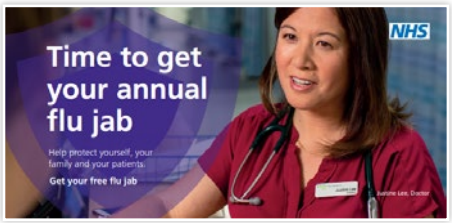
Time to get your flu jab – The new campaign for health and social care workers

PHE launches new health and social care worker campaign













A brand new flu vaccination campaign for health and social care workers launched this year, delivered by Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England and NHS Improvement. "Time to get your flu jab" takes a new approach – emphasising the protective benefit of the flu vaccination with a "Shield" motif and the message "Help protect yourself, your family and your patients. Get your free flu jab" to encourage the uptake of flu vaccinations by health and social care workers.

Campaign materials show NHS and social care staff going about their work protected by the shield of flu vaccination – all materials, including adaptable artwork and social media tools, are live on PHE's Campaign Resource Centre for colleagues to download or print locally at weblink 18.

The resources available include:

- A4 posters featuring different health and social care professionals
- leaflet
- sticker artwork
- social media tools including gifs and digital banners
- brand artwork
- communications toolkit (including long and short copy)
- FAQs



Help Us Help You – the public facing campaign

The Help Us Help You (HUHY) branded PR and marketing campaign for the 2019/20 flu season supports the flu immunisation programme and encourages those eligible to get vaccinated. The messages will focus on who is eligible for the free vaccine while highlighting the impact that flu can have on those most at risk.

The campaign will run between early October into the beginning of November and will consist of TV, radio and digital (social and display) advertising supported by search and partnership activity. It will target pregnant women, parents of children aged 2 and 3 years old and adults with underlying conditions. These groups are at particular risk from flu and vaccination is the best protection we can offer them against an unpredictable virus.

In addition to flu messaging the HUHY flu campaign encourages preventative self-care to help ease the pressure on NHS services and has been supported each year by local NHS trusts, local authorities, charities and commercial sector partners (see weblink 14).







Case study – using resources aimed at children to increase flu vaccine uptake

How we did it!

In 2017-18, Wolverhampton had the lowest uptake for school-aged flu vaccinations in the Black Country. As we approached the 2018-19 Flu season, we were set a challenge by our director of Public Health, to increase the uptake of the flu vaccine and gave us the space to be innovative. Children are described as 'super spreaders', therefore it is important to vaccinate children, to reduce spread to older and more vulnerable adults.

We decided to create the Flu Fighters storybook aimed at primary school children to increase awareness of the importance of the flu vaccine among children and parents. We worked with education colleagues in the council, with whom we have established links as it helps reinforce their work to improve attendance. The story book involved an alien invasion of flu viruses and a heroic nurse vaccinating a group of primary school children to shield them from the flu virus aliens. In Wolverhampton, we have one sole provider of the school-based flu vaccination scheme, therefore we could work with them to improve the system easily. We engaged with the vaccination provider to provide them with stickers and branding for certificates and letters, to drive the brand through frontline staff.

At the end of the 2018-19 flu season, we saw increases of between 8-10% in the uptake of the flu vaccine in each year group, compared to the 2017-18 flu season. Overall, there were around 1,600 more children vaccinated in Wolverhampton in 2018-19, compared to the previous year (between Reception – Year 4).



The reasons we believe that this campaign brought about such a dramatic improvement are multi-faceted. We ensured that all primary school children in Wolverhampton received a booklet to keep and take home, including Year 6 pupils, even though they were not eligible in 2018-19, this totalled around 28,000 books. We aimed to get the books to the children as they received their consent forms, which gave the children and parents time to read the book and make a decision on consent. We had a collaborative approach working with the CCG, local hospital trust and the provider, which included all parties using the same communications material and branding. We found that it was easier to work on the system when there was just one provider, who were willing to work closely with us to encourage further vaccine uptake. As well as having a fun, illustrated booklet with a target reading age of 5, we complemented it with a targeted social media campaign, generic messages via schools that were being vaccinated within the next week and stickers for children once they had been vaccinated. We also offered school staff a flu vaccine via our employee flu vaccine scheme, that we ran as a council.

