

## Childhood seasonal influenza vaccination programme 2013-14 FAQs

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) relating to the childhood seasonal influenza vaccination programme in England have been agreed with NHS Employers, NHS England and the General Practitioners Committee of the BMA.

### 1. What is the age range for the childhood seasonal influenza vaccination programme?

The age range for the childhood seasonal influenza vaccination programmes is patients who are aged two or three years on 1 September 2013, respectively. This means that all patients aged either two or three years on 1 September 2013 will be included in the vaccination programme cohort even if they turn four during the vaccination timeframe of 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014. Essentially a patient who is three years of age on 1 September is eligible to be vaccinated even if they turn four on the 2 September.

The DOB range would be: 2 Sept 2009 - 1 Sept 2011.

### 2. Can health care assistants (HCAs) administer vaccinations for the childhood seasonal flu programme?

Yes, suitably trained HCAs can provide vaccinations under patient specific directions (PSDs), but ultimately the responsibility lies with the prescriber. As long as individuals are named and assessed for provision of this service and with the governance emphasis on training and competency of HCAs.

### 3. The original service specification stated that where patients are not able to have Fluenz®, contractors will be required to make an alternative vaccine available and that a supply of TIV has been purchased centrally to cover children who are contra-indicated. The updated specification contradicts this and states that 'practices will be expected to procure TIV themselves'. Which is correct?

The original specification was incorrect. Practices will be required to procure alternative vaccine for their contra-indicated patients as per the process and costs associated with the general seasonal flu vaccinations programme. When using their own supply of alternative vaccine on contra-indicated two and three year olds, practices will be able to claim back the personal administration (PA) fee as well as the £7.64 item of service payment.

A small central supply of TIV will be available for practices to request, if they find they have not ordered sufficient stock of alternative vaccine.

### 4. The tripartite seasonal flu letter relating to two and three year olds states that all supplies of Fluenz® will expire by 16 January 2014, but the service specification states that the programme will run until 31 March 2014. What should practices do for patients attending the practice between 16 January – 31 March 2014 requiring vaccination?

The driver for the flu vaccination programme is that flu vaccinations are offered before the virus starts circulating. Historically, vaccination patterns have shown that most GPs complete their flu vaccination programme before the middle of December. Fluenz® availability extends to the middle of January, offering appropriate opportunity for GPs to vaccinate the

target population. However if a GP is presented with a child after mid-January who he or she feels would still benefit from vaccination then they can offer the inactivated vaccine (TiV) as appropriate. In the event that practices do not have sufficient vaccines to cover these patients there is guidance available via PHE around how to procure additional vaccines.

**5. Why are children aged two and three years eligible for vaccination under this enhanced service as the original recommendation was for two year olds only?**

Initially this programme was only going to be rolled out to two year olds. A decision was later taken to extend the programme to include three year olds and will remain the target age range for this year. This decision was informed by new additional advice from the JCVI.

Further extension of this programme will be informed by pilot sites and through collaboration between Public Health England, NHS England and the Department of Health (DH). Pilots this year (Autumn 2013) are looking at how the programme can be extended to pre-schools and primary schools (i.e. up to the age of 11 years). The current plan is to extend the roll out in 2014/15, with further piloting looking to roll out the programme to secondary schools.

**6. Will the childhood seasonal flu vaccination programme continue annually as with the current seasonal flu programme, or will one dose of Fluenz® offer life-time immunity for patients?**

The intention is that this will be an annual vaccination. Further information about any future extension of the programme to include patients aged between four and up to 17 years will be available from Public Health England in due course.

**7. Do practices have to purchase Fluenz® for their two and three year old patients?**

Practices are not required to purchase Fluenz® for their two and three year old patients, as this will be supplied centrally. This includes all two and three year old patients irrespective of whether or not they considered to be at-risk.

Practices will however be required to purchase alternative vaccine for contraindicated patients (see question 3 above).

**8. Do practices have to purchase Fluenz® for their at risk children aged four and over?**

Practices will be required to purchase Fluenz® for their at risk children in other age groups (i.e. four and over) where it is suitable. The ordering of Fluenz® for 2-3 year olds and 4-16 year olds can be done together as it is up to the practice how they use the vaccine.

Please refer to the guidance in the Green Book for further information  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/147958/Green-Book-Chapter-19-v4\\_71.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/147958/Green-Book-Chapter-19-v4_71.pdf)

**9. Why does the price differ for some of the 2013/14 vaccination programmes i.e. the shingles programme has an IOS fee of £7.63 and the shingles catch-up programme has an IOS fee of £7.64?**

The prices for these programmes differ due to the timings and process for setting or agreeing the vaccination programmes.

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