



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

# The importance of immunisations – seasonal influenza

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September 2020

# Outline

All about flu

Why Vaccinate

Flu vaccination programme 20/21 and COVID 19

- types of vaccine,
- eligible cohorts

Where can you get vaccinated?

Key messages for care home workers

Benefits for Care Homes

Updating records, monitoring and recording uptake

Resources and training for care home staff

Any questions

# It's all about flu!

- Flu is a viral infection of the respiratory tract (nose, mouth, throat, bronchial tubes and lungs).
- Flu is spread by germs from coughs and sneezes which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours
- Flu is highly contagious and spreads rapidly in closed communities
- Most cases in the UK occur during an 8-10 week period during the winter
- Even people with only mild or no symptoms can affect others
- The incubation period is around 1-5 days (avg 2-3 days)



# Flu vaccination programme and COVID-19

The flu vaccination programme for the 2020/21 flu season has been extended, with more groups eligible to receive flu vaccine than in previous years. As COVID-19 is likely to be co-circulating with flu, protecting those at high risk of flu, who are also those most vulnerable to hospitalisation as a result of COVID-19, is vitally important.

Control measures to prevent the spread of the virus such as shielding and social distancing will mean that delivering the flu vaccine this year will be more challenging as flu vaccines are likely to be delivered in a very different way than in previous years and a range of different ways of delivering the programme this year should be considered. Flu immunisers are also likely to need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) in keeping with the advice that is current at the time of delivering the flu vaccine.

# Which vaccine to offer

Eligible group	Type of vaccine
Aged 2 and 3 years on 31 August 2020 All primary school aged children & year 7 (aged 4 to 11 on 31 August 2020)	Offer <b>LAIV</b> If child is in a clinical risk group and is contraindicated to LAIV (or it is otherwise unsuitable) offer inactivated influenza vaccine (see below).
At risk adults (aged 18 to 64), including pregnant women	Offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QIVc</b></li> <li>• <b>QIVe</b> (as an alternative to QIVc)</li> </ul>
Those aged 65 years and over	Offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>aTIV*</b> should be offered as it is considered to be more effective than standard dose non-adjuvanted trivalent and egg-based quadrivalent influenza vaccines.</li> <li>• <b>QIVc</b> is suitable for use in this age group if aTIV is not available.</li> </ul> <p>* It is recommended that those who become 65 before 31 March 2021 are offered aTIV 'off-label'.</p>

# Flu vaccine eligibility: 2020/21 flu season

all those aged two to eleven (but not twelve years or older) on 31 August 2020

people aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups

all pregnant women (including those who become pregnant during flu season)

people aged 65 years and over (including those becoming 65 years by 31 March 2021)

people living in long-stay residential care homes or other long-stay care facilities  
carers

household contacts of those on the NHS shielded patient list and  
immunocompromised individuals

all frontline health and social care workers

individuals between 50 and 64 years may be offered flu vaccine under the NHS  
flu vaccination programme following prioritisation of other eligible groups and  
subject to vaccine supply

# Uptake ambitions for 2019/2020

Eligible groups	Uptake ambition
Aged 65 years and over	At least 75%
In clinical at risk group	At least 75%
Pregnant women	At least 75%
Children aged 2 and 3 year old	At least 75%
All primary school aged children and school year 7 in secondary school	At least 75%
Frontline health and social care workers	100% offer

# Frontline health and social care workers

- All frontline health and social care workers with direct patient/service user contact should be provided with flu vaccination by their employer. This includes staff in all NHS trusts, general practices, care homes, and domiciliary care Employers are encouraged to :
- Commission a service which makes access to the vaccine easy for all staff
- Encourage staff to get vaccinated
- Monitor the delivery of their programme
- NHS England and Improvement (NHSE/I) will continue to support vaccination of social care and hospice workers, with vaccination available through their employer, community pharmacy or their registered GP practice



# Key messages to health and social care workers

- getting vaccinated against flu can help protect you, your patients and family
- everyone is susceptible to flu, even if you are in good health and eat well
- you can be infected with the virus and have no symptoms but can still pass flu virus to others including patients or residents
- good infection control measures reduce spread of flu and other acute respiratory infections in healthcare settings but are not sufficient alone to prevent them
- throughout the last ten years there has generally been a good to moderate match between the strains of flu virus in the vaccine and those that subsequently circulated
- impact of flu on frail and vulnerable patients can be fatal and outbreaks can cause severe disruption in communities, care homes and hospitals
- flu vaccine has a good safety record and will help protect you. It cannot give you flu. Having the vaccination can encourage your colleagues to do likewise
- staff act as positive role models for patients aged 65 and over, those with long-term health conditions and pregnant women to take up the offer too
- duty of care as professionals to patients or residents to do everything in your power to protect them against infection, including being immunised against flu

# Where can care/nursing home residents and staff be vaccinated

- The community pharmacy seasonal influenza advanced service framework will be amended to enable community pharmacies to vaccinate both residential care/nursing home residents and staff in the home setting in a single visit to increase uptake rates
- GP practices are also able to vaccinate in the residential/care home, residents and staff who are registered with the practice
- Attend a GP or Pharmacy appointment

# Benefits of vaccination for Care Homes

- Less staff sickness due to flu
- Less chance of needing expensive agency staff
- Less chance of residents becoming ill
- Reduced chance of having a flu outbreak
- Your employer investing in you



## Flu immunisation for social care and hospice staff

This information is for social care and hospice care providers. It gives details on the benefits of providing staff flu vaccination and options for providing the service to increase uptake.

### Introduction

Flu can be a serious illness, particularly for older people or those with other health conditions. Care workers are looking after some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, so it is important that they help protect themselves and those receiving care against flu.

Flu spreads easily and can be passed from staff to the people they care for, even if the staff member has mild or no symptoms. This is why vaccination is important for all staff working with people who are vulnerable either because they are in a clinical risk group or because they are aged 65 and over. Every year there are flu outbreaks in care homes

despite high flu vaccination rates for residents. This is partly because as people age they do not produce as good an immune response to vaccination. This makes vaccination of staff caring for these people even more important.

Vaccination of staff has been shown to be effective in reducing disease spread and patient mortality in the residential care setting<sup>1</sup>. It can also help to ensure business continuity by reducing staff flu related illness and the need to provide locum cover<sup>2,3</sup>. It is also equally important to vaccinate staff who are supporting people living in non-residential care settings.



Flu **i**mmunisation

# Monitoring Uptake

Keeping records of staff and patients vaccinated

How we record and report on vaccination uptake

Ensuring that staff GP records are updated to capture social care vaccinations

# Resources for Care Home Workers

Resources including the care home tool kit and training resources for care home workers are in the process of being updated for the 2020/21 flu season. When available they can be accessed via the link below

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/info-professional/public-health/infection-winter/care-guidance/>

The care home tool kit will offer guidance / resources for the following;

Information and guidance

Employer responsibility

Overcoming barriers to vaccination

Displaying uptake

Links to video materials

NICE guidance

Useful resources

# Question Time



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