



Autumn Winter Campaign 2024/2025

Flu and COVID-19 Vaccination Programme
Update for General Practice

September 2024



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Introduction

The Influenza and COVID-19 vaccination programmes have now transitioned to Seasonal Vaccination Campaigns, which allows for the co-administration of both influenza and COVID-19 vaccines in the Autumn Campaign, in line with National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) guidance.

➤ **Campaign Commencement**

The Autumn/Winter programme will commence on the 1st October 2024, and the HSE will be launching a public information campaign on 30th September to support the programme.

The LAIV programme will commence on 7th October.

➤ **Autumn/Winter Co-administered Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccines**

Co-administration is encouraged where clinical guidance permits, as it offers individuals the greatest convenience and represents the most logical operational model.



Eligible Cohorts

➤ Influenza Vaccination Programme

Eligible groups for 2024/25 HSE influenza vaccination programme are outlined in **Appendix A**.

➤ COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Recommended groups for the Autumn COVID-19 booster vaccine programme **Appendix B**.

Clinicians are advised to review [NIAC guidance](#) and align vaccination with current [clinical guidance](#).



Types of Vaccines

➤ Influenza Vaccines

Two types of flu vaccines will be available for 2024/25 HSE seasonal flu vaccination programme.

LAIV: live attenuated influenza vaccine Fluenz nasal spray suspension

Available for use in children aged 2-17 years.

QIV: Injectable inactivated egg-based Quadrivalent influenza vaccine. Two brands of this will be supplied - Influvac Tetra (manufactured by Mylan) and Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur).

Available for all other eligible populations including those eligible children (aged 2-17 years) with contraindications to LAIV.

➤ COVID-19 Vaccines

COMIRNATY JN.1 is the vaccine supplied for the autumn winter campaign and is approved for both primary course and booster doses.



Ordering and Delivery Schedule

Ordering

- Vaccines for the autumn winter programme can be ordered through the National Cold Chain Services (NCCS) online portal www.ordervaccines.ie
- The delivery schedule is a fortnightly cycle with delivery dates identified in the NCCS calendar within the online portal system.
- Ordering of COVID-19 and Influvac Tetra (QIV) flu vaccines commenced on the 9th of September.
- You can order up to 100% of your Influvac Tetra (QIV) allocation, based on previous Flu seasons.
- Up to 50% of your Fluenz nasal spray suspension (LAIV) allocation based on previous Flu seasons, is available to order in the first cycle with the remainder available in the next cycle. Fortnightly deliveries commence in late September as per your delivery calendar. Due to the short shelf life of this vaccine it should be ordered on a fortnightly basis, with quantities based on planned appointments.
- COVID-19 vaccines should be ordered on a fortnightly basis. No more than 3 weeks stock of vaccines should be held at any time.
- If GPs require additional vaccines outside of stock availability identified on the online portal, please request via email to vaccines@udd.ie



Vaccination Training and Education

➤ Training is available for:

- COVID-19 Vaccine modules on www.hseland.ie. Vaccinators should complete the relevant modules on HSELand prior to the administration of COVID-19 vaccines. This training has been updated to reflect changes in the NIAC guidance.
See NIAC Chapter 5a COVID-19 www.rcpi.ie/Healthcare-Leadership/NIAC/Immunisation-Guidelines-for-Ireland

➤ Key resources will be available for vaccinators ahead of the autumn / winter campaign, please see:

- The updated NIAC chapters for COVID-19 and Influenza are now [available](#)
- Information for healthcare professionals is available on www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/
- Details of upcoming NIO webinars will be available at;
www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/conference/



VPCC Webpage

The Vaccine Programme is supported by the HSE Vaccinations Primary Care Contractors (VPCC) team, who coordinate the service and provide Relationship Management Support to GPs.

➤ **Information resources available on the [VPCC webpage](#) to support vaccinators include:**

- **Guidance Note 1:** Guidance on COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccine Consumables and Information Resources
- **Guidance Note 2:** Completing Vaccine Record on IT Systems
- **Guidance Note 3:** Guidance on Management of Repeat Primary Course COVID-19 Vaccination for Clinical Reasons
- **Guidance Note 4:** Primary Vaccination administered outside the Republic of Ireland
- **Guidance Note 6:** Guidance on COVID-19 vaccination following an allergic reaction in past
- **Guidance Note 8:** Guidance on Alternative to Deltoid Vaccination Site
- **Guidance Note 10:** Guidance on Immunocompromised Assessment Pathway for COVID-19

There is also updated **Operational Guidance** and a section on **FAQ's** to further support vaccination



HSE Vaccination Teams

For the Autumn / Winter campaign, HSE Vaccination teams will offer the following vaccination services:

➤ **COVID-19 clinics for:**

- Children aged 6 months – 11 years.
- Prisons.
- Those requiring non-mRNA vaccine (Novavax)

➤ **COVID-19 and Flu vaccines for those eligible who are:**

- Residents in Long Term Residential Care Facilities (LTRCFs) including Older Persons, Mental Health and Disability.
- Health and Care Workers (HCW) - HSE teams will facilitate clinics in workplace settings for HCWs, with support from peer vaccinators. HCWs can also be vaccinated by their Pharmacist or GP.
- Housebound. For GP referral please see [Housebound referral pathway](#)
- In-patients in acute hospitals.