This year, the story continues. Local school children have been sending in designs for new flu virus aliens. Three of these sketches have been digitalised for this year's sequel of the story, where we demonstrate the importance of vaccination every year to meet the everchanging tactics of the flu virus aliens. You can download a copy of the booklet at weblink 26.

How we did it!

Improved flu vaccination uptake for 2-3 year olds – CHIS letter

In July 2012, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recommended that the flu vaccination programme should be extended to healthy children in a phased roll-out which started the following year. Vaccinating children each year means that not only are the children protected, but transmission across the population is reduced, helping to protect vulnerable members of the population.

All two- and three-year-old children are offered flu vaccination through general practice, and primary school aged children offered it through schools. Two and three-year olds included in the clinical at-risk groups continued to be actively called and recalled for their flu vaccination by their GP. Flu vaccination uptake for two and three year olds is lower compared to school aged children with 44.0% of two and three year olds being vaccinated in England in 2017/18 and we were keen to explore ways that uptake rates for this age range could be increased.



Mark Frost

To increase this lower uptake rate the Screening and Immunisation Team in Leicestershire implemented a trial for the 2017/18 season where a letter from the Childhood Information Service (CHIS) was sent out to parents/carers of two and three year olds at the beginning of the flu vaccination period, in addition to the offer sent by the GP as required by the enhanced specification. This showed a significant increase in the uptake of the vaccine for the 2017/18 season in comparison with the year before.

Following the success of this trial NHS England Public Health Commissioning Team commissioned three Childhood Information System (CHIS) providers in South West England to send a letter to all parents/carers of eligible two and three-year-olds in selected CCGs to make them aware that flu vaccination was available for their child for the 2018/19 flu season. The selected CCGs were Kernow; South Devon and Torbay; Northern, Eastern and Western Devon; Somerset; Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire; Dorset and Gloucestershire CCGs. These represented 7 of the 10 CCGs in the South-west area.

In all cases the CHIS letter was distributed to parents/carers over the first two weeks in October 2018. Due to the volume of letters being sent out the distribution of letters going out was staggered over this two-week period. The aim of this letter was to make parents/carers aware that their child was eligible for flu vaccination. It included a statement on why the vaccine was important and advised them to contact their GP surgery to arrange an appointment. It also included a section at the bottom for the parent to record the time and date of the appointment once booked in.

