

Toolkit to support organisations to deliver key flu messages to target audiences

This toolkit is designed to help organisations to encourage those to access a free flu vaccination.

This includes organisations and people who work with:

- Those with long term health conditions
- Early years setting aged 2-4 years
- Parents of children aged 2 – 11 years old
- Carers
- Those who are pregnant
- Over 65 years of age

This toolkit provides access to bespoke materials aimed at specific target audiences.

Within each suite of materials you will find the following items;

- Newsletter and website text
- Social media messages and graphics for each social media channel
- Posters
- Email signatures
- Digital screen graphics

This toolkit has been split into two sections;

1. general information and guidance and
2. the bespoke targeted information for specific audiences.

1. Preventing the spread of winter illnesses including flu

Flu is very infectious and easily spread to other people. You're more likely to give it to others in the first 5 days.

Flu is spread by germs from coughs and sneezes, which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours. The flu virus is found in droplets that come from coughing and sneezing from those that have it or may be incubating it.

To reduce the risk of spreading flu:

- wash your hands often with warm water and soap if not available use hand sanitiser
- use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- bin used tissues as quickly as possible

Steps to reducing the spread of illnesses

Many steps introduced to reduce the spread of Covid will also reduce the spread of seasonal illnesses, such as flu. Here are some practical actions for your organisation to take as you continue to adhere to Covid care guidelines.

Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures

You should increase the frequency of handwashing and surface cleaning by:

- encouraging people to follow the [guidance on hand washing and hygiene](#)
- providing hand sanitiser around the setting whether this is a hostel, care home, soup kitchen, day centre, drop in centre or other workplace, in addition to washrooms
- frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly known as touch points
- enhancing cleaning for busy areas, for example in a hostel consider the reception, entrances and exits for instance and communal type areas
- setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets
- providing hand drying facilities – either paper towels or electrical dryers

Maintain 2m social distancing, where possible

Where possible, you should maintain 2m between people by:

- putting up signs to remind workers, residents and visitors of social distancing guidance
- avoiding sharing workstations
- using floor tape or paint to mark areas to help people keep to a 2m distance
- arranging one-way traffic through the setting/workplace if possible
- switching to seeing visitors by appointment only do remotely what you can using telephone and video contact if possible.

Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Where it's not possible for people to be 2m apart, you should do everything practical to manage the transmission risk by:

- considering whether an activity needs to continue for the business to operate and what classes as essential only activities.
- keeping the activity time involved as short as possible
- using screens or barriers to separate people from each other
- facemasks to be used in communal areas in settings
- using back-to-back or side-to-side working whenever possible

- staggering arrival and departure times
- reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering'

What to do if you catch the flu

Flu symptoms come on very quickly and can include:

- a sudden fever – a temperature of 38C or above
- an aching body
- feeling tired or exhausted
- a dry cough
- a sore throat
- a headache
- difficulty sleeping
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or tummy pain
- feeling sick and being sick
- The symptoms are similar for children, but they can also get pain in their ear and appear less active.

Could it be coronavirus?

If symptoms are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste, it could be coronavirus (COVID-19). Please follow the coronavirus toolkit for advice on how to manage coronavirus and the vulnerable adult testing pathway.

How to treat flu yourself

To help you get better more quickly:

- rest and sleep
- keep warm
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to lower your temperature and treat aches and pains
- drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration (your pee should be light yellow or clear)
- A pharmacist can help with flu
- A pharmacist can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies.

Be careful not to use flu remedies if you're taking paracetamol and ibuprofen tablets as it's easy to take more than the recommended dose.

2. How to obtain a flu vaccination

Who can have a flu vaccine free on the NHS

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk.

This is to help protect them against catching flu and developing serious complications.

Individuals should have the flu vaccine if they:

- are 65 years old or over
- are pregnant
- have certain medical conditions (list below)
- are living in a long-stay residential care home or another long-stay care facility
- receive a carer's allowance, or you're the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill
- live with someone who's at high risk of coronavirus (on the NHS shielded patient list) or you expect to be with them on most days over winter

Later in the year, the flu vaccine may be given to 50-64-year-olds. More information will be available later in the autumn.

However, if someone is aged 50-64 in an at-risk group, they should not delay having their flu vaccine.

Frontline health and social care workers are also eligible to receive the flu vaccine. It's their employer's responsibility to arrange and pay for this vaccine.

You may also be able to have the flu vaccine at the GP surgery or a local pharmacy offering the service if you're a frontline health or social care worker employed by a:

- registered residential care or nursing home
- registered homecare organisation
- hospice

You can also have the flu vaccine if you provide health or social care through Direct Payments (personal budgets) or Personal Health Budgets (such as Personal Assistants) or both.

