



Position Paper for the Provision of Influenza Vaccination for Section 39s and other healthcare organisations

1. Background

Healthcare workers (HCWs) prevent the spread of flu and save lives by getting the flu vaccine. The best way to protect the worker, their family and their patients is to get vaccine each year. HCWs can pass the flu virus to somebody they care for even before they know that they are sick.

The HSE Peer Vaccination Programme has been in place since 2016 in order to support the increased availability of and knowledge about the vaccine locally in healthcare environments. **In addition, HCWs can now access free vaccination through their local pharmacy and GPs.** In 2022, the seasonal influenza vaccination programme was expanded to enable HSE nurse and midwife vaccinators to administer the seasonal influenza vaccine under medicine protocol to vaccine recipients including healthcare workers.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination programme education: The Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) develops the HSE LanD education programme titled *Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme: Education Programme for Nurses and Midwives*.

Relevant information on the programme is available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/fluinfo/>

A supportive document for this programme has been developed by the HSE – “Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme Supportive Document for HSE Vaccinators”¹. This refers to registered nurses and midwives employed by the HSE vaccinating vaccine recipients including Healthcare workers². HCWs from Section 39’s and other organisations are outside the scope of this supportive information document as they are not HSE employed.

HSE nurse and midwife vaccinators and Occupational Health Services provide influenza vaccine to HSE HCWs, agency and contract staff working in HSE organisations. Due to resources, it is not possible for HCWs from other organisations to be accommodated within the HSE clinics.

To ensure widespread HCW vaccination it is recommended that all healthcare organisations provide local peer vaccination. Section 39s and other organisations have historically arranged their own influenza vaccination through an Occupational Health provider. Staff from some section 39s and other organisations have previously accessed training from the HSE and have developed Seasonal Influenza Vaccination programmes within their own organisations.

2. Training as Vaccinators and Setting up Vaccinator Clinics

Management from Section 39’s and other organisations must make the decision regarding the implementation of the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination programme within their own organisations and must provide governance for the programme within their own organisation. Medical oversight should



be provided by the Section 39s and other organisations and not the HSE. Each organisation must confirm appropriate clinical indemnity with their own insurance provider.

Management from Section 39's and other organisations must ensure:

Note: The following is the education criteria for HSE registered nurse and midwife vaccinators: The registered nurse or registered midwife must have completed all of the following:

1. Be a Registered Nurse or Registered Midwife, on the active register maintained by the NMBI
2. Education programme for registered nurses and registered midwives on the *Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme: Education Programme for Nurses and Midwives* and any updates for nurses and midwives accessible on www.HSElanD.ie
3. An approved *Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers Course* within the last two years (i.e. Irish Heart Foundation (IHF))
4. Initial *National Anaphylaxis Education Programme for Health Care Professionals* accessible on www.HSElanD.ie followed by a two hour classroom based skills workshop. Recertification is required every two years by completing the on-line *National Anaphylaxis Education Programme for Health Care Professionals* accessible on www.HSElanD.ie
5. Self-Assessment of Competency Form available at www.immunisation.ie
6. COVAX online programme available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/hsecovid19vms.html>

Recommended:

1. *Immunisation Foundation Programme*, available at www.hseland.ie
2. *The Flu Vaccine – It's a Lifesaver*, available at www.hseland.ie

The HSE medicine protocols can be adopted for use in Section 39 organisations, with local governance for the medicine protocols clearly outlined. These are:

- Medicine Protocol for the Administration of Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (split virion, inactivated) to adult vaccine recipients including nurses, midwives, healthcare workers, agency staff, contract workers and volunteers by registered nurses and registered midwives.
- Medicine Protocol for the Administration of Influvac Tetra to adult vaccine recipients including nurses, midwives, healthcare workers, agency staff, contract workers and volunteers by registered nurses and registered midwives

The current medicines protocols can be found here:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/fluinfo/>

Ensures that all staff are familiar with the appropriate immunisation documents including those outlined in the above Medicine Protocols for the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines and the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) guidance on anaphylaxis management, available at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines/anaphylaxis.pdf>



It is the organisations responsibility to ensure they are fully equipped with all equipment and resources required for the safe provision of a seasonal influenza vaccination programme, in line with the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme Supportive Document for HSE Vaccinators.

Flu vaccine promotional materials – posters and leaflets can be requested by email to immunisation@hse.ie

The National Immunisation Office have developed 2 eLearning Programmes available on HSeLand for all vaccinators.

- "Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV)" updated September 2022
- "Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (QIV)" created September 2022

3. National Cold Chain Service

The influenza vaccine will be provided by the National Cold Chain Service – management and storage of these vaccines are the responsibility of the Section 39's and other organisations. Further information can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/vaccineordering/>

Any service wanting to implement a seasonal influenza vaccination programme for the first time is required to register with the National Cold Chain Service as soon as possible. Confirmation must be given that vaccines will be managed within the cold chain and a named doctor or pharmacist is required to sign the Bona Fides form.

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Signature:

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Signature:

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