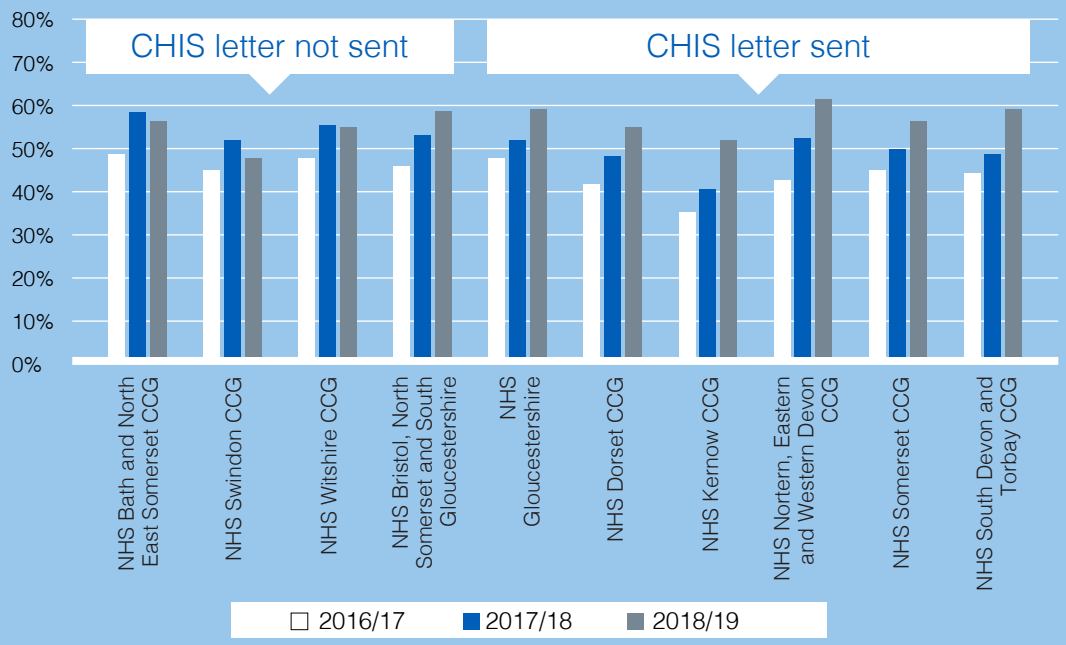
Whilst seven of the ten CCGs in South West England participated in this pilot, the remaining three, B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire were not included. This meant that we could monitor the performance in flu vaccination uptake of the seven CCGs that used the CHIS letter and compare with the three CCGs that did not participate in the pilot.

In all ten CCGs considered in this report CHIS also continued to send out the standard letter to parents/carers of children aged three years and four months who were becoming due for routine vaccinations. They also sent out correspondence to parents/carers of two and three-year olds who were overdue any of the routine vaccinations. This correspondence included a paragraph at the bottom making the parents/carers aware that the child may be eligible for the flu vaccination.

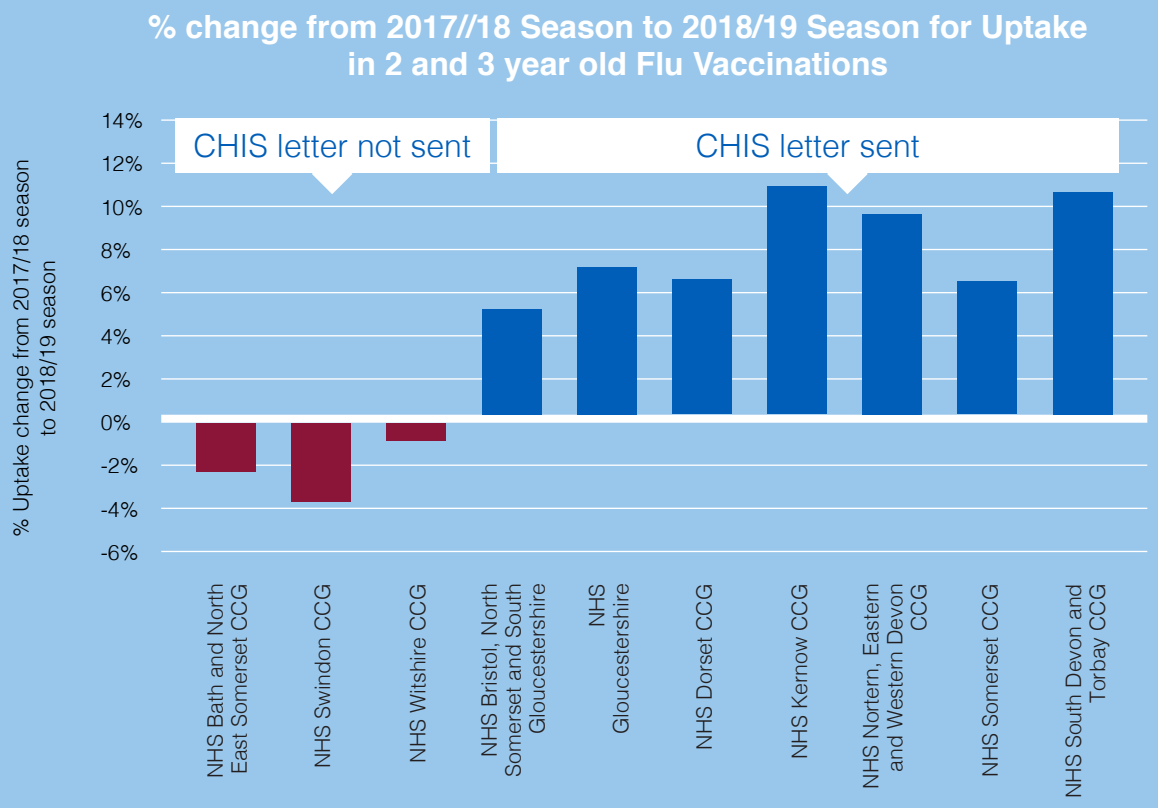
The uptake in flu vaccinations for two and three-year-olds was reviewed for the 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 seasons for the ten CCGs across the South West Area. This data is illustrated below. This data shows that for first three CCGs listed where no CHIS letter was sent out there was a slight drop in uptake of the flu vaccine in 2018/19 from the previous season. In the seven CCGs where the CHIS letter was sent to parents there was an increase in uptake for all the CCGs for uptake in flu vaccination over the same timeframe.

