



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination and Health Care Workers (HCWs)

2016/2017 Influenza Season

Facts about flu

In healthy adults symptoms of flu can range from

- ▶ classic influenza to
 - ▶ mild illness
- ▶ asymptomatic infection

Symptoms	Cold	Classic Flu
Fever	Rare	Very common
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General aches/ pains	Slight	Often severe
Fatigue/ Weakness	Mild	Sudden onset and can last up to 3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Cough, Chest discomfort	Mild to moderate	Common and can become severe

Symptoms of head cold and flu

How Does the Flu Spread?

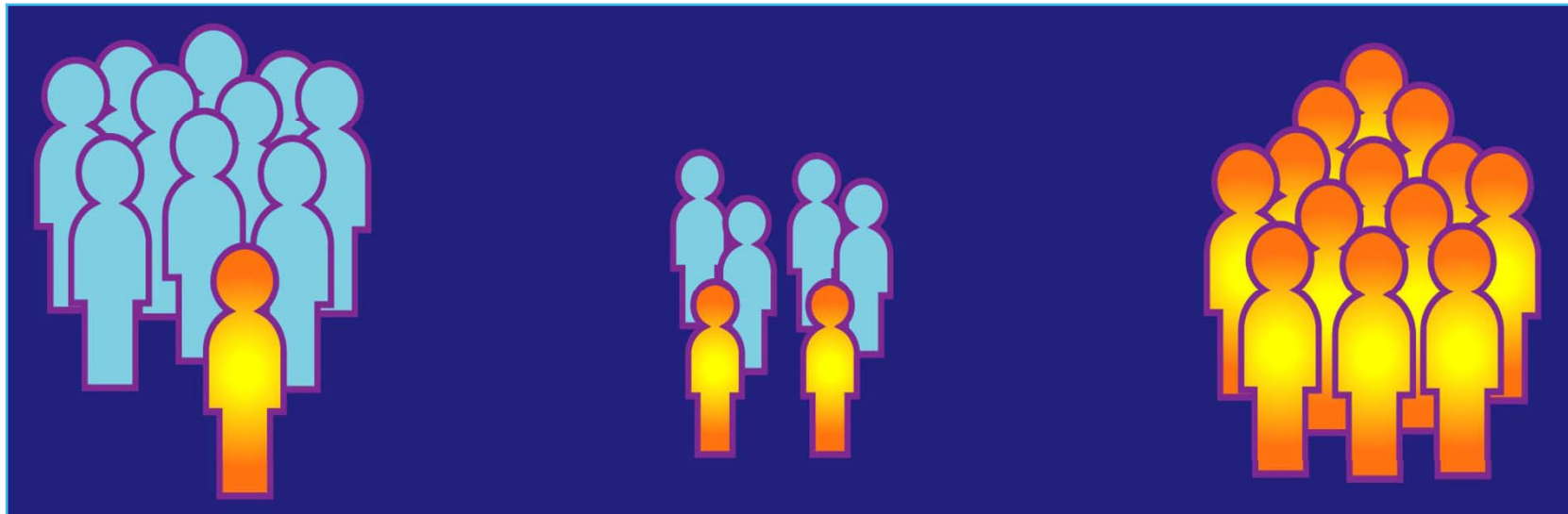
- Flu is spread through tiny droplets sprayed into the air when a person who has the flu coughs, sneezes, or even talks.



