



England

Seasonal vaccinations 2023/24

Community pharmacy

Last updated: 15 September 2023

East of England Screening and Immunisation Team

Introduction

Welcome to the 23/24 seasonal vaccination bulletin from the NHS East of England Screening and Immunisation Team. Our aim is to help you increase the uptake of seasonal vaccinations, by providing key information and resources, which are summarised in this slide pack.

The flu and COVID vaccination campaigns started on 11th September, with cohorts being rolled out throughout the coming weeks. The aim of the flu and COVID programme for 2023 to 2024 is for all eligible groups to have been offered a vaccine, and providers should aim to equal or exceed last season's uptake particularly in clinical risk groups.

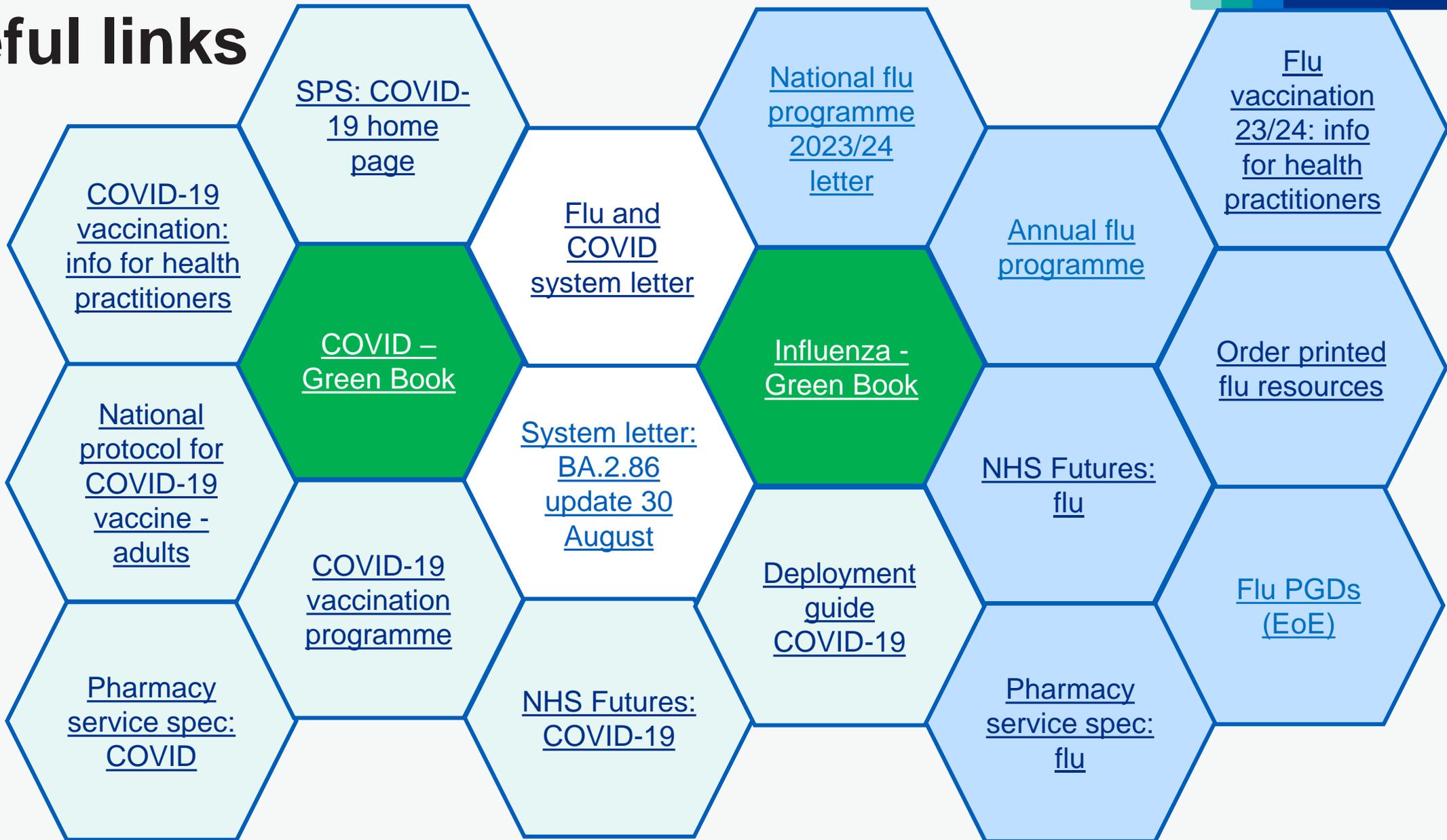
This bulletin may be shared with your pharmacy teams and any other interested parties.