Uptake of Flu Vaccination for 2 & 3 year olds from 2016-2019 by CCG

Data from Immform



This data can be analysed to reflect the % change in uptake for the ten CCGs in South West England as illustrated in the graph below:



The average increase in uptake across the seven CCGs that sent the CHIS letter out is 8.1% in comparison with a slight decrease in the three CCGs where no CHIS letter was sent.

Whilst the data suggests that the CHIS letter significantly improved uptake in eligible two and three-year olds flu vaccination it is important to realise that other campaigns and communications were also going on across the South West of England to help encourage uptake. However the fact that all seven of the CCGs that sent the CHIS letter saw an increase in uptake whilst the three that didn't saw a slight decrease on the previous year suggests that this letter was an effective element at improving flu vaccine uptake in the two and three year old population.

For the 2019/20 season we intend to implement this CHIS letter again but this time across all of the CCGs in the South West area. This will help us to establish if the CHIS letter is able to help maintain the higher levels of uptake observed in the 2018/19 season for the CCGs that sent the letter in 2018/19 season. It will also help us to observe if we can replicate this improved uptake in the three CCGs that did not participate in the pilot. Should anyone want any further information on this initiative our email address is england.swscreeningandimms@nhs.net.

Members of our flu team

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Jane Oswin
Charlotte Cadwallader
Mark Frost
Andrea Arnott

Training for the national flu and childhood flu programme

The national flu immunisation programme for 2019 to 2020 slideset

See weblink 3.



The childhood flu immunisation programme for 2019 to 2020 slideset

See weblink 4.

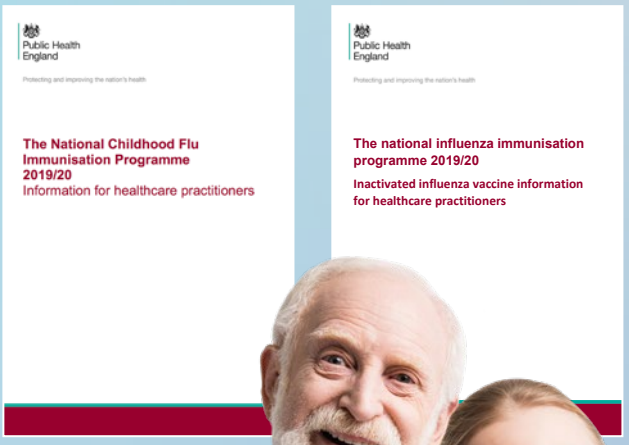


Childhood and inactivated flu vaccine: information for healthcare practitioners (weblink 6 and weblink 20)