Courtesy: CDC/ Brian Judd

Everyone is at risk

≈100 million people infected every year
in Northern Hemisphere*



1:10 adults

1:3 children

10,000-40,000
deaths in the USA

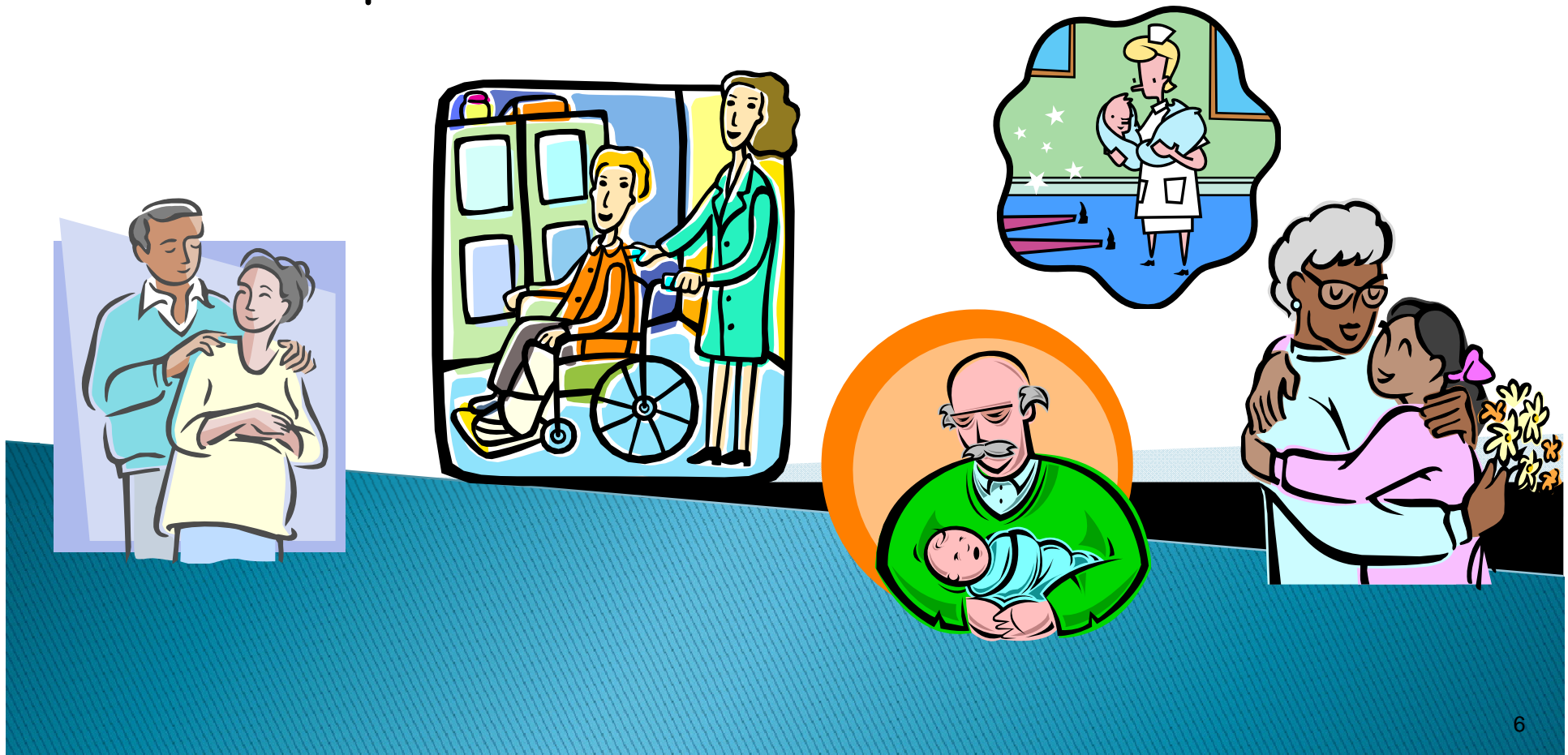
*In North America, Europe, and Japan.

ESWI. Available at: <http://www.eswi.org/library/bulletins/0499-4.html>.

CDC. *MMWR*. 2001;50(RR-04)1-46.

Good News!!