If you have any questions, the team can be contacted throughout the season at the following addresses:
Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes: england.immsqa@nhs.net
East Anglia - england.eaimms@nhs.net
Essex - england.essexatimms@nhs.net

Please also watch out for an updated bulletin later in the season.

Best wishes,
East of England Screening and Immunisation Team, NHS England

Useful links





PharmOutcomes

The PharmOutcomes system should be used to record flu vaccinations in community pharmacy settings.

The system offers contractors access to the following functionality:

1. The use of pre-consult. Introduced last year, this app will support entry of patient information ahead of the vaccine appointment. Please follow the link to access the guidance: <https://outcomes4health.org/o4h/help/home?flu>
2. A Flu template- Pharmacy teams can complete the initial screening front of house if required and pass the information through to the pharmacist to complete the vaccination stage of the service after review of the screening questions.
3. GP Notification via MESH. When the flu record is saved a message will be sent to the patient's GP practice via the Message Exchange For Social Care and Health (MESH). This is a much more efficient way to transfer patient information to GP Practice.
4. Direct link to MYS for claim management. When records are saved for the flu record, a claim is automatically sent to the NHS BSA.

We encourage you to continue building good working relations with the GP practices and ensure that all notifications for NHS vaccinations given in pharmacies make their way into the GP practice system. The Screening and Immunisation teams in East of England have worked with providers to ensure GP practices have signed up to receive notifications on PharmOutcomes. Your support in encouraging that message is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or require more information about PharmOutcomes please contact: helpdesk@phpartnership.com

Flu: eligibility and uptake ambition

The aim of the influenza programme for 2023 to 2024 is to demonstrate a 100% offer and providers should aim to equal or exceed last season's (2022 to 2023) uptake particularly in clinical risk groups, children aged 2 and 3 years old, and pregnant women.

Eligible groups	Vaccines
Those aged 65 years and over	Egg grown quadrivalent Influenza vaccine (aQIV) Or Recombinant quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVr) Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVc) (only where aQIV or QIVr is not available)
At those in a clinical risk group (aged 18 to 65), including pregnant women and those in long-stay residential care homes, carers and close contacts of immunocompromised individuals	Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVc) or Recombinant quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVr) Egg-grown quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVe) (only where QIVc or QIVr is not available)
At risk children aged from 6 months to less than 2 years in GP Practices	Give QIVc (Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine) 'off label' use. If QIVc is not available give QIVe.
At risk children aged 2 to under 18 years	Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) unless contraindicated (or it is otherwise unsuitable) offer QIVc. If QIVc is not available give QIVe.
All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023 to be vaccinated in GP Practices	Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV)
All primary school and secondary school (years 7-11) aged children	Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) unless contraindicated or where parents object to porcine gelatine, then offer QIVc (aged 2+).
Frontline staff employed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a registered residential care or nursing home registered domiciliary care provider a voluntary managed hospice provider Direct Payment (personal budgets) or Personal Health Budgets, such as Personal Assistants (who have no employer led occupational health scheme) 	Those 18-65 receive the same vaccine as those in a clinical risk group aged 18-65. (QIVc or QIVr) Those over 65 year should receive the same vaccine as those in the aged 65 and over group. (aQIV or QIVr)

[POSTER: Flu vaccines 2023 to 2024 season](#)

[POSTER: Flu vaccines for children and young people 2023 to 2024](#)

[LEAFLET: The flu vaccination: who should have it and why](#)

