

25 million to be offered free NHS flu jab this winter

A trio of England's top medics have today (Friday 4 October) urged those at risk of suffering from or spreading flu to ensure they get their free NHS vaccination this winter.

The health service in England has prepared for its largest ever flu protection drive to help keep people well and ease pressure on urgent care services over the colder months.

The number of people eligible has topped 25 million this year as the offer of the vaccine is now extended to all primary school aged children – an extra 600,000 children. NHS commissioned school vaccination teams, maternity services, general practices and local pharmacies are all now gearing up to provide vaccines to primary school aged children, 2 and 3 year olds, those with underlying health conditions, pregnant women and older adults (aged 65 years and over).

Employers of frontline health and social care workers also have a responsibility to ensure their staff can get the free vaccine. A record number of NHS staff – almost 3 quarters of a million, or 70.3% of frontline workers – took up their workplace jab last year.

Professor Yvonne Doyle, Medical Director at Public Health England (PHE), said:

Every winter there is always the threat of a bad flu season. Flu is a serious illness and can even be deadly for the most vulnerable of our population.

That's why it's vital that we are prepared and always working to offer people better protection.

This year, more vaccines are available and every primary school child will be offered a flu vaccine. Children are 'super spreaders' of flu. Flu vaccination not only protects the children but it also protects other more vulnerable members of the community from a potentially horrible illness.

If you or your child are in an eligible group, make sure you get a flu vaccine. It's the best defence we have against an unpredictable virus.

Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical Director at NHS England, said:

People might think that flu is just a cough or cold, but actually

this serious illness can have devastating effects on people including causing death in some cases.

NHS services across England have been working hard to prepare for the winter season, including staff in every part of the country getting their flu jab in the coming weeks, so now we're appealing to the public to Help Us, Help You by ensuring that you, your children or relatives take up the free and convenient flu vaccine as soon as you can.

This year, a wider range of flu vaccines are available which should offer better protection. This includes the 'adjuvanted' vaccine which was offered to those aged 65 years and over for the first-time last year. The adjuvanted vaccine provided a higher level of protection compared to the standard non-adjuvanted vaccines in this age group last year.

In addition, a new cell-based vaccine which protects against 4 strains of flu (quadrivalent) will also be available. As the vaccine virus is grown in cells, rather than eggs, this avoids the changes that can occur when using eggs in the manufacturing process (egg adaptation). There is increasing evidence in recent seasons that egg adaptation may mean that vaccines do not work as well, particularly against the A(H3N2) virus strain. This vaccine should offer better protection for older people against flu than standard-dose, non-adjuvanted vaccines that are grown in eggs. The cell-based vaccine has been recommended for both older adults and for under 65s with underlying health conditions and pregnant women. Children will continue to be given the nasal spray vaccine unless they have a medical condition that means they should receive the injectable version.

Professor Jonathan Van Tam, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England, said:

Flu is a potentially fatal illness and one that can spread quickly. Alongside frontline healthcare workers, tens of millions of over-65s, children and adults in at-risk groups will be offered the vaccine this year and I would urge them, and those that care for them, to ensure this free opportunity is taken up in the coming weeks.

Having the vaccine is the single best way to protect against flu and will be an important step in preventing not only you, but your family, friends and colleagues from this debilitating illness.

Flu vaccination is the single best defence against what can be a serious illness. Flu is a highly infectious disease and can lead to serious complications particularly for people with underlying health condition such as COPD, bronchitis, emphysema, diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease or a chronic neurological disease like multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy and some learning disabilities. Flu on top of health conditions like these increases the chance of serious health complications resulting in a hospital visit.

NHS England is funding vaccines for social care and hospice workers, with older adults more vulnerable and liable to suffer more than most people if they do catch flu. Protecting children is also crucial for protecting the rest of the population as they tend to be 'super spreaders' of flu due to poorer hand hygiene.

Eligible adults are encouraged to get their free vaccine from their GP or pharmacy to help protect themselves and their families before flu reaches its seasonal peak.

As well as getting the vaccine, practising good hand hygiene by catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue, throwing it away and washing your hands after can help limit its spread – catch it, bin it, kill it.

For further information please contact:

NHS England and NHS Improvement works closely with PHE and the Department of Health and Social Care to provide and commission a range of public health services. This includes commissioning of flu immunisation services to a standard that will prevent the infections and outbreaks caused by flu viruses.

People who are eligible for the NHS flu vaccine this year include:

- those aged 65 and over
- those aged 6 months to 64 with a long-term health condition
- children aged 2 to 3 (on 31 August 2019) via their GP practice
- school children in years reception, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- pregnant women
- health and social care workers
- carers

Adults with chronic conditions need the flu vaccine because people with respiratory diseases like COPD, emphysema or asthma are seven times more likely to die if they catch flu compared to healthy adults, and people with cardiovascular problems like chronic heart disease or angina, or have had a stroke, are 11 times more likely to die. The risk is far worse for those with chronic liver disease, who are 48 times more likely to die if they get flu. Read [Green Book, Chapter 19](#).