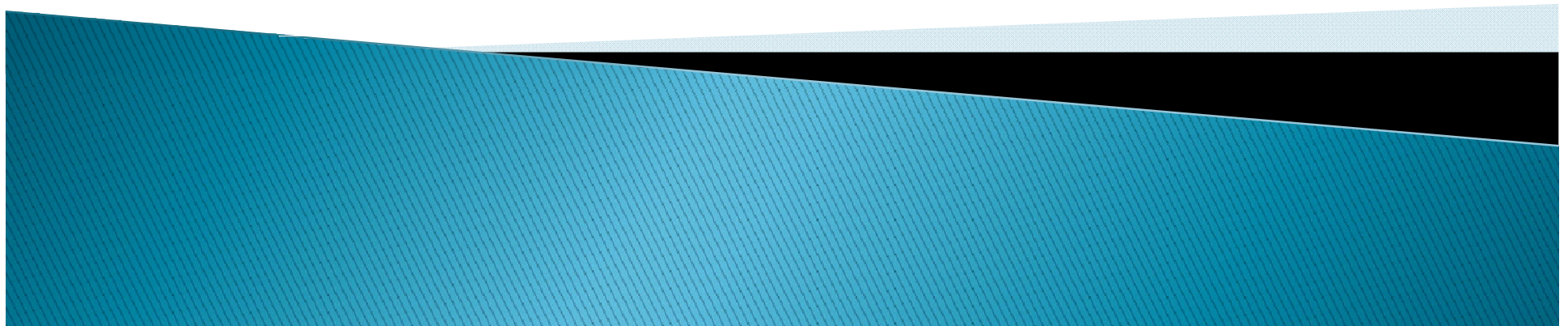
Seasonal flu vaccine is considered as the best means of protection from flu



Why vaccinate Healthcare staff

Flu vaccination is an integral component of
Infection Control within the healthcare setting

HCW have increased risk
Employer responsibility - duty of care
Outbreak management plans



Who to include in healthcare vaccination programme

ALL staff including pregnant staffexcept

- ▶ Permanent exclusion

History of previous severe reaction

Allergy to any component of the vaccine

Word on egg allergy

- ▶ Temporary exclusion

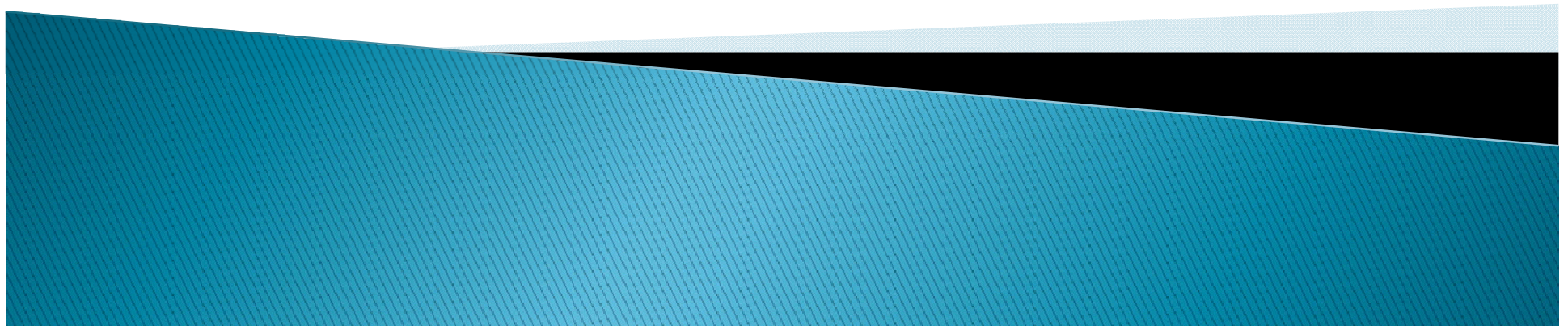
Fever on the day $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$

Acute infectious illness

Received immunoglobulin in last 3 months

Facts about the flu vaccine

- ▶ Inactivated vaccine
- ▶ Immune system response - makes protective antibodies (takes about 14-21days)
- ▶ These antibodies then protect when in contact with actual flu