Flu vaccine for children

[You can access the bespoke toolkit for parents of 2-3 year olds here.](#)

The flu vaccine is free on the NHS for:

- children over the age of 6 months with a long-term health condition
- children aged 2 and 3 years on 31 August 2020 (that is, born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2018)
- children in primary school
- children in year 7 (secondary school)
- Children aged between 6 months and 2 years who are eligible for the flu vaccine will receive an injected flu vaccine.

Children eligible for the flu vaccine aged between 2 and 17 will usually have the nasal spray flu vaccine.

65s and over and the flu vaccine

[You can access the bespoke toolkit for the over 65s here](#)

An individual is eligible for the flu vaccine this year (2020 to 2021) if they're aged 65 and over on 31 March 2021 (that is, they were born on or before 31 March 1956).

For example, if someone is currently 64 but will be 65 on 31 March 2021, they do qualify.

It's important that they benefit from having the most effective vaccine.

For those aged 65 and over they'll usually be offered the adjuvanted trivalent vaccine. This vaccine contains an adjuvant that helps the immune system make a stronger response to the vaccine.

Pregnant women and the flu vaccine

[You can access the bespoke toolkit for those who are pregnant here](#)

If someone is pregnant, they're advised to have the injected flu vaccine, regardless of the stage of pregnancy they have reached.

That's because there's strong evidence to suggest pregnant women have an increased risk of developing complications if they get flu.

If someone is pregnant, they'll benefit from the flu vaccine because:

- it reduces the chance of getting serious complications of flu, such as pneumonia, particularly in the later stages of pregnancy
- it reduces the risk of having a miscarriage, or a baby being born prematurely or with a low birthweight, because of flu
- it'll help protect the baby, as they'll continue to have some immunity to flu for the first few months after their birth
- It's safe to have the flu vaccine at any stage of pregnancy from conception onwards.

[Find out more about flu vaccine in pregnancy.](#)

Flu vaccine for people with medical conditions

[You can access materials created to target those with specific long term health conditions here.](#)

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to anyone with a serious long-term health condition, including:

- chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#) (that requires an inhaled or tablet steroid treatment, or has led to hospital admission in the past), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#) (COPD), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
- chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
- [chronic kidney disease](#)
- chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
- chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), or cerebral palsy
- a learning disability
- [diabetes](#)
- problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell disease](#) or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
- being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
- This list of conditions is not definitive. It's always an issue of clinical judgement.

A GP can assess an individual to take into account the risk of flu making any underlying illness they may have worse, as well as their risk of serious illness from flu itself.

The vaccine should always be offered in such cases, even if they're not technically in one of the risk groups.

If an individual lives with someone who has a weakened immune system, or they're on the NHS shielded patient list, they may also be advised to have a flu vaccine.

Flu vaccine for carers

[You can access materials designed to target carers here.](#)

If an individual is the main carer for someone who's elderly or disabled, speak to a GP or pharmacist about having a flu vaccine along with the person they care for.

Read more about the flu vaccine for carers on the [Carers UK website](#).

Adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults

[There are a range of materials for you to use here in order to assist in communicating key flu messages to this audience.](#)

These resources are aimed at people who have, or care for someone with a learning disability. They provide advice on:

- the flu virus and why you need a vaccine every year
- signs of flu
- flu jabs and where to get one

People with a learning disability and their carers can get a free flu jab from their doctor or pharmacist.

The Helping you to stop getting flu leaflet can also be useful for people whose first language is not English and can also be for people with a low reading age.

[Protect yourself from flu – easy read poster](#)

[Protect yourself from flu – easy read leaflet](#)

[All about flu and how to stop yourself from getting it](#)

Businesses

Successful uptake of the flu vaccination is paramount this year. Each winter it is important, but in light of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic this winter it is more important than ever. A number of employees may be eligible for the flu vaccination for free on the NHS from their GP or local pharmacy. A full list of the eligible criteria can be seen at the top of this toolkit. Even if you don't fall within one of the eligible categories, you are still able to obtain a vaccine from your local pharmacy for a small fee.

[Materials for businesses to use can be accessed here.](#)

Migrant communities and asylum seekers

[Flu vaccinations – who should have it and why – Polish translation](#)

[Flu vaccinations – who should have it and why – Hindi translation](#)

[Flu vaccinations – who should have it and why – Bengali translation](#)

[Flu vaccinations – who should have it and why – Urdu translation](#)

[Flu vaccinations – who should have it and why – Punjabi translation](#)

[Protecting your child against flu – polish translation](#)

[Protecting your child against flu – Hindi translation](#)

[Protecting your child against flu – Bengali translation](#)

[Protecting your child against flu – Urdu translation](#)

Prisons

[Flu guidance for prisons and patients in secure settings](#)

[Flu guidance for children and young people's secure estate](#)