Flu vaccines 2023 to 2024 season

6 months to less than 2 years in a clinical risk group ^(M)	2 years to less than 18 years in eligible year groups or in a clinical risk group ^(M)	18 years to less than 65 years ^(iv) in a clinical risk group ^(M) and pregnant women	65 years and over		
<p>QIVc (Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine) 'off label' use</p> <p>or QIVe (Quadrivalent influenza vaccine, egg grown) if QIVc not available</p> <p>1⁽ⁱ⁾ or 3⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ 4⁽ⁱⁱ⁾</p>	<p>No contraindications to LAIV</p> <p>Quadrivalent LAIV (Live attenuated influenza vaccine, nasal spray suspension)</p> <p>2⁽ⁱⁱ⁾</p>	<p>If LAIV contraindicated or otherwise unsuitable⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾</p> <p>QIVc (Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine)</p> <p>or QIVe (Quadrivalent influenza vaccine, egg grown) if QIVc not available</p> <p>1⁽ⁱ⁾ or 3⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ 4⁽ⁱⁱ⁾</p>	<p>QIVc (Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine)</p> <p>QIVr (Recombinant quadrivalent influenza vaccine)</p> <p>or QIVe (Quadrivalent influenza vaccine, egg grown) if QIVc or QIVr not available</p> <p>1 5 or 3 4</p>		
<p>Cell-based Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine ▼ CSL Seqirus</p> <p>QIVc</p> <p>1 Egg-free</p>  <p>licensed from 2 years of age</p>	<p>Fluenz Tetra AstraZeneca</p> <p>LAIV</p> <p>2</p>  <p>licensed from 2 years to less than 18 years of age</p>	<p>Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine Sanofi</p> <p>QIVe</p> <p>3</p>  <p>licensed from 6 months of age</p>	<p>Influvac sub-unit Tetra Viatrix (formerly Mylan)</p> <p>QIVe</p> <p>4</p>  <p>licensed from 6 months of age</p>	<p>Supemtek ▼ Sanofi</p> <p>QIVr</p> <p>5 Egg-free</p>  <p>licensed from 18 years of age</p>	<p>Adjuvanted Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine ▼ CSL Seqirus</p> <p>aQIV</p> <p>6</p>  <p>licensed from 65 years of age</p>

COVID: eligibility and vaccine types

Please check link for most up to date guidance: [FINAL Current Cohort Eligibility - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

Seasonal vaccination: Autumn/Winter 2023/24			
Eligible cohorts As recommended by JCVI			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult aged 65[†] years and over, irrespective of place of residence • A resident (of any age) in a care home for older adults[‡] • Individuals aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as defined in Tables 3 and 4 in Green Book, Chapter 14a • Frontline health and social care workers • Individuals aged 12 to 64 who are household contacts (as defined in Green Book, Chapter 14a) of those with immunosuppression (see 'Immunosuppression' rows of Tables 3 and 4) • Individuals aged 16 to 64 who are carers (as defined in Green Book, Chapter 14a), and staff working in care homes for older adults 			
Age group	Vaccine*	Dose volume	Vaccination schedule
18 years and over	Comirnaty Original/Omicron BA.4-5	0.3mL dose	A single dose may be offered irrespective of prior vaccination status, providing there has been at least 91 days ago since the previous dose
12 to 17 years	Comirnaty Original/Omicron BA.4-5 (PGD / National Protocol not yet published)	0.3mL dose	
5 to 11 years	TBC	TBC	
6 months to 4 years	Comirnaty 3 (Three) (Original) Concentrate	0.2mL diluted dose	A two-dose primary schedule is required, with an interval of at least 91 days. As this cohort commenced vaccination recently, some may become eligible for a subsequent seasonal dose, providing an interval of at least 91 days has been met during the campaign.
†Individuals who turn 65 years of age by 31 March 2024 can be vaccinated at any point in the campaign		‡Care home for older adults as defined through CQC registration	*New variant vaccine timeline yet to be confirmed. See the Deployment Guide for the latest deployment information, start dates and key milestones.