How safe is the flu vaccine

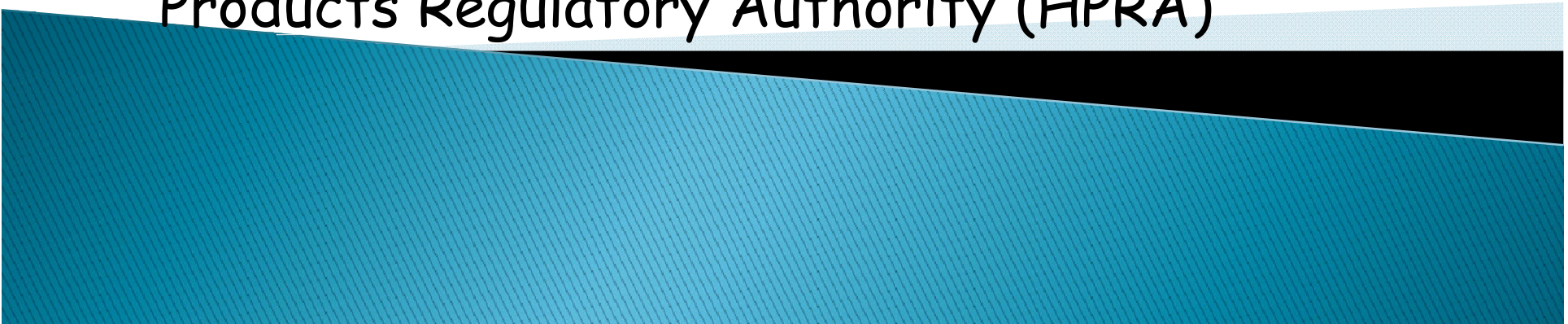
In use for 60+ years

Millions of people worldwide have received it

Reactions reported are mild and self limiting

Licensed by European Medicines Agency -
Ongoing monitoring of side effects

Side effects must be reported to Health
Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA)



