

# Flu Newsletter: Issue 2 October 2020 – GP Practice

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Firstly we wish to thank you all for your excellent progress thus far with this year's flu vaccination campaign!

## Vaccine ordering for further supplies

As you will be aware, the DHSC Guidance for general practice on accessing DHSC centrally supplied flu vaccines has now been published (see link below). This has been long awaited and will be hugely welcomed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accessing-government-secured-flu-vaccines-guidance-for-gps>

The guidance refers to practices who wish to order DHSC stock should “*Keep in contact with your Regional NHSEI Public Health Commissioning Team on your levels of stock and any additional stock you may need as they may be able to advise of surplus stock held locally by another provider that you can access.*” Our data shows that there are no practices with a surplus of stock and so we support the ordering of central stock as detailed in the guidance and below.

Further communication to GP practices was circulated through the gateway on 22<sup>nd</sup> October informing that GP surgeries can now order from the national stock of flu vaccines:

On 9 October, [DHSC wrote to GP practices](#) to confirm the process by which GPs will be able to access the additional adult flu vaccine stock secured to support the expanded vaccination programme this season. GP practices are now invited to begin ordering or pre-ordering this supply from manufacturers.

The earlier guidance note set out when vaccines would be available over October, November and December. In the first instance, GP practices are invited to order or pre-order the following vaccines:

Manufacturer	Product	Age profile in the adult programme	Expected first deliveries to DHSC	Min order	Max order
Seqirus	Flucelvax® Tetra	18 years to 64 years	w/c 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	150	1000
	Adjuvanted Trivalent Influenza Vaccine	65 years and above	w/c 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct		
Mylan	Quadrivalent Influvac® sub-unit Tetra	18 years to 64 years	w/c 9 <sup>th</sup> Nov	30	1000

If a GP practice has a provisional order with Sanofi for QIVe, please contact them to confirm this, before placing another order for QIVe for this cohort.

As set out in the guidance, on placing an order, GP practices will be asked by manufacturers to verify that stock is being ordered for NHS eligible patients or frontline social care workers, where there is a genuine shortage for this cohort. Orders should only be placed where you have a shortfall in supply for existing eligible patients at this stage. Further instruction on timing of extension of eligibility to all 50 to 64 year olds will follow and stock should not be ordered for this cohort at this stage. Practices should ensure they have read the guidance thoroughly before placing an order or pre-order.

### Vaccinating staff in the GP practice - Request to submit each month the survey spreadsheet sent out to practices by the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month

Each month we will collate the information regarding the vaccination status of patient facing GP practice staff regardless of where the staff member was vaccinated from each practice and enter onto ImmForm. Please return the completed spreadsheet to us between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month giving the information for GP staff vaccinations as per the dates below

Survey Month	For data covering vaccinations administered from 1 September 2020 up to date	Survey Start Date	GP & Trusts Survey End Date	NHS England Team Survey End Date
			(7 Days)	(9 Days)
October	Sat 31/10/2020	Sun 01/11/2020	Tue 10/11/2020	Thu 12/11/2020
November	Mon 30/11/2020	Tue 01/12/2020	Wed 09/12/2020	Fri 11/12/2020
December	Thu 31/12/2020	Fri 01/01/2021	Tue 12/01/2021	Thu 14/01/2021
January	Sun 31/01/2021	Mon 01/02/2021	Tue 09/02/2021	Thu 11/02/2021
February	Sun 28/02/2021	Mon 01/03/2021	Tue 09/03/2021	Thu 11/03/2021

### Making suitable adjustments for LD patients when vaccinating

Guidance from PHE on supporting people with learning disabilities to have the flu vaccination (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccinations-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/flu-vaccinations-supporting-people-with-learning-disabilities>) states that when someone with learning disabilities who is anxious about needles requires a blood test or an injection there should always be consideration of less invasive alternatives. This would include the use of the nasal spray flu vaccine.

The live intranasal influenza vaccine is given as a single spray squirted up each nostril. This has the advantage of being needle-free and for children it is more effective than the injected flu vaccine. This is not licensed for adults, as there is evidence it may be less effective than the injected inactivated vaccine. However, guidance for healthcare workers says that medical practitioners can choose to use the nasal spray “off-label” and that this can be for “patients with learning difficulties who become seriously distressed with needles”.

