

## **BOB Flu Up-date No 1 (15.07.20)**

### **Introduction**

In order to support Primary Care across BOB in maximising flu vaccine uptake across the region, a team has been formed to provide fortnightly communications to Flu Leads of the most up to date guidance and topical issues leading up to the planned start of the programme (1<sup>st</sup> September-31<sup>st</sup> March 2021), and to monitor uptake during the season.

This is the initial BOB Flu Up-date for circulation to Flu Leads across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West CCGs. If you would like additional staff to be included in the Flu Lead distribution list, please email Hilary Munube, IP&C Lead, Oxfordshire CCG [h.munube@nhs.net](mailto:h.munube@nhs.net).

There are 2 Webinars planned in August and October to support the flu programme and invitation will be via the BOB Flu Lead distribution list. Should practice staff require flu related IP&C advice during the flu season, please email Hilary Munube, IP&C Lead, Oxfordshire CCG [h.munube@nhs.net](mailto:h.munube@nhs.net), and your query will be assigned to the most appropriate responder.

During flu season, vaccine uptake will be monitored fortnightly and where practices are challenged, support will be provided.

Immunisation is one of the most successful and cost-effective health protection interventions and is a cornerstone of public health. High immunisation rates are key to preventing the spread of infectious disease, complications and possible early death among individuals and protecting the population's health through both individual and herd immunity. The impact of COVID-19 on the NHS and social care has been visible to all, and this coming winter we may be faced with co-circulation of COVID-19 and flu. Those most at risk from flu are also most vulnerable to COVID-19. So, flu vaccination is one of the most effective interventions reduce pressure on the health and social care system this winter.

By providing flu vaccine uptake support across Primary Care in BOB, there will be greater opportunities to collaborate and share innovative ways to provide this valuable service during the challenging times of Covid 19.

This first communication covers:

- Current Guidance
- Preparing your Practice for Flu Clinics
- Immunisation Training
- Vaccine delivery update

## Current Guidance

The [National Flu letter 2020-2021](#) has listed the eligible groups as

- all children aged two to ten (but not eleven years or older) on 31 August 2020
- those aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- those aged 65 years and over
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- health and social care staff employed by a registered residential care/nursing home, registered domiciliary care provider, or a voluntary managed hospice provider.

Flu clinics are a major organisational feat under normal circumstances, coupled with the Covid precautions required, which makes this season flu programme a greater challenge. At this time, we anticipate that the guidance will advise us to follow [PHE's general primary care guidance on use of PPE](#) where there is sustained transmission of COVID-19. If this is the eventual guidance, it would require the use of disposable gloves, disposable plastic aprons, fluid-resistant face masks (FRSM) and eye or face protection (sessionally) for each immunisation.

NHS England & Improvement (NHSE&I) has confirmed that a working group comprising NHSE&I, Dept Health & Social Care (DHSC), and Public Health England (PHE) is considering the matter and how to obtain sufficient PPE for the flu season to support the programme.

## Preparing your Practice for Flu Clinics

While further guidance about how to manage the immunisation programme to reflect these circumstances will be issued by NHSE&I and PHE nearer the planned start of the programme, the aim of this briefing is to provide some early insight into the possibilities and to allow GP practices the time to reflect on how to manage Flu Clinics within the Covid parameters. No two practices are alike and therefore each practice will need to adopt different measures to mitigate risks to staff and patients as far as possible. Dispensing practices may face particular challenges in meeting social distancing requirements. We recognise you can only do your best within your own practice's constraints and resources.

Actions	Considerations
Prepare Flu lists	Draft flu letters/texts to encourage and reassure patients to attend for flu vaccination
Prepare Flu Clinic space	If there is a consultation room with external access, could this be used to facilitate a swift vaccine appointment without the need for the patient to enter the building
	Remove any unnecessary equipment/furnishings from the room, leaving only 2 wipeable chairs, hand washing facilities, PPE, decontamination wipes, recording (IT) facilities, vaccine supplies, communication (panic alarm/telephone), emergency equipment nearby.

	Select a room with external ventilation.
	Consider a one way system utilising 2 external doors for entry/exit.
	Consider ways to minimise the time the patient needs to be on site
	When confirming their appointment,
	Consider where a post-vaccination room maybe situated, in the event of a patient requiring monitoring post vaccine.
	Consider how socially distanced queues could be managed, including covered areas outside.
	Consider the use of car parks, particularly for shielding patients if able to vaccinate the patients in their vehicles
	Ensure clear signage to reduce patient footfall within the practice.
	In large practices, consider multiple consultation rooms to provide the service.
	Considering the number of patients who can safely be accommodated in the building.
	Consider extending opening hours / days to provide sufficient flu clinics given the additional time required.
	Consider training of additional staff to provide the service.
Invite patients to Flu Clinics	Remind patients not to attend if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 or self-isolating. Also explain the process which will be followed in the practice and any other points they need to be aware of.
	If the practice requires the patient to wear a face covering, inform them of this at invitation, give advice to patients on suitable clothing to wear to drive further efficiency in the time taken to provide the service.
	Advise the patient that a chaperone can be provided or can attend with the patient if this will facilitate a swift service.
Flu Clinics	Ask patients to sanitise their hands before entering the room.
	Ask patients to consider wearing a face covering or provide the patient with a face mask if the practice requires.
	Wipe down chairs, surfaces, keyboard / keyboard cover, pens (if used) between patients.
	Plan daily and post-session cleaning of the room
	Consider how normal practice services will operate during flu Clinics and keep patient flow separate with clear signage.

### Immunisation Training

Flu immunisation training for Primary Care across BOB as a webinar is currently under consideration, which would require a local competency sign off; further details shall be available in the next GP Bulletin update. Currently the training course [here](#) is available.

### Vaccine delivery update

Sanofi have confirmed the QIVe flu schedules for this year. They are as follows:

General practice - 4 slots:

25% week commencing 28 September

20% week commencing 12 October

25% week commencing 26 October

30% week commencing 9 November

All GPs should have received an email to encourage them to log on to their vaxishop account, they should all be registered for flu and have a unique ID code. All scheduling information will be on the system.