

PHPU Newsletter

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[PHPU Website](#) [PHPU Newsletters](#)

Improving Flu vaccine uptake in clinical risk groups

Over the last few months more than 40 GP practices have been involved in a pilot project designed to improve seasonal flu vaccine uptake in clinical at risk groups. Participating practices have completed a self-audit of their flu immunisation processes and have received an individualised feedback report providing specific recommendations for improvement.

Practices have been encouraged to share this feedback report with key members of the primary care team with the aim that these community partners will encourage patients to attend on their behalf. To date, practices have shared the feedback report among their practice staff and some have shared it with their local community pharmacists, attached health visitors and district nurses.

The final project report will not be available until the end of the flu season but several key recommendations include :

- Encouraging staff to be immunised themselves and thereby nurturing a pro immunisation attitude
- Learning from neighbouring practices with higher uptakes
- Encouraging an opportunistic approach i.e. nab and jab
- Sending reminders to all eligible patients in the at risk groups, including pregnant women and carers

Practices may wish to consider implementing these recommendations for the remainder of the flu season. Any practice wishing to participate in this initiative or wishing more information should contact frances.notman@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Measles alert for travellers to Europe

Primary care staff are asked to note that due to current outbreaks of measles in some European countries particularly Romania, Italy and Germany, every opportunity should be taken to ensure that those who are known to be travelling to these countries are fully protected i.e. have had 2 doses of MMR. Please refer to the [HPS Weekly Report Dec 19th](#) for more details.

Uncertain/incomplete vaccination status – updated guidance

Public Health England has updated its [advice](#) on vaccination of individuals with uncertain or incomplete immunisation status to reflect the introduction of Infanrix hexa® vaccine.

CMO letter - authorisation for GPs to use antivirals

The CMO has recently issued a [letter](#) authorising the use of antivirals in General Practice. This follows recent HPS surveillance information indicating that there is now a substantial likelihood that people presenting with an influenza-like illness are infected with an influenza virus.

Prescribers are reminded to endorse all prescriptions for antivirals with the reference "SLS". Pharmacists can only dispense antivirals at NHS expense if this endorsement is made by the prescriber.

GPs should also note the [recent decision](#) by the Crown Office that certifying doctors will not be required to notify Procurators Fiscal of deaths associated with seasonal influenza until further notice.

Seasonal turkey advice

There is advice on the [Foods Safety Scotland](#) website for those who are planning to cook turkey or other type of bird during the festive season.

The advice covers defrosting, preparation, cooking, and how to store left-overs.

Vaccines and storage - seasonal reminders

Fridges

As the end of the year approaches, practices should review vaccine stock in their fridges, ensuring only the minimum is held to reduce the impact of vaccine loss during cold chain incidents. This is particularly important as many practices will be closed for two four day periods over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

During the holiday period staff arrangements may result in changes to normal deputising arrangements for monitoring fridge temperatures. One way of minimising problems is to encourage as many staff as possible within the practice to undertake a brief (20 minutes) e learning module about the cold chain at <http://nhs.learnprouk.com> (NHS staff) or <https://community.learnprouk.com> (GP practice staff). Once registered, click on 'more learning' and go to the 'pharmacy' tab.

Childhood pentavalent vaccines

Infanrix hexa® is now established in the childhood immunisation programme. Practices are asked to return any remaining Infanrix IPV + Hib® and Pediacel® stock to the Pharmacy Distribution Centre for destruction. Please complete a [vaccine return form](#) and return it by [email to PDC](#) who will then arrange uplift.

Rotarix®

The presentation of Rotarix® is changing from a prefilled oral applicator to a tube. While the vaccine, dose and route of administration remain unchanged there is a small change to the way the vaccine is prepared before administration. Staff are asked to refer to the [Summary of Product Characteristics](#) to familiarise themselves with the change. For a short period of time it is expected that both presentations of the vaccine will be in use, the NHSGGC Rotavirus® PGD has been amended to include both.

Fluenz Tetra®

Fluenz Tetra® has a shorter expiry than injectable flu vaccine and stock in GP practices is due to expire in mid-January. It can't be guaranteed that suitable replacement stock will be available so practices should endeavour to complete the immunisation of their Pre-5 child cohort as soon as possible.

NHSGGC – Festive Booklet

NHSGGC has produced a [Festive Booklet](#) which provides details on the availability of NHSGGC services over the Festive weekends and how to access them.

There is also a list of [community pharmacists](#) within the NHSGGC area and their opening hours on the public holidays.

Merry
Christmas
and Happy
New Year