Additional information Also view the clinical sections of the [COVID-19 Vaccination Bulletins](#) and [Green Book, Chapter 14a](#) for more details

- A Patient Group Direction (PGD) and National Protocol for adults are available [here](#). A PGD and National Protocol for 5 to 17 year olds will be available later. There will be no PGD or National Protocol for those aged 6 months to 4 years. A local Patient Specific Direction (PSD) can be used.
- Vaccine handling guidance and template SOPs are available from Specialist Pharmacy Service [here](#).
- There is no need to defer immunisation in individuals after recovery from a recent episode of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection. Vaccination can be offered if clinically well.
- Information about vaccination for those individuals a clinician may consider eligible for additional doses on a case-by-case basis, including timing, is available in the [Green Book, Chapter 14a](#).
- When mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are not considered clinically suitable, VidPrevtyn Beta is recommended as an alternative for adults aged 18 years and over. Vaccination for those aged under 18 years in whom mRNA vaccines are unsuitable requires an individual clinical judgement.

Co-administration of flu vaccines

Providers are encouraged to align delivery of the flu vaccination with other commissioned vaccination programmes for which the patient may be eligible where it is clinically acceptable, operationally feasible, and where the patient is content. This includes:

- **COVID-19 vaccines**

These can be given together with any flu vaccines for eligible cohorts; read more [here](#) or in the [green book](#).

- **Pneumococcal vaccines**

Flu and pneumococcal vaccines can be given together as well; for more information, see the [green book chapter](#).

- **Shingles**

The guidance on this has **changed** recently, and **Shingrix can be co-administered alongside all flu vaccines** without an interval between vaccines. More information can be [found here](#).

Coadministration of all the above vaccines will not be possible in community pharmacy due to current commissioning arrangements, however promotion of outstanding vaccines and signposting to general practice is encouraged.

Please refer to the [Green Book, chapter 19 \(Influenza\)](#) for further clinical information for healthcare professionals regarding flu vaccination.

Flu uptake data 2022/23 (%)

Area	At risk 6mths-2yrs	Aged 2	Aged 3	Pregnant	All under 65 at risk	Aged 65 and over
EAST OF ENGLAND	10.8	46.6	48.5	34.3	50.7	80.9
MID AND SOUTH ESSEX ICB	6.5	40.4	42.5	30.2	46.5	78.2
BEDFORDSHIRE, LUTON AND MILTON KEYNES ICB	14.9	45.5	46.7	32.6	48.2	79.2
SUFFOLK AND NORTH EAST ESSEX ICB	10.7	48.7	51.0	34.2	52.4	82.2
HERTFORDSHIRE AND WEST ESSEX ICB	14	48.7	49.6	37.1	51.4	80.7
NORFOLK AND WAVENEY ICB	10.9	50.4	53.2	37.0	54.2	82.8
CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH ICB	7.5	47.5	50.2	34.6	51.8	82.0

COVID uptake data – spring booster 2023 (at least 2 doses)

Area	All patients aged 65	At Risk patients aged 65 plus	At Risk patients aged 50 to under 65	At Risk patients aged 40 to under 50	At Risk patients aged 25 to under 40	At Risk patients aged 16 to under 20	At Risk patients aged 12 to under 16	At Risk patients aged 5 to under 12
EAST OF ENGLAND	39	47.4	5.2	6.1	1.7	0.6	0.3	0.2
MID AND SOUTH ESSEX ICB	37.2	44.7	4.2	5.0	1.2	0.5	0.2	0.1
BEDFORDSHIRE, LUTON AND MILTON KEYNES ICB	33.8	40.9	3.7	4.1	1.1	0.6	0.1	0.0
SUFFOLK AND NORTH EAST ESSEX ICB	41.0	50.3	6.2	7.0	1.8	0.5	0.3	0.1
HERTFORDSHIRE AND WEST ESSEX ICB	38.2	46.8	5.4	6.4	1.8	0.8	0.2	0.1
NORFOLK AND WAVENEY ICB	43.3	52.8	6.8	8.4	2.5	1.2	0.6	0.5
CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH ICB	38.9	47.4	5.5	6.7	1.9	0.4	0.2	0.1



Engaging the ‘at risk cohorts’

Key messages:

- These vaccines will help protect you against serious complications that could put you in hospital.
- Individuals with certain health conditions such as diabetes and issues affecting lungs, heart, kidneys, liver or immune system, are at higher risk of severe complications if they get flu or COVID. It is especially important that they get vaccinated.
- The vaccines protect you, your family and friends, and are much better than having COVID or flu!