PHE manages the supply and distribution of children's flu vaccines. For all other eligible populations, local providers (such as GPs and pharmacies) remain responsible for ordering vaccines directly from manufacturers for all eligible populations.

Flu is a viral infection that is spread through coughs and sneezes. Most people recover with rest in a week, but people with chronic conditions or who are over 65 should call NHS 111. Doctors may prescribe antivirals in some cases which can help speed up recovery but is not a cure.

Getting the vaccine from the NHS if you are eligible and practising good hand hygiene is the best way to prevent yourself from getting flu.

The flu vaccine typically starts to be distributed from September. The vaccine is offered through local GPs, pharmacies and within NHS school age immunisation programmes.

We cannot predict with certainty which strains will circulate in the UK this winter. The WHO makes recommendations for the composition of the northern hemisphere flu vaccine every year, and this is published 6 months in advance to allow for vaccine production times.

The cell-based quadrivalent vaccine which PHE and the NHS are recommending this year for people aged 65 and over and adults with underlying health conditions was licenced for use in this age group in January 2019. It has previously been used in other countries.

Reported end of season flu vaccine effectiveness for 2018 to 2019 against all strains was:

- 44.3% (95% CI 26.8, 57.7) across all ages
- 48.6% (95% CI -4.4, 74.7) for 2 to 17 year olds live attenuated influenza vaccine ('children's nasal spray') only)
- 44.2% (95% CI 21.3, 60.5) for 18 to 64 year olds (any vaccine)
- 49.9% (95% CI -13.7, 77.9) for those aged 65 and over (any vaccine)
- 62% (95% CI 3.4, 85.0) for those aged 65 and over (adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine only)

Help Us Help You

PHE's annual flu marketing campaign will run from early October into the beginning of November and will focus on pregnant women, parents of children aged 2 and 3 years old and adults with underlying health conditions. The campaign is part of the wider Help Us Help You winter campaign.

Help Us Help You encourages people to take appropriate actions, be that getting the flu vaccination or accessing the appropriate service, to better enable the NHS to help them.

It is an overarching brand which unifies a family of campaigns incorporating messages about flu, staying well in winter, NHS11, pharmacy and GP extended hours.

The campaigns will consist of TV, radio and digital advertising supported by search and partnership activity.

Remarks at the German Embassy by the

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster:

3 October 2019

Thank you, Peter – thank you for your welcome, and thank you also for inviting so many friends of Germany to your home here this evening.

They say that every cloud has a silver lining and sometimes silver linings have clouds as well.

When our current Prime Minister invited me to join his government, I was delighted and flattered but also a little bit sad.

Sad because in joining the government it meant that I was no longer able to fulfil the commitment that I'd entered into to visit Bayreuth this year, in order to enjoy the Festspiele.

And it meant that I was deprived of your company, Peter, as well as the wonderful music that I was so looking forward to.

And the links between our two countries – cultural, political and personal – are links which I cherish.

One of my first political experiences was attending a Young Koenigswinter Konferenz in Berlin and getting to know a rising generation then of German thinkers, business people, diplomats and journalists.

And since then I've had the opportunity to attend further Koenigswinter conferences to get to know people across the political and business spectrum in Germany.

And I'm always admiring – admiring of what modern Germany has achieved.

Because modern Germany stands as an example to us all of what democracy can achieve against odds that some once thought impossible.

If you look back at the history of modern Germany, you can see in Konrad Adenauer one of the towering statesmen of the last century.

You can see Ludwig Erhard, and the establishment of the social market economy – a model which combines free enterprise and social justice in a way that other countries have learnt so much from.

We've seen in the example of Willy Brandt an opportunity to try to bring together and to transcend divisions which some thought impossible to overcome.

And of course we saw in Helmut Kohl a chancellor who in a supreme act of statesmanship managed to bring the people of Germany together in a unity that we celebrate today.

And no-one should underestimate the scale and the measure of that achievement.

To take East Germany, which had been imprisoned in communism, and as a result its people having been denied freedom and free expression –

To take East Germany, to bind it with West Germany and to create from those two sundered parts a country which today is an example of democratic virtue and of civic spirit and of entrepreneurialism and solidarity, was an amazing historical achievement.

And it should continue to be celebrated.

But as the Bundeskanzler enlightened us today in Kiel, the work of German unity is a work that is always ongoing, as the work of unity for all politicians always is.

There are always challenges that pull us apart: political polarisation, economic divisions, and sometimes an increasingly raucous and strident political and media atmosphere.

There are temptations for people to pull apart rather than come together.

Well, the example of modern Germany reminds us how important it is to come together. And as the Ambassador also reminded us, it also shows that we can come together quickly when we recognise how important it is to set aside divisions.

Britain made its democratic decision three years ago to leave the European Union – and I know there will be many people in this room who will deeply regret that decision.

But also one of the things that I am grateful for, and I know that the British government is grateful for, is the way in which the German government and our friends in Europe respect that decision and have sought since then to ensure that that decision can be honoured in a way that makes sure that the links that have been forged on a personal and on a cultural and on an economic level can be preserved in the future.

And in the days ahead I hope we can secure our exit from the European Union in a way that ensures that the deep ties that bind both our countries can be enhanced and refurbished in the days to come.

