

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination 2023

General Practitioners and Aboriginal Medical Services

Please distribute to all doctors and staff in your practice

1. *From April 2023, free influenza vaccines will be available to eligible people under the National Immunisation Program.*
2. *Immunisation Providers should target children under 5 years, Aboriginal people, pregnant women, medically-at risk patients and people aged 65 and over*
3. *Take the opportunity to ensure your patients are up to date with all vaccinations*
4. *Prepare your practice by reviewing the Influenza Vaccination Provider Toolkit 2023 available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/flu*

2023 Influenza vaccination

- Annual influenza vaccination from mid-April is the single most effective way to protect your patients and others from severe influenza and prevent hospitalisations and deaths.
- Equip yourself to make strong influenza vaccine recommendations, your vaccine recommendations matter. Refer to <https://www.ncirs.org.au/ncirs-fact-sheets-faqs-and-other-resources/influenza> for more information.
- Promote childhood influenza vaccinations, in 2022 only 30% of children aged 6 months to under 5 years were vaccinated against influenza.

Eligibility and priority groups

- Influenza vaccination is recommended for all people aged 6 months and over
- People at higher risk of serious influenza complications are eligible for free influenza vaccination under the National Immunisation Program
- Prioritise all children 6 months to under 5 years, Aboriginal people, pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy, people aged 65 and over and people with chronic medical conditions in your practice.
- Discuss influenza vaccination with other present family members
- More information about key at risk groups will be published in the ATAGI 2023 *Statement On The Administration Of Seasonal Influenza Vaccines* available from early March at <https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-technical-advisory-group-on-immunisation-atagi>

Co-administration with COVID-19 and other vaccines

- Influenza vaccines can be co-administered with COVID-19 vaccines.

- Take the opportunity to ensure your patients are up to date with all of their vaccinations
- Refer to the pneumococcal vaccination recommendations in the Australian Immunisation Handbook <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/resources/publications/pneumococcal-vaccination-for-all-australians>
- For more information visit, <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/covid-19-vaccines/advice-for-providers/clinical-guidance>.

Preparing your practice

- Read the **NSW Health 2023 Influenza Vaccination Provider Toolkit** available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/flu
- Ensure your practice software can report vaccinations to the **Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)**. Reporting of all vaccinations is mandatory. Further information is available at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/proda-provider-digital-access>. Aboriginal Medical Services will also need to complete the Australian Immunisation Register Application to Register as a Vaccination Provider available at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/application-air-provider.aspx>
- Ensure your practice is **registered for online vaccine ordering with the NSW Vaccine Centre** (<https://nsw.tollhealthcare.com/>). Call your local public health unit on 1300 066 055 if you have not already registered for online ordering. Faxed orders will not be accepted
- Visit our frequently asked questions and answers about influenza vaccination at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu.aspx>

Ordering influenza vaccine

- Your first order will be pre-allocated based on your previous year's vaccine usage, including reported expired and discarded vaccines.
- From **Tuesday 28 February 2023**, you will receive email instructions from the NSW Vaccine Centre regarding your first order allocation, please check your junk folder.
- You will be able to review and confirm your pre-allocation on **Monday 6 March 2023** as per the email instructions from NSW Vaccine Centre. Only confirmed orders will be delivered.
- Subsequent orders can be made online once you have received your initial order and have confirmed receipt of the order on the NSW Vaccine Centre online ordering system.
- There may be limits placed on subsequent orders to ensure equitable vaccine distribution to all providers in NSW.
- **Only schedule influenza vaccination clinics once vaccine supplies are received.**

Vaccine deliveries

- Influenza vaccine deliveries will commence when the vaccines become available and orders will be despatched to practices who have reviewed and confirmed their first order allocation.
- Due to the volume of orders at the beginning of the season, it takes around three to four weeks for the NSW Vaccine Centre to deliver all first influenza vaccine orders.
- Once you have received and confirmed your first order, you can place subsequent orders. Only order enough vaccines required for use in a maximum four-week period.

Further information

- NSW Health Influenza Immunisation website www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu.aspx
- NSW Health Influenza website www.health.nsw.gov.au/flu
- Contact your local Public Health Unit on **1300 066 055**