

To: NHS trust and foundation trust

- Medical directors
- Chief pharmacists

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www.england.nhs.uk
www.improvement.nhs.uk

7 February 2018

Dear colleague

Re: Vaccine ordering for 2018-19 influenza season

This letter advises NHS providers on influenza vaccine for the 2018/19 season and requires immediate action to ensure use of the most effective vaccines for healthcare workers.

Public Health England has concluded work to review clinical evidence in relation to influenza vaccines for use in the 2018/19 season and advise.

The quadrivalent influenza vaccine, on average, will offer superior effectiveness compared to the trivalent vaccine particularly during seasons when there is circulation of a B-lineage with a mismatch to that season's trivalent vaccine. The quadrivalent vaccine will then be likely offer clinical benefit with improved protection to the health care worker themselves in terms of reduced absence and illness, and also indirectly to their vulnerable patients as well.

It is therefore clear that for the 2018-19 winter season, NHS providers should be planning to offer the quadrivalent vaccine (QIV) for healthcare workers.

In light of the clinical evidence and our recommendation, we are asking you to review any orders for the 2018-19 winter season and ensure orders are placed in line with the evidence-based clinical view.

We are aware that planning for the 2018-19 influenza vaccination campaign is already well underway and many providers are in the process of placing orders for next season's influenza vaccines. Orders that are not in line with this guidance should be changed so as to use the most effective vaccine to protect the workforce and patients.

Suppliers have confirmed that there will be enough QIV to meet demand as long as quadrivalent vaccine orders are placed by **29 March 2018**.

Yours sincerely



Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHS England



Dr Kathy McLean
Executive Medical Director and Chief Operating Officer
NHS Improvement