These guidance documents for healthcare practitioners provide detailed information about:

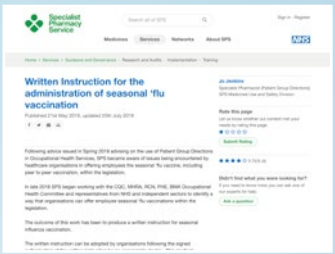
1) the different types of flu vaccine
2) flu vaccine recommendations and eligibility
3) contraindications and precautions
4) vaccine administration issues

View and download the accompanying childhood flu programme 2019 training slideset at weblink 7.



Guidance for the administration of seasonal influenza vaccination for healthcare staff

See weblink 5.





Other resources to support delivery of the programme

5 reasons flu poster

'Five reasons to vaccinate your child against flu' poster. This sets out key messages for parents about the flu vaccine.

See weblink 8.



Flu early years

This resource is for practitioners working in early years settings, including childminders

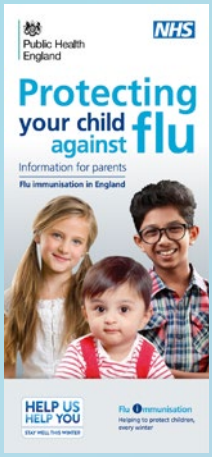
See weblink 11.



Protecting your child against flu

The 'Protecting your child against flu' leaflet provides information for parents on the flu vaccine, including how it works and contraindications.

New version of the poster available to download now. See weblink 8.



Winter flu leaflet

This leaflet explains to patients how they can help protect themselves and their children against flu this coming winter.

It includes information for children, eligible adults and pregnant women, and explains why it's very important that people at increased risk from flu have their free vaccination every year. Translations are now available. See weblink 10.



Flu vaccination in schools

This guidance has been produced to assist all school staff and headteachers with any questions about the nasal spray flu vaccination being offered to children in primary schools during the autumn term 2019.

It is not intended for children, parents or guardians, because they will receive their own dedicated information at the appropriate time.

The publication (product code 2016027C) can be ordered from the DH health and social care line. See weblink 13.



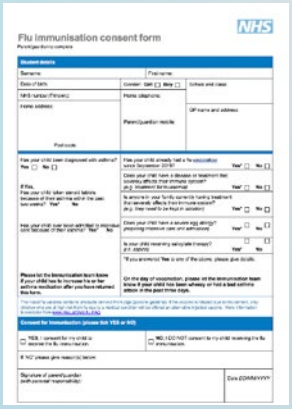
Flu immunisation invitation letter template



This letter template can be downloaded and adapted to suit the needs of local healthcare teams. It should be sent to parents of eligible children, along with an accompanying information leaflet and consent form.

See weblink 13.

Flu immunisation consent form template



This consent form template (available in both Word and open document text format) can be downloaded and adapted to suit the needs of local healthcare teams. It should be sent to parents of eligible children, along with an information leaflet.

See weblink 15.

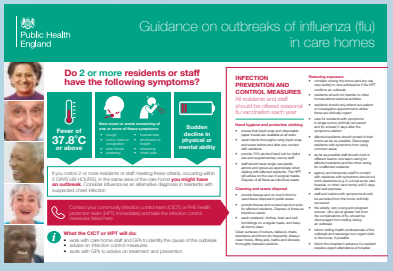
Flu vaccination in social care

See weblink 12.



Guidance on managing flu outbreaks in care homes

See weblink 16.



Easy read flu leaflet

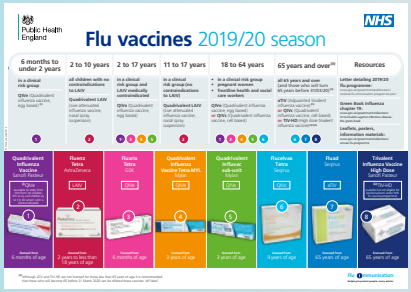


A new easy read leaflet for people with learning disabilities can be viewed at weblink 27 and ordered from weblink 22.