Vaccine side-effects

Very Common

Headache

Myalgia,

Injection site pain, tenderness, bruising

Common

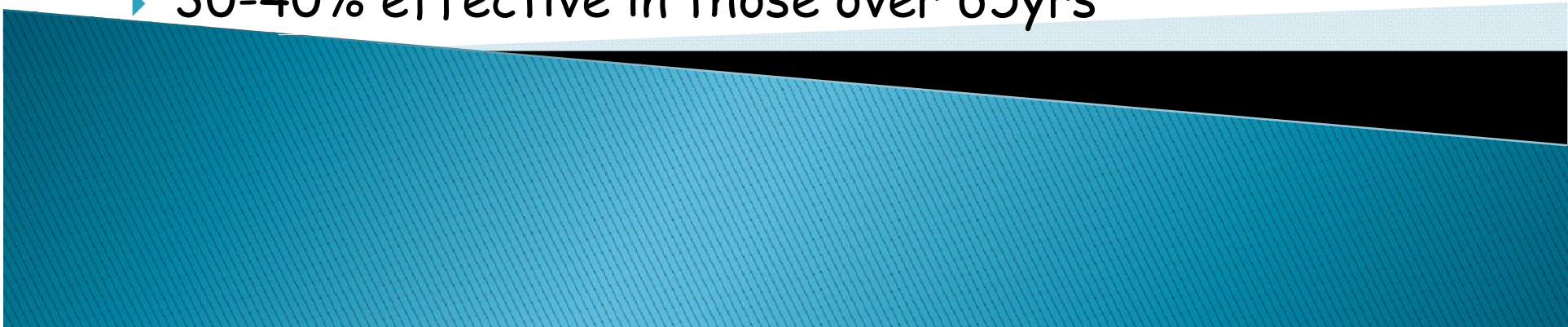
Increased sweating

Fever

Arthralgia

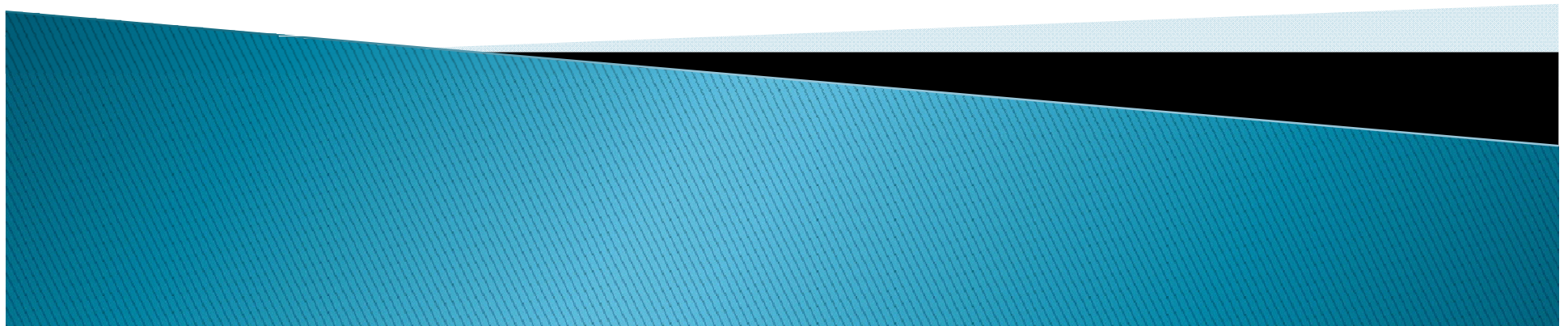
Others

How effective is the flu vaccine

- ▶ Effectiveness depends on how closely circulating flu matches strains in vaccine
 - ▶ Strains matched by WHO
 - ▶ Annual vaccination important - flu virus is constantly changing
 - ▶ Considered to be up to 70-90% effective <65yrs
 - ▶ 30-40% effective in those over 65yrs
- 

Flu vaccine 2016/17 contains

- ▶ A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like strain
- ▶ A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2) - like strain
- ▶ B/ Brisbane/60/2008 -like strain



HCW and vaccination

Where are we in Ireland?

Uptake of immunisation among Irish HCWs

1. National uptake is mid 20's approx - 27% in 2015
2. Inter-hospital variation

* Mereckiene J et al. Euro Surveill. 2007;12(12)

10/9/2013

HCW uptake in KGH 2015/16

Uptake by employee group

▶ Management & Administration	9.5%
▶ Medical	34.5%
▶ Health & Social Care Prof	12.5%
▶ Nursing	5.5%
▶ Support Staff General	9%

Total 12%



Reasons for not taking vaccination advanced by health care workers

I never get the flu and I don't feel I need the vaccine

The flu vaccine can give me the flu

Since I am around sick people all the time, I am already immune to the flu

I am worried about having an adverse reaction to the vaccine

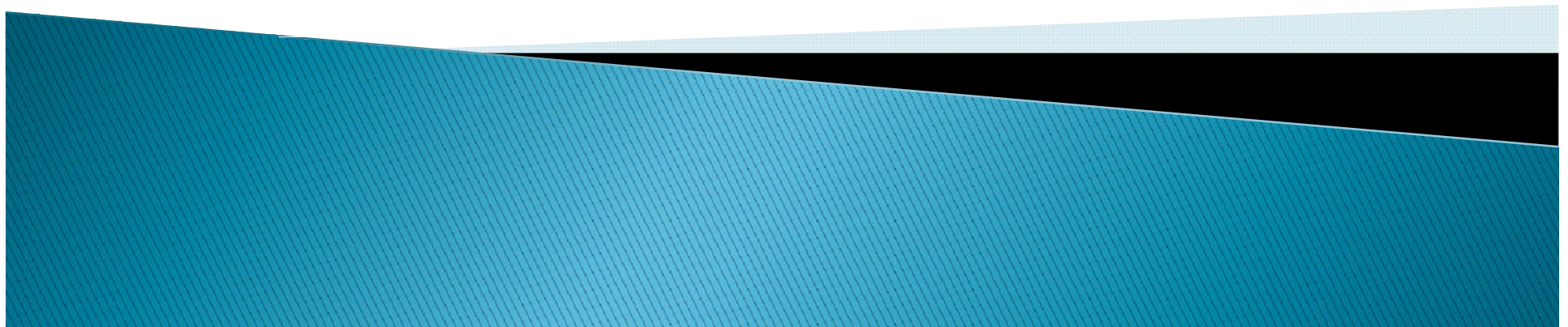
The vaccine doesn't work on me. I got the flu anyway