**PHE has agreed that the national stock of the nasal spray flu can be used for this purpose but it needs to be individually prescribed using a Patient Specific Direction (PSD).**

Intranasal vaccine is available via Immform.

### Cold Chain guidance in the event of a breach

There have been reports of cold chain breaches which have unfortunately led to practices having to dispose of a significant amount of flu vaccine, thereby leading to planned clinics having to be cancelled. As you will be aware, not all cold chain breaches need result in loss of vaccine and the Screening and Immunisation Teams must be informed so that they can advise accordingly and be aware in case of negative publicity. Whilst many CCG meds management teams support with cold chain breaches, please can you ensure that the local SIT is also informed.

The regional cold chain policy can be found on our website (<https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/medicines-optimisation/flu-resources/3907-east-of-england-cold-chain-policy-oct-2020/file>). The full list of actions are detailed on Page 9, however a short summary of key actions are listed below:

Quarantine and clearly label affected vaccine

Move the affected vaccine stock to an alternative environment. that is monitored and able to maintain recommended temperature of +2°C to +8°C. If this is not possible then keep the vaccines in the affected fridge closed until further advice has been sought.

Contact the manufacturers of the affected vaccines to assess which if any vaccines are still appropriate for use 'off label'.

Contact your local Screening and Immunisation Team to advise of the incident and confirm the action taken.

### Flu Marketing Campaign Toolkit

A flu marketing campaign toolkit has been produced by PHE, that includes an FAQ section and has been agreed for regional comms purposes. These Q&As are for Healthcare professionals to use, but the document is not designed to be posted on public facing websites. These Q&As are not to be confused with separate Q&As that NHSE will be disseminating imminently ('Primary Care Q&As'), which will provide public facing lines.

The link for the toolkit is

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/34/resources/5409>

I have also added the Campaign Resource Centre link to the Public Flu Vaccination Campaign, where more resources are available for use:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/34-public-flu-vaccination-campaign/resources>

The public facing campaign started on 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020. The broad reaching parts of the campaign (e.g. broadcast TV) was delayed for a minimum of two weeks to avoid creating additional demand. The early part of the campaign will promote the flu vaccination for 2-3-year olds, pregnant women, at risk groups only using more targeted digital channels only. These groups have been targeted as there is very healthy vaccine supply for 2&3-year olds and 3 supply routes for pregnant women (GP, pharmacy, trusts). In addition, these groups have the most ground to cover to reach the minimum 75% targets.

### **ImmForm data for 50-64 year olds**

Concerns have been raised regarding the ImmForm coding to be used for the 50-64 year old groups. It was confirmed that patients in risk groups should be coded as normal and additional coding for those not in the groups is available on ImmForm in 5-year intervals. This should avoid issues by age cohort and clinical risk group coding.

### **Vaccines for the 2021/22 season**

Seqirus are taking orders (which can be cancelled or amended) for next season, and it is understood that other manufacturers may have approached practices for early orders. JCVI have not yet made a recommendation about vaccines for next year, and any recommendations they make will need to be reviewed by NHSE/I to decide what will be reimbursed.

Therefore, it is likely that guidance regarding next years' vaccines is several weeks away from being released. Our advice would be for practices to await the official communications regarding next seasons vaccines before ordering, but if they do want to order early they should make sure that their orders can be cancelled or amended if the vaccines they have ordered are not recommended or reimbursed.

### **Additional resources/ training**

The Vaccine update Flu Special has now been published:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-update-issue-312-october-2020-flu-special-edition>

The Disease Surveillance Report for Flu is now combined with the COVID-19 Report from 08/10/2020, which is when reporting of official statistics for the flu season starts (reporting on week 40 data). This contains the first weekly vaccine uptake data from GPs. The link for the combined report is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports>

NHSE East Screening and Imms are starting a weekly drop-in 'Flu Bites' session for practice nurses, which allows nurses to ask and raise any flu queries they may have. Practice nurses can drop into the sessions at any time during the hour slot. The sessions are every Monday from 3-4pm starting Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October. The intention is to develop some FAQs from these sessions that can be shared more widely. Details to join are:

#### **[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)**

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Conference ID: 485 012 879#