Because Britain and Germany have so much in common.

Not just – I think Britain and Germany do have much in common – but my view is that both of us are robust and successful democracies, both of us are examples of how you can combine commitment to a free enterprise economy with a commitment to social justice.

And both of us have a critical role to play in making sure that the rules-based international order – those values that have come to be known as western values, but in truth are universal democratic values – are upheld and

defended.

And that's why I want to thank not just the German Ambassador but also the government of the Federal Republic of Germany for their friendship – and in particular to thank the Bundeskanzler for the leadership that she has shown and continues to show in demonstrating that modern Germany is an example to us all, and an example that we can celebrate.

And with that I just want to say to all our friends in Germany – thank you for your friendship, thank you for your solidarity, and thank you for your example.

Thank you.

5 millones de libras para proyectos de investigación sobre resistencia a los antimicrobianos entre el Reino Unido y Argentina

Los fondos serán destinados a 5 proyectos de investigación bilateral entre el Reino Unido y la Argentina.

El aporte proviene del Fondo Global de Innovación en RAM (GAMRIF) del Reino Unido y tendrá como contrapartida un aporte equivalente del Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas de la Argentina (CONICET) constituido por personal y recursos de laboratorio.

Esta semana, investigadores británicos y argentinos lanzaron en Buenos Aires el programa 'Herramientas para controlar la RAM en el medio ambiente'.

Los proyectores receptores de los fondos son los siguientes:

Las investigaciones beneficiarán a países de ingresos medios y bajos que son los más afectados por la resistencia a los antimicrobianos.

El programa estará administrado en el Reino Unido por el Consejo de Investigación en Biotecnología y Ciencias Biológicas (BBSRC) y el Consejo para la Investigación del Medio Ambiente (NERC) en representación del GAMRIF, y por el CONICET en la Argentina.

El uso de drogas antimicrobianas en la ganadería es uno de los principales factores del desarrollo y propagación de la RAM. Los microorganismos resistentes a los antimicrobianos pueden transmitirse del animal al ser humano por contacto directo o a través de la cadena alimentaria y del medio

ambiente, lo que representa una importante amenaza potencial para la salud humana.

[Mark Kent](#), Embajador Británico ante la República Argentina, dijo al respecto:

El anuncio de hoy es otra muestra del compromiso del Reino Unido de trabajar conjuntamente con la Argentina en el abordaje de problemas globales. La resistencia a los antimicrobianos es una amenaza que provoca la muerte de cientos de miles de personas en todo el mundo cada año.

Este programa de investigación representa lo mejor del Reino Unido y la Argentina en materia de capacidad técnica, y tendrá impacto a escala internacional. Combatir la resistencia a los antimicrobianos constituye una prioridad mundial, por ello resulta crucial investigar la RAM en el sector agropecuario y en el medio ambiente.

Este proyecto bilateral es una excelente noticia, no solo porque es bueno para la ciencia británica y la argentina, sino también porque los beneficios pueden compartirse con las economías en vías de desarrollo y emergentes de todo el mundo.

Dijo el Dr. Jorge Tezón, Gerente de Desarrollo Científico y Tecnológico del CONICET:

Se necesitan investigaciones de alta calidad para incrementar nuestra capacidad de tratar eficazmente las infecciones bacterianas en seres humanos y animales. Es por ello que el CONICET ha decidido asociarse con el Ministerio de Salud y Acción Social del Reino Unido, el BBSRC y el NERC y promover proyectos de investigación conjunta.

A nivel nacional, la Argentina promueve la labor interdisciplinaria de distintos actores nucleados bajo el concepto de “una sola salud”. Este programa de investigación reviste especial importancia porque conlleva la interacción de diversas instituciones nacionales abocadas al problema de la RAM.

También creemos que este proyecto puede beneficiar a otros países y regiones del mundo que sufren los mayores efectos de la RAM y ayudarlos a mejorar la seguridad alimentaria y la economía que la sustenta.

NHS England tasked with keeping Royal Shrewsbury A&E open

The independent panel visited the trust to hear directly from clinicians at both sites, who reported that the local area needed a new model of hospital care to provide their patients with consistently safe, high quality emergency care and treatment 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The independent panel recommended the emergency care centre for the region will remain at the Royal Shrewsbury hospital.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said: "I want all patients to receive excellent healthcare throughout their life, no matter where they live. Any changes to services are rightly based on clinically led decisions at a local level.

"I am delighted we are investing £312 million for acute services in the local area.

"Having listened to and accepted the advice of independent clinical experts, I have asked NHS England to come forward with proposals within a month on how they will keep the A&E in Telford open as an A&E Local so that the Princess Royal Hospital can continue to deliver the urgent and emergency care the residents in the growing town of Telford need."

Plans for A&E Locals are being developed by NHS England and Improvement, and the Department is in close contact with the NHS on these developments."

The Health Secretary recognises that patients in Telford must continue to have access to emergency healthcare services and has therefore written to NHS England tasking them with keeping open the A&E at the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford as an A&E Local.

Letter from the Home Secretary to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service

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Updated to add html version of the letter

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