

## NHSScotland Seasonal Flu Vaccination Distribution Update September 2018

This e-newsletter is part of a series of updates to help keep Health Boards informed about flu vaccine distribution arrangements for the 2018/19 season. Please pass on this update to interested stakeholders within your board. Sent direct to: Health Board Flu Distribution Stakeholder Group, VHC Group, Immunisation Coordinators, DoPs, NAPS, Primary Care Pharmacy Leads.

### Smooth Start to 2018/19 Flu Vaccine Distribution

The first deliveries to GP practices were made on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. The distributor, Movianto is supplying over 1000 delivery locations across Scotland, GP practices and vaccine holding centres.

### Vaccine Availability

Due to UK-wide supply constraints, the adjuvanted trivalent vaccine (aTIV) is being made available across the UK in three consignments in September, October and November. Practices have been asked to split their orders for aTIV in line with the UK delivery schedule as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> order – 40% of total aTIV requirement (for delivery in September)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> order – 20% of total aTIV requirement (for delivery in October)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> order - 40% of total aTIV requirement (for delivery in November)

The centralised distribution model has provided the ability to control the release of the vaccine to ensure equitable share of the vaccine across Scotland. Ordering for the October delivery will open on Monday. Movianto will be contacting all GP practices directly with information on their maximum order quantity.

All other vaccines are in stock and available for practices in Scotland to order, including the quadrivalent vaccine which has been subject to supply problems in England.

### Prioritisation of aTIV for persons aged 75 and over

There has been recent press coverage surrounding differences in the 2018/19 flu vaccines programme in Scotland and how this differs from the rest of the UK.

In November 2017 the JCVI issued updated recommendations advising the use of adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine:

*“Given the low influenza vaccine effectiveness seen in the over 65- 74 year olds over several A(H3N2) dominated seasons, and non-significant VE for all types of influenza in the over 75s, the Committee agreed that use of aTIV in those aged 65 years and over would be both more effective than the non adjuvanted vaccines currently in use, and also cost-effective.”*

*“The Committee agreed that if a change in approach were to be considered, switching vaccination of the 75 years and upwards age group to adjuvanted vaccine would be the first priority, given the un-adjuvanted inactivated vaccine showed no significant effectiveness in this group.”*

The Scottish Government updated its policy in line with the JCVI recommendations and National Procurement published a tender to secure the adjuvant vaccine for all persons aged 65 and over. At the same time NHS England also wrote to GP practices advising them to purchase aTIV for all persons aged 65 and over.

Within their tender response Seqirus, who are currently the only manufacturer of adjuvanted trivalent vaccine (aTIV), advised that due to the sudden increase in demand they would need to phase deliveries of aTIV into the UK across three (3) consignments in September, October and November. This phased delivery schedule is UK-wide.

The phased delivery schedule imposed by Seqirus meant that they would not be able to supply sufficient quantities of vaccine at the start of the seasonal flu campaign in October when GP practices would target their 65 and over age group. A decision was therefore taken by Scottish Government post National Procurement tendering for the vaccine to prioritise aTIV for persons aged 75 and over, in line with JCVI recommendations, and continue to use the standard trivalent vaccine (TIV) for persons aged 65 to 74, thereby ensuring sufficient supply of vaccine to vaccinate as many at-risk persons as possible as early as possible.

#### **Communication and Support**

Communications are being issued directly to GP Practices to keep them informed. Updates can also be found on the the flu page on the Practitioner Services Division website <https://nhsnss.org/services/practitioner/medical/flu-vaccine-distribution>

If you have any questions then please contact the National Procurement pharmacy team (Laura Ferguson: 0131 275 6725 / [nss.fluvaccineenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:nss.fluvaccineenquiries@nhs.net))