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## The National Flu Immunisation Programme 2020 to 2021 – Update

The Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) have now published an update to this year's flu programme. It covers most things, including the expansion of the programme to consist of:

- Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List (NHSPL)
- Children of school Year 7 age in secondary schools (those aged 11 on 31 August 2020)
- Health and social care workers who deliver domiciliary care
- 50-64-year-old age group – subject to vaccine supply in November and December

Other key points include:

- All frontline health and social care workers should receive a vaccination this season, provided by their employer
- Increase flu vaccination levels for those who are living in the most deprived areas and from BAME communities
- An inactivated vaccine may be offered to those children whose parents refuse the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) due to the porcine gelatine content
- NHS England and Improvement (NHSEI) will continue to support vaccination of social care and hospice workers employed by registered residential or domiciliary care providers
- Community pharmacies will be able 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
- Household contacts of people on the NHS Shielded Patient list will not be subject to call and recall arrangements but should be offered the vaccine opportunistically, with the aim to offer to all identified
- The DHSC has procured additional national supply of the adult vaccine – guidance will be issued in September on how and when this can be accessed

A significant increase in flu vaccination coverage is required in 2020-21 to achieve a minimum 75% uptake across all eligible groups, as outlined in this table:

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 years old	At least 75%
All primary school aged children and school year 7	At least 75%
Frontline health and social care workers	100% offer

Practices need to reassure patients that appropriate measures are in place to keep them safe from COVID-19 as it is likely to be co-circulating with flu, especially for the NHS Shielded Patient List, and practices are expected to deliver the programme whilst meeting social distancing guidelines.

Following on from the latest Primary Care webinar, there is no new guidance on PPE, although NHSEI appreciates that practices have concerns about the implications of this. It is currently being explored and PHE, in discussion with the RCGP, are considering revised guidance for all immunisation services; this will be published as appropriate. In the meantime, the current advice on [immunisation during COVID-19](#) is still to use a mask and visor for the whole session but to change gloves and aprons between patients.

However, only just over half of practices have signed up for the PPE portal so please do so as soon as possible <https://www.nhs-ppe.co.uk/customer/authentication>.

There isn't yet clarity about additional funding in respect of flu vaccinations this year because contract negotiations with the GPC and the BMA have not yet concluded, but the updated DES specification will be issued by the end of August. The £10.06 IoS fee continues to apply to eligible cohorts and there are additional incentives for flu in the PCN Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) this year.

NHSEI is planning on issuing a comprehensive flu Q&A document soon, which will include various questions on indemnity, which need to be absolutely clear for the different delivery models that will be deployed this year.

Finally, there is no information yet to support practices with flu planning for additional vaccines required. NHSEI is working with DHSC colleagues who are liaising with suppliers/manufacturers to get this information out to practices as soon as they can - but at the moment, NHSEI does not expect it to be before September due to the logistical issues that are being worked through.

At QCS we have produced a flu planning checklist to help you to prepare for your flu clinics. To download the checklist for free, please visit [here](#).

## **Patient Group Directions (PGDs) – Written Instruction for the Administration of Seasonal Flu Vaccination 2020/21**

[Written instructions](#) have been issued along with a template and a factsheet. It includes additional advice specific to GP practices in the use of PGDs and the administration of seasonal flu vaccinations.

## **CQC Registration: Flu Vaccination Arrangements**

CQC have very helpfully produced some [key things](#) practices need to consider, including examples of possible models and their registration requirements such as the vaccination clinic location, the responsibility for the delivery and safety of the clinic, and whether a CQC application or notification is necessary or not.