My own immune system will protect me



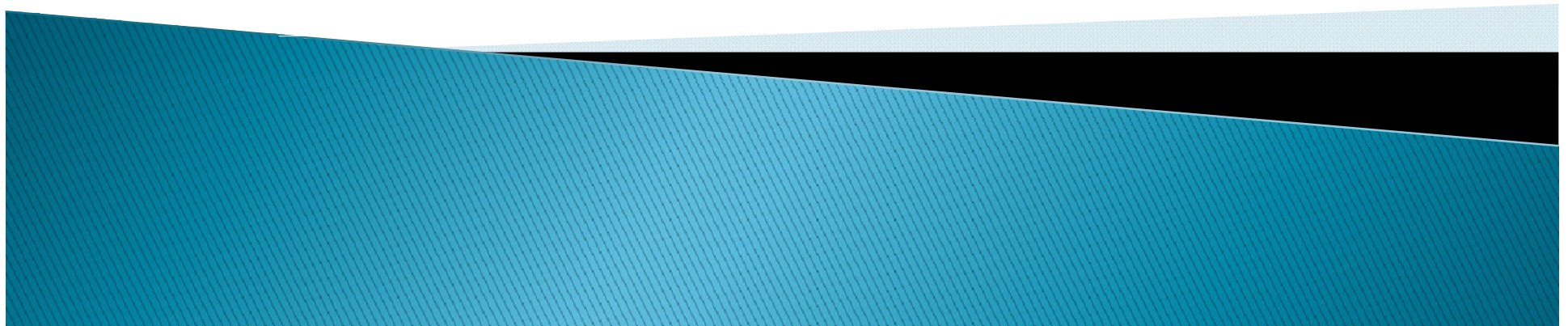
I'm healthy - my own immune system
will protect me

- ▶ The flu virus changes each year so the immune system cannot protect you from something it doesn't recognise



Getting a vaccine each year will weaken my immune system

- ▶ The flu vaccine changes slightly each year because the virus is constantly changing
- ▶ A number of staff who get the flu vaccine each year report that they do not even get the common cold anymore



I've worked in Healthcare a long time,
surely I'm immune at this stage

Your body cannot protect itself from new types of flu because your immune system does not recognise it.

Flu virus changes every year and subsequently the flu vaccine is updated every year.

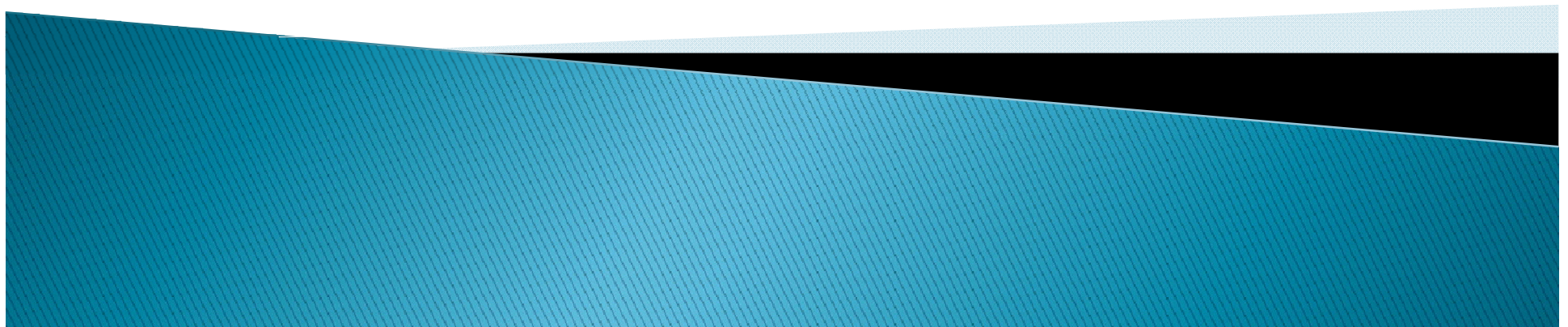
- Annual vaccination is required

I know the symptoms of flu, I'd stay at home if I got the flu so I wouldn't spread it to other staff and patients

- ▶ Infectious 1 day before the onset of symptoms and up to 7 days after the onset of symptoms
- ▶ Some staff can have mild symptoms or even subclinical infection and so do not recognise it but are infectious
- ▶ Risk to loved ones at home