Tactics to improve uptake include:

- Educating your whole workforce on eligible groups vaccine is essential to enable supportive face-to-face conversations with patients across a variety of encounters and contexts ([see training slide](#))
- Appointing a member of the team to communicate, answer questions for adults and parents with children in the ‘at risk’ cohort.
- Working with local GPs, health and care professionals to target and support groups with low uptake
- Put up and share marketing materials about the vaccines in your pharmacy ([see comms slide](#))

Marketing and communications

National materials available to download or order:

- [Flu vaccination: easy-read flu vaccination resources - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Influenza vaccines marketed in the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Order flu or COVID publications [Home - Health Publications](#)
- [Health and Social Care Workers Winter Vaccinations Campaign Resources | Winter vaccinations | Campaign Resource Centre \(dhsc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [National toolkit: 2023 Autumn/Winter flu and COVID-19 campaign - CommsLink - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)
- Further COVID-19 resources expected in coming months: [COVID-19 vaccination programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



NHS

Get your free flu jab

Some people with a learning disability can get very ill if they get flu.

The best way to avoid flu is to get a free flu jab.

NHS
GP surgery

You can have the flu jab at your GP surgery.

Pharmacy +

Or you can have the flu jab at a pharmacy.

If you are scared of needles, tell the nurse. You may be able to have the vaccine as a nose spray instead.

Supporting people with a learning disability

People with learning disabilities may be eligible for flu and COVID vaccines, as might their family, carers and paid supporters. If you have patients in this category, talk to them about arranging their vaccines.

Consider putting reasonable adjustments in place to help people with learning disabilities have the flu and COVID vaccinations, by sharing easy read information where relevant and consulting the guidance linked opposite.

[Simple text information for adults and children leaflet](#)

[Easy Read Flu Leaflet](#)

[Flu vaccinations: supporting people with learning disabilities guidance](#)

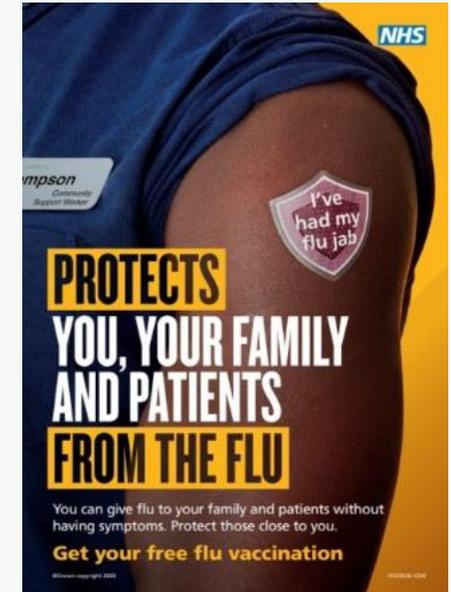
[Supporting set of slides that can be used by as a training resource.](#)

Health and social care workers

The flu vaccine **should be provided by the employer** as part of the organisation's policy to prevent the transmission of infection. As in previous years, **community pharmacies are covered to vaccinate their own staff.**

Where employer-led occupational health services are not in place, flu vaccination for social care and hospice workers employed by registered residential or domiciliary care providers as well as those employed through Direct Payment or Personal Health Budgets to deliver domiciliary care to patients and service users will be **available through community pharmacy and general practice.**

COVID-19 vaccine may be offered through health and social care employers or you can book the vaccine through the [National Booking Service](#) or by calling 119. All eligible frontline staff will continue to be able to self-declare on the National Booking Service (which includes participating pharmacy and GP sites), and can also get vaccinated in care home settings alongside residents.



