

October 2020

Seasonal Child Influenza Programme Update

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your hard work this season so far in what are extraordinary circumstances. Some practices have already achieved the national ambition of 75% in their 2 and 3 year old cohorts – thank you and congratulations!

A Plea!

Child Flu stock has been available since the beginning of September, so it is disappointing that the uptake in the child cohorts is currently low across London. **If practices aren't vaccinating adult cohorts because they do not have stock, please could they focus on children as uptake in this cohort is worryingly low.** It is really important that this cohort is vaccinated early as children are the main source of transmission, thereby protecting other vulnerable groups. Local systems should communicate this message to patients and practices.

Call/Recall Letter

A national call/recall reminder letter for 2/3yo has been sent out during the week beginning 5th October and any children not vaccinated will receive a reminder phone call later in the season, followed by a second letter later this year (date tbc).

Reminder of the Eligible Cohorts

Eligible group	Type of Flu Vaccine	Venue
At risk children aged from 6 months to less than 2 years	Offer QIVe. LAIV and QIVc are not licenced for children under 2 years of age.	GP
At risk children aged 2 to under 18 years	Offer LAIV If LAIV is contraindicated or otherwise unsuitable offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• QIVe to children less than 9 years of age.• QIVc should ideally be offered to children aged 9 years and over who access the vaccine through general practice. Where QIVc vaccine is unavailable, GPs should offer QIVe.	GP and Schools/School Community Catch Up Clinic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is acceptable to offer only QIVe to the small number of children contraindicated to receive LAIV aged 9 years and over who are vaccinated in a school setting. 	
Aged 2 and 3 years on 31st August 2020 and have a DOB between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2018 inclusive.	<p>Offer LAIV</p> <p>If child is in a clinical risk group and is contraindicated to LAIV (or it is otherwise unsuitable) offer inactivated influenza vaccine (see above).</p> <p>For children not in at risk groups, this year if a parent refuses LAIV in some areas an alternative QIVe or QIVc vaccine may be offered to them where possible.</p>	GP
All primary school children aged 4-11 years and have a DOB between 1st September 2009 and 31st August 2016 inclusive. Secondary pupils in year 7 aged 11-12 years and have a DOB between 1st September 2008 and 31st August 2009 inclusive.	<p>Offer LAIV</p> <p>If child is in a clinical risk group and is contraindicated to LAIV (or it is otherwise unsuitable) offer inactivated influenza vaccine (see above).</p> <p>For children not in at risk groups, this year if a parent refuses LAIV in some areas an alternative QIVe or QIVc vaccine may be offered to them where possible.</p>	Schools/School Community Catch Up Clinic

Please note:

Some children who were due to commence school in September 2020 may have deferred due to COVID-19 and are not in school. These children are 4/5 years old with a DOB between **1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016 inclusive**. These children should be offered the vaccine by our school aged providers and will need to be referred there if they present at a practice.

National and Regional Comms

The National Flu Promotion campaign begins on Monday 26th October and will run across several media outlets, promoting all eligible cohorts. We will also run a pan London campaign on Social Media and other local outlets to promote the uptake of the child flu vaccine in early November.

Alternative to LAIV

For the avoidance of doubt, the centrally ordered supply of injectable vaccine available via ImmForm from September 2020 is to be used only to vaccinate the clinically at-risk children who require an alternative to LAIV. Additional supplies of vaccine procured centrally by the DHSC are expected to be made available, to enable an alternative vaccine to be offered to those not consenting on grounds of porcine gelatin content, from November 2020.

School Flu Programme

This commenced in all areas on the 5th October 2020.

The programme has been expanded this year to include children of school Year 7 age in secondary schools (those aged 11 on 31st August 2020).

Practices are reminded that if any children present at their practice, having missed the vaccine at school, to direct them to the local community clinics run by the SAV providers. These details have been previously circulated but are attached again for reference.

The National Immunisation Vaccination System (NIVS) digital solution is a new central reporting of school flu vaccination data that has been rolled out this year to support the NHS national flu programme call and recall service.

Any schools that decline the programme, should send the invitation from the SAV providers directing the children to their community clinic.

A national call/recall letter went out for these children in September and will be repeated later in the season to those that didn't receive the vaccine.

Resources

Resources for the children's programme are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-leaflets-and-posters>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-flu-programme#2020-to-2021-flu-season>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>