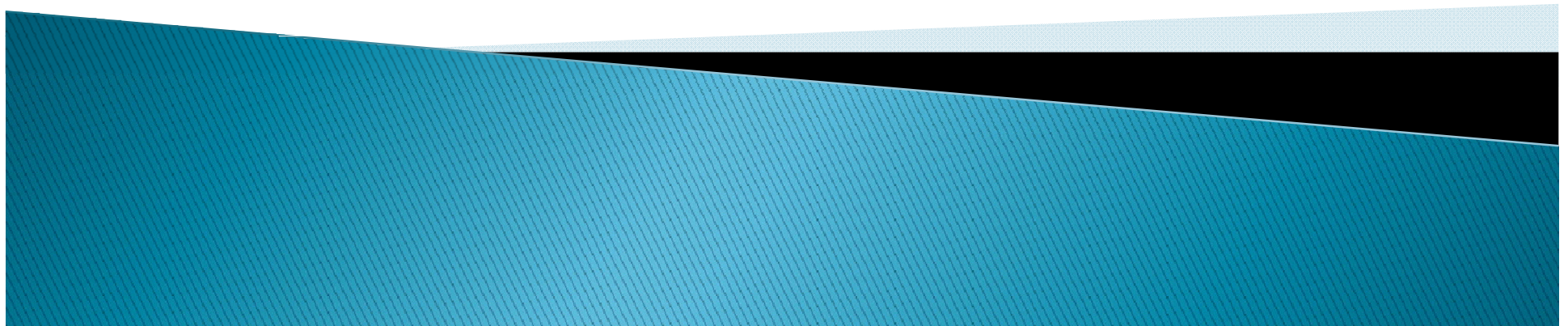
Hand hygiene is key to preventing the spread of infection so I don't need the vaccine as well

- ▶ Hand hygiene is essential
BUT
- ▶ Flu vaccination is the most effective protection against flu



Flu vaccine causes the flu

- ▶ The vaccine is Inactivated so it cannot cause the flu
- ▶ Some side effects are similar to flu but are not the flu, are mild and self limiting
- ▶ Doesn't protect for 14-21 days so you are still at risk if exposed to flu before vaccine works
- ▶ Flu vaccine protects against flu virus - not other viruses in circulation




Flu vaccine doesn't work - "I got the vaccine and still got the flu"

The vaccine takes 14-21 days to be effective

70-90% Effective in those <65yrs

Vaccine protects against flu virus and not other circulating viruses

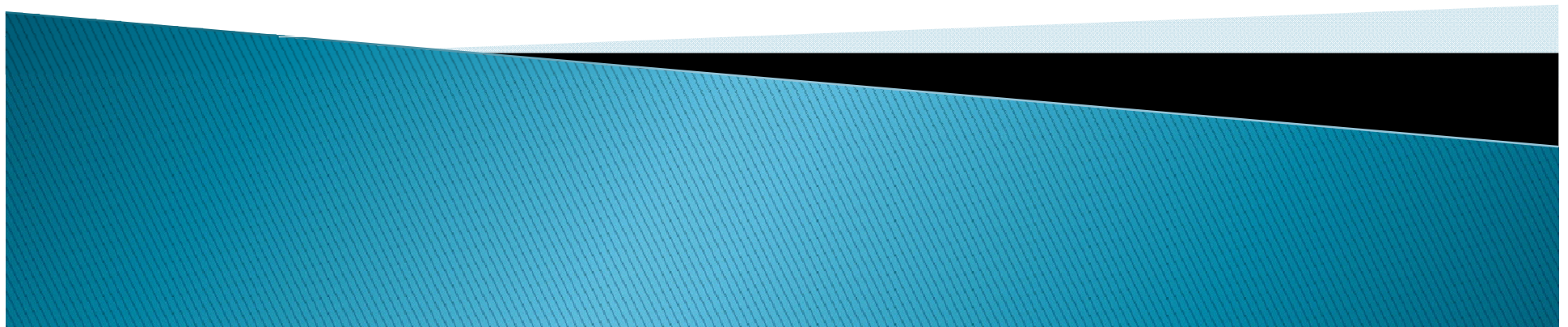
30-40% effective in >65yrs and for those who are immunocompromised but it does lessen severity



Flu Vaccination

I'm afraid of having a bad reaction to the vaccine

- ▶ Side effects are mild and self limiting
- ▶ Ongoing monitoring of vaccine safety



I never get the flu and I don't feel I need the vaccine

Changing virus

Healthy people can get really sick from flu

The elderly and those with chronic medical conditions are even more at risk

Complications of flu

Vaccine is the best form of protection available

Important Message to all HCWs

Get the vaccine, not the flu!"

"Protect yourselves, your loved ones and your patients"