Which flu vaccines should children have?

This is for health care professionals who administer the flu vaccine to download.

It shows which flu vaccines should be given to individuals in each age group (See weblink 19).



Flu posters for visitors to hospitals and care homes

These posters aim to encourage visitors to hospitals and care homes to have the flu vaccine and avoid visiting when ill with flu.

The 'Flu poster for visitors to hospitals' can also be ordered using the product code FLU2001.

The 'Flu poster for visitors to care homes' can also be ordered using the product code FLU2002 (see weblink 17).

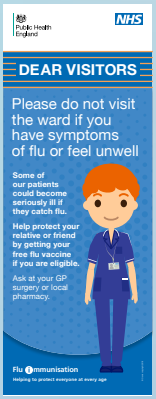
Pull up banner artwork for hospitals to print locally. We have two designs of pull up banners.

The banner size is W800mm x H2100mm.

See banners with weblink 24 and weblink 25.









NICE Quality Standards on Flu vaccination: increasing uptake in under 65s

NICE issued draft quality standards for consultation this summer. The quality standard covers increasing the uptake of the free flu vaccination among people who are eligible. It describes high-quality care in priority areas for improvement. It does not cover flu vaccine uptake in people aged 65 and over. It is for commissioners, service providers, health, public health and social care practitioners, and the public.

The consultation has now finished. The quality standard is expected to be published in January 2020. See further details at weblink 9.

Vaccine supply for the 2019 to 2020 Flu programme

Flu vaccine availability for 2019 to 2020

PHE supplies flu vaccines for children included in this year's flu programme, via the ImmForm website.

The following vaccines are expected to be made available to providers of the children's flu programme in 2019 in England as per the following table. Please check the ImmForm website regularly for the latest update, as this information remains subject to change.

Vaccine	Manufacturer	Anticipated order opening for Schools	Anticipated order opening for GPs
Fluenz Tetra®	AstraZeneca	Week commencing 30 September	Week commencing 7 October
Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (split virion, inactivated) (QIV)	Sanofi Pasteur	Available for ordering	

As indicated above, ordering of Fluenz Tetra® will open to providers of the school's programme one week before GP practices.

It is the responsibility of GP practices and other providers in England to order sufficient flu vaccine directly from manufacturers for eligible patients aged 18 years and over. Please refer to guidance from your respective health departments for arrangements in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Children's flu vaccine ordering information

As in previous years, order controls will be in place on ImmForm to reduce the amount of Fluenz Tetra® ordered across England but not administered to children.

Information for General Practice on editing Fluenz Tetra® orders

Due to the anticipated large volume of orders for Fluenz Tetra® in the first few weeks of ordering, orders for this product will be assembled as soon as they are placed. Please do not edit your Fluenz Tetra® order after you have clicked 'confirm order' as any changes will not be reflected in your delivery. If you need to make an adjustment to your order after it has been placed, please contact the ImmForm helpdesk.

Information for General Practice

Ordering controls for general practices are tailored to each practice and work by allocating an amount of vaccine based on the number of registered eligible patients. The planned timings and changes to the allocations are set out below in order to assist with local planning. Please note that these controls are subject to change as necessary (e.g. to increase allocations earlier than planned), to respond to the needs of the programme.

The following controls will be applied to those accounts ordering for the GP part of the programme:

- in the first 4 weeks of ordering, all customers will be able to order up to 40% of the eligible cohort (all 2 and 3 year olds, plus children in clinical risk groups from 4 to <18 years). Requests for extra vaccine will be considered on a case by case basis
- in the next 4-week period, all practices will be able to order up to last year's INDIVIDUAL uptake (or remain at 40% if individual uptake was lower). Requests for extra vaccine will be considered on a case by case basis
- after these first 8 weeks, all practices will be able to order a set number of packs per week (one order per week) which will be advised at a later date. Requests for additional vaccine will continue to be considered on a case by case basis

Any changes to this schedule in-season will be communicated via the news item on the ImmForm front page.