Flu and COVID vaccination training

The e-learning courses for both flu and COVID-19 vaccination consist of 3 knowledge sessions and 3 assessment sessions and can be accessed here:

[Flu Immunisation - elearning for healthcare \(e-lfh.org.uk\)](https://e-lfh.org.uk)

[COVID-19 Vaccination - elearning for healthcare \(e-lfh.org.uk\)](https://e-lfh.org.uk)

The logo for 'elearning for healthcare' (elfh) features the lowercase letters 'elfh' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the text is a horizontal bar composed of several colored segments: pink, blue, and light blue.

elearning for healthcare

Other links that you may find useful:

- [NHS England » Community pharmacy seasonal influenza vaccine service](#)
- [Flu immunisation training recommendations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [National flu programme slideset \(2023-2024\)](#)
- [National COVID programme slideset \(2023-2024\)](#)
- [National protocol for COVID-19 vaccine \(adults\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Check: right vaccine, right cohort

In previous years, vaccine errors have been reported across all age groups. Staff should be vigilant about potential errors that may arise due to picking the incorrect vaccine type.

Please refer to the PGD and the national protocol.

If you have any questions, please contact us at:

Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes:
england.immsqa@nhs.net

East Anglia - england.eaimms@nhs.net

Essex - england.essexatimms@nhs.net

Any vaccine administration errors should be reported. National guidance provides advice to healthcare professionals in these circumstances.

Further information can be found [here](#).

Put up posters to remind staff:

- [POSTER: Flu vaccines 2023 to 2024 season](#)
- COVID posters TBC [COVID-19 vaccination programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Frequently asked questions – flu

If an individual has had confirmed influenza recently and they are in an at risk group should they still have the vaccine?

Anyone eligible to receive the vaccine should still have it even if they have had confirmed influenza, either recently or in the past.

Can we co-administer flu vaccine with COVID-19, shingles and pneumococcal vaccines?

It's safe and convenient to co-administer COVID-19 vaccine and the pneumococcal vaccines together, and we would encourage this wherever feasible. Shingrix can also be co-administered alongside all flu vaccines.

Which vaccines have porcine gelatine in them and is it possible to get a vaccine without this?

Porcine gelatine is used in Fluenz® Tetra®, the nasal spray vaccine that protects children against flu. For those who may not accept the use of porcine gelatine in medical products, injected flu vaccine is available as an alternative.

Can the flu vaccine be given to women who are breastfeeding?

The flu vaccine can be given to breastfeeding women; however, they are not eligible for an NHS vaccine unless they are in a clinical risk group.

At what stage of pregnancy should pregnant women be offered the flu vaccine?

All pregnant women should be offered an inactivated influenza vaccine regardless of their stage of pregnancy.

Are all people with asthma eligible for an NHS flu vaccination under the national flu vaccination enhanced Service?

Only people that have asthma that requires continuous or repeated use of inhaled or systemic steroids or with previous exacerbations requiring hospital admission are eligible for the flu vaccine.

Frequently asked questions - COVID

Why is the printed vaccine vial expiry label shorter than the over labelled expiry on the outer carton?

From time to time, the MHRA may approve batch specific variations to the Marketing Authorisation of COVID-19 vaccines, meaning that some batches may have shelf lives that are different from labelled manufacturer's expiry date. Central vaccine stock is thawed (usually the day before distribution) and an updated fridge storage expiry date is added to the outer carton of the box by specialist logistical partners (SPLs). **Any shelf-life extension will have been applied before you receive the vaccine.** If you receive thawed vaccine from an SPL you **do not need to take any further action** and **must not** extend the expiry date further. See the full information on [SPS here](#)

Why are seasonal vaccinations being brought forwards?

The NHS has been asked to bring forward the delivery of seasonal vaccinations following the latest expert guidance on the new BA.2.86 Covid variant. The NHS will be working quickly to ensure as many eligible people as possible are vaccinated by the end of October, in line with the latest guidance. You can read more in the press release [here](#) or the updated system letter [here](#).

My question hasn't been answered, where can I find more Q&A materials?

Other Q&As relating to the COVID-19 can be found on NHS Futures: [FAQs - Autumn / Winter 23-24 COVID-19 and Flu Vaccination Campaign - acceleration of programme for new variant - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

Are there any sessions where I can ask the screening and immunisation questions?

Yes, there are weekly, live Teams sessions with NHS East of England colleagues that you can attend. Email the screening and immunisation team admin to be sent the invites: england.pheast@nhs.net

Thanks for reading

Have a question that hasn't been answered?

Email:

Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes: england.immsqa@nhs.net

East Anglia - england.eaimms@nhs.net

Essex - england.essexatimms@nhs.net