Children's LAIV (Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine) Programme

- GP's are reminded to provide the HSE with details of primary schools where they have agreed to offer LAIV onsite during the 2024/25 season, using the forms provided at [LAIV Schools Programme Planning 2024/2025](#).
- Details of the primary school Roll Number and Eircode for each participating school will be required. Where forms have already been returned, any changes or amendments may still be submitted in September.
- Stock allocation of Fluenz nasal spray suspension (LAIV) to GP's for school-based vaccination will be based on the information provided on the planning forms as outlined above.
- If GPs require additional LAIV stock outside of stock availability identified on online portal, please request via email to vaccines@udd.ie
- We will follow-up with GP's upon completion of the LAIV Schools Programme to identify the schools in which the LAIV service was provided on-site and the number of students vaccinated during these clinics. We ask that GPs maintain records of the schools in which LAIV was provided and the students vaccinated to assist in completion of the review.



Recording of Vaccine Administration

- All COVID-19 and Influenza vaccinations must be entered on GP Practice Management Systems (PMS) or GPVax, this serves as both a clinical record and triggers payment through PCRS.
- Please note that it is essential to record the administration of all COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines promptly, so that clinical records are kept up to date and two doses are not administered in error.
- GP systems will be updated to reflect current vaccines only with redundant vaccines being removed periodically. Any notifications of vaccine removals will be issued in advance.
- Vaccinators may receive a phone call from HSELive to clarify data quality (DQ) items. HSELive is part of the HSE and the team work closely with the NIO and contracting office to seek clarification to resolve DQ issues. There is dedicated line for GP's to ring HSELive, in relation to DQ issues which is: 01 240 8786 .



Fee Schedule

➤ **Influenza Vaccine**

The existing fee rates are being maintained for the administration of the seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme for winter 2024/2025.

- The fee of €15 will be maintained for all QIV Influenza vaccinations administered to patients in the recommended HSE patient groups (GMS and non-GMS);
- In addition to this, each GP will be eligible for a further payment of €100 for every 10 unique patients to whom he/she administers one of the QIV Influenza vaccines;
- A fee of €20 will apply for vaccinations administered using the (nasal) Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) for children aged from 2 to 17 years inclusive;
- In addition, each GP will be eligible for a further payment of €150 for every 10 unique patients aged from 2 to 17 years inclusive to whom he/she administers the LAIV;

➤ **COVID-19 Vaccine**

- The rate to be paid for vaccinations administered by GP's will remain at €25 per dose.



Appendix A - Eligible groups for 2024/25 HSE influenza vaccination programme

The following groups are eligible to receive the flu vaccine for free through the HSE programme

People who:

- Are 60 years of age and over
- Are a child aged 2 to 17 years
- Are pregnant
- All those aged 6-23 months and 18-59 years at increased risk of influenza-related complications such as:
 - Those with chronic illness, e.g. chronic heart disease (including acute coronary syndrome), chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease (where the neurological condition compromises clearance of respiratory secretions), chronic renal failure, chronic respiratory disease (including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis, moderate or severe asthma, and bronchopulmonary dysplasia), diabetes mellitus, or haemoglobinopathies
 - Those with immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, including asplenia or hyposplenism, and all cancer patients
 - Those with any condition that can compromise respiratory function (e.g. spinal cord injury, seizure disorder, or other neuromuscular disorder especially those attending special schools/day centres)
 - Children and adults with Down syndrome
 - Children with moderate to severe neurodevelopmental disorders such as cerebral palsy and intellectual disability
 - Those with morbid obesity (Body mass index >40)
 - Children on long term aspirin therapy
- Residents of nursing homes, old people's homes, and other long stay facilities where rapid spread is likely to follow introduction of infection
- Healthcare workers
- Household contacts of people with underlying chronic health conditions or Down syndrome
- Out-of-home care givers for people who have an underlying chronic health condition or have Down syndrome
- People in regular contact with pigs, poultry or waterfowl



Appendix B – Recommended groups for the Autumn COVID-19 booster vaccine programme

Recommended groups for the Autumn COVID-19 booster vaccine programme

- Those aged 60 years and older.
- Those aged 18-59 years living in long term care facilities for older adults.
- Those aged 6 months-59 years with:
 - immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccination
 - medical conditions associated with a higher risk of COVID-19 hospitalisation, severe disease or death.
- Health and care workers.
- Pregnant adolescents and adults (recommended all year and not seasonal).

Note: Access to a COVID-19 vaccine in Autumn 2024 should be available for those aged 18-59 years who, following discussion of their reasons with a health care provider (e.g., GP, pharmacist or HSE vaccinator), request vaccination.