Requests for additional vaccine should be sent to the ImmForm helpdesk (helpdesk@immform.org.uk/0844 376 0040) and should be sent in good time before your order cut-off. Out of schedule deliveries will be by exception only.

Multi-Branch Practices and Fluenz Tetra® allocations

Please note that GP practices or groups that operate over multiple sites but are part of the same organisation will have a joint allocation (as in previous years), even where each site has a unique ImmForm account. This means that it is possible for one site to potentially order all of the available vaccine for the group, unless there is local agreement on how the allocated volume is shared across multi-branch practices. PHE recommend that this agreement is in place before ordering opens to reduce the risk of supply interruption. The information above allows practices to estimate the amount of vaccine they will be allocated during the first 8 weeks, and how it should be split between all sites.

If additional vaccine is required then this should be requested in the normal way via the ImmForm helpdesk.

Information for Schools Providers

A default ordering cap of 300 packs (3000 doses) per week, per ImmForm account will be in place for school providers (as in previous years).

This is due to the variability in programme management across the country, which limits the options for national stock management.

We understand that there may be instances where school providers need to order more than 300 packs (3000 doses) in a week from a single account. Where this is the case, providers will need to contact the ImmForm helpdesk. These requests will be dealt with on a case by case basis and will be by exception only.

Additionally, if a provider covering a large population feels that they need a higher weekly cap than 300 packs (3000 doses) to deliver the programme, they should request an increase via the ImmForm helpdesk.

All orders are monitored regularly and Commissioners may be alerted to any requests for additional vaccine or unusual ordering activity.

Inactivated flu vaccine ordering

PHE also supplies an inactivated vaccine that is suitable for all children from six months to less than 18 years old. It should be used for eligible children who are contraindicated for Fluenz Tetra (or otherwise unsuitable) **AND** are in a clinical risk group.

This vaccine is Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (split virion, inactivated), and will have an initial order cap of 20 doses per week.

All influenza vaccines for the 2019 to 2020 season

Information on all influenza vaccines that have been marketed in the UK for the 2019 to 2020 season are available at weblink 20.

Please refer to the flu letter for information at weblink 21 on which vaccines are eligible for reimbursement in the 2019 to 2020 season.

Web links

Weblink 1	www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flu-immunisation-programme-plan
Weblink 2	www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/vaccines-for-19-20-seasonal-flu-vaccination-programme.pdf
Weblink 3	https://publichealthengland-immunisati.box.com/s/4g170e5eyreevnnkqfmlpvh9ulbn7psq
Weblink 4	https://publichealthengland-immunisati.app.box.com/s/48xi8ezl0lmifo09qiebpsmzsqc0sib6
Weblink 5	https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/written-instruction-for-the-administration-of-seasonal-flu-vaccination/
Weblink 6	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-flu-programme-qa-for-healthcare-professionals
Weblink 7	https://publichealthengland-immunisati.app.box.com/s/gk0rhxdo2hgi5oni44wyegdx83cpa7wa
Weblink 8	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-leaflets-and-posters
Weblink 9	https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng103
Weblink 10	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-who-should-have-it-this-winter-and-why
Weblink 11	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-immunisation-for-early-years-settings-including-child-minders
Weblink 12	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-immunisation-for-social-care-staff
Weblink 13	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-in-schools
Weblink 14	https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/34-stay-well-this-winter-/resources
Weblink 15	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-outbreaks-of-influenza-in-care-homes-poster
Weblink 16	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-poster-for-visitors-to-hospitals-and-care-homes
Weblink 17	https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources
Weblink 18	https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/92-healthcare-workers-flu-immunisation-
Weblink 19	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inactivated-influenza-vaccine-information-for-healthcare-practitioners
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