

South West Public Health

Section 7a Screening & Immunisations Bulletin



Issue 122: 16th January 2023

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ICARS Newsletter 13/01/2023

Please find this week's ICARS newsletter attached to this email.

Notification of National Flu Communications

The following was issued Thursday 12th January by the national team.

Please be aware that the flu programme is commissioned to run until 31st March 2023.
Vaccines should still be available to order from manufacturers / Immform. If you have any difficulty giving or signposting people to receive their flu vaccination, please contact ICARS at england.swicars@nhs.net.

NHS Delivers 20 Million Flu Jabs As Critical Care Cases Rise

More than 20 million people in England have had their flu jabs as the number of patients in critical care with the virus hits its highest yet this winter, new NHS figures show today.

Around four in five people aged 65 and over, as well as more than three in five of those aged 50 to 64, have had their flu vaccine.

Data published today shows flu inpatients are still much higher than they have been since the pandemic hit, with 5,263 people in hospital with the virus last week.

The number of patients in critical care with flu has risen again to 349, up by around five percent on the previous week.

While 20 million people have had a flu jab and more than 17 million people have had a covid booster, there are still a number of eligible people who have not taken up their winter vaccinations, placing themselves at an increased risk of serious illness.

The NHS is still offering protection to thousands of people every day at thousands of sites across the country.

NHS Director of Vaccinations and Screening Steve Russell said: “The NHS has been able to deliver more than 37 million vaccinations this winter, including 20 million flu jabs, thanks to the determination and hard work of NHS staff.

“This has provided crucial protection to the most vulnerable in our society but we are still in the eye of the storm with the highest number of patients in critical care with flu we have seen so far this winter.

“So the message is clear – if you are eligible for a vaccination and yet to come forward, I would strongly urge you to join the millions who have already had theirs and book your winter jabs through your GP, local pharmacy or on the National Booking Service, and protect yourselves and your loved ones from serious illness.”

Those eligible for the flu jab include all people aged 50 and over, health and social care workers, people aged six months and over and considered “at risk” because of another medical condition, as well as pregnant women and kids aged two and three.

Children are able to receive their vaccination through a nasal spray and are encouraged to get the vaccine to not only protect themselves but cut transmissions to others at risk.

The NHS has prepared extensively for winter and industrial action, with plans already in place to manage rising demand including around the clock system control centres, additional bed capacity, more mental health support for ambulance services and community falls services.

The weekly winter situation report can be found on our statistics pages: Urgent and emergency care daily situation reports 2022-23.

Those eligible for the flu jab are:

- People aged 50 and over
- Those aged between six months and 49 years with a specified health condition
- some secondary school-aged children
- Two and three-year-olds
- Pregnant women
- Primary school-aged children
- Those in care homes
- People who are carers, as set out in the Green Book
- Frontline healthcare workers
- Frontline social care staff who do not have access to occupational health schemes
- Household contacts of people with weakened immune systems.

Patient Group Direction (PGD) Template to Support Outbreaks Where Chickenpox is Co-Circulating with Scarlet Fever in Non-Immune Children from 9 Months of Age and Adults

UKHSA have published a new PGD for Varicella Vaccine (live) here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/varicella-vaccine-live-pgd-template>

The clinical guidance it supports is here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-managing-outbreaks-in-schools-and-nurseries>

The UKHSA Health Protection team have requested cascade of this information to NHS colleagues who need to be sighted on this.

Further Information

Back issues of these bulletins and attachments are available on the NHSEI website [here](#). If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please contact the Integrated Public Health Team at england.swscreeningandimms@nhs.net