

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 83/2020

FOR ACTION

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social
Care Board/HSC Trusts/ NIAS

GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board

All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward
distribution to practice staff)

OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

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Our Ref: HSS(MD) 83/2020

Date: 9 December 2020

Dear Colleague

CONTINUATION OF SEASONAL FLU PROGRAMME BY PEER VACCINATORS

Action Required

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all staff involved in administering seasonal influenza vaccine.

Introduction

1. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of changes in the seasonal flu vaccination programme aimed at increasing uptake among Health and Social Care Workers.
2. The COVID-19 Oversight Board previously determined that flu clinics in the Trust Occupational Health flu vaccination programme for Health and Social Care Workers (HSCW) would be stood down from 6 December to make way for the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.
3. However as there may be periods of time where there is not any COVID vaccine to deliver while awaiting new stock to arrive, it has been determined that peer HSCW flu vaccination should now continue on an opportunistic basis. In particular it is important that HSCWs working in care homes are still given the opportunity to receive the flu vaccine.
4. The peer vaccinator and HSCW staff member must adhere to the requirements relating to ensuring a 7 day gap between receiving a flu vaccine and subsequently receiving the COVID vaccine. Flu vaccinations can be

administered between COVID vaccination doses as long as the 7 day interval between vaccinations is observed.

5. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all who have worked hard to administer flu vaccines so far this year. Uptake rates have increased from this time last year which is to be commended due to the challenges the programme has faced so far.
6. I would ask all staff who have not yet received their flu vaccine to make sure they are vaccinated as soon as possible to ensure the HSC is prepared for normal winter pressures and unexpected events, and to protect staff from the potentially serious consequences of concurrent infection with influenza virus and SARS-CoV-2 virus. Staff can continue to receive the vaccine via the community pharmacy scheme
7. I would also ask OH teams to continue to submit monthly flu uptake data to the PHA as this is essential to monitor vaccine uptake

Yours sincerely



DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer

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