

## Important NHS advice – Care Staff Flu Vaccinations

### To all social care providers

Dear colleague in care,

Influenza or flu is a serious illness in vulnerable people, potentially causing deaths and complications such as pneumonia. Up to 20% of care workers get infected with flu each year and they can pass it on to their loved ones and to the vulnerable people they care for.

To limit risk of flu in this high-risk population **we ask that you support your staff to get vaccinated and to keep an up-to-date company record of their flu vaccinations.** Good staff vaccination against flu is the most effective way to prevent flu outbreaks in care homes and other settings, and to minimise disruptions to essential health and social care services.

The NHS free flu vaccination program has been extended this year to include all social care staff employed by a registered care provider, who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable service users who are at increased risk from exposure to flu; those aged 65 and over, with a learning disability or a long-term health condition.

The program can help you meet your duty of care as an employer, and responsibilities to reduce risks of harm to vulnerable care users under the social care Code of Practice.

The program supports existing arrangements, so please continue with any plans you already have.

Flu is not yet circulating widely, so we urge you to do everything you can to ensure your staff and service users are protected in good time by advising your staff about flu vaccinations and encouraging them to get vaccinated as soon as possible.

You can support your staff to get vaccinated by:

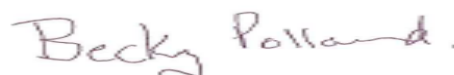
1. Showing front-line staff that vaccination is the right thing by getting vaccinated yourself as a senior manager, and letting your colleagues know you have done this
2. Distributing our myth-buster factsheet (attached) to staff
3. Advising staff they can get vaccinated for free by taking appropriate ID (e.g. badge, payslip or employer letter) to a local pharmacy (see [birmingham.gov.uk/flu vaccine](http://birmingham.gov.uk/flu vaccine)) or their GP – phone for an appointment
4. Allowing staff time off for their vaccination as far as possible; you could ask your local pharmacy about running a vaccination session for staff and service users on-site

With thanks for your support in helping to minimise risks to essential staff and vulnerable people.

Yours sincerely,



**Graeme Betts**  
Corporate Director of Adult Social Care



**Becky Pollard**  
Director of Public Health