



**25<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Circular Number:** NCO-35-2024

**RE:** COVID-19 and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme Autumn Winter 2024/2025

Dear Doctor,

I refer to Circular [NCO-32-2024](#), dated 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, which outlined plans for the Autumn / Winter Vaccination Programme 2024/2025.

The autumn / winter campaign commences on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

### **Vaccines & Ordering**

- Vaccine orders commenced as follows:
  - Comirnaty JN.1 age 12+ and Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine (QIV) on 9<sup>th</sup> September
  - Fluenz nasal spray vaccine (LAIV) on 16<sup>th</sup> September
- All COVID-19 and flu vaccines can be ordered online from <https://www.ordervaccines.ie/>. All vaccine deliveries are fortnightly. No more than 3 weeks stock of vaccines should be held at any time.
- Any expired stock should be returned to NCCS using the normal process – see <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/vaccineordering/vaccreturn.pdf>.
- Information resources for COVID-19 and influenza vaccination programmes will be based on orders and will be delivered with the vaccines. COVID-19 PIL and record card must be given to those who receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

For any queries relating to vaccine allocations, orders or deliveries, please contact NCCS customer services at: [vaccines@udd.ie](mailto:vaccines@udd.ie) or 01 4637770.

### **Clinical Information for Vaccinators**

An extensive range of materials to support vaccinators has been developed by the National Immunisation

Office. All vaccinators should be familiar with the updated training and guidance documentation before commencing vaccination, which can be found at the following links:

- [Vaccine Information for Health Professionals](#)
- [Immunisation Bulletins](#)
- [Influenza Vaccination Programme 2024/25](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Health Professionals](#)
- [HSELand](#)

For any clinical queries, please contact [immunisation@hse.ie](mailto:immunisation@hse.ie).



Note: Following revision of the Guidance on the Provision of Vaccination Services by Pharmacists, Community Pharmacy Contractors will no longer be required under the regulations to notify the patients' General Practitioner of Influenza vaccines administered. As flu vaccines are available across many settings and providers including General Practice, Community Pharmacies, HSE vaccination teams and Peer Vaccinators, and recorded on the National system, it is recommended that vaccinators use the Vaccination History Search facility to confirm date of last vaccination.

### **Operational Guidance**

The National COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination Programme Operational Guidance for General Practice has been developed and circulated via Healthmail, and is also available to view or download on the [Information for General Practices](#) section of the VPCC webpage.

### **Children's LAIV (Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine) Programme**

The primary pathway for provision of children's flu vaccine is via GPs and Community Pharmacies. GPs and Pharmacies have engaged with mainstream primary schools to offer the free LAIV nasal spray to children in all year groups during the upcoming Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme, which will commence on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

HSE vaccination teams will be offering LAIV nasal flu vaccine to children in Junior Infants in some mainstream primary schools not covered by GPs or Pharmacies, and to children in primary-age special schools across Ireland for the 2024/2025 season.

The *Toolkit to Support the Administration of Flu Vaccination to Children in Primary Schools or Community Settings by Primary Care* can be accessed at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/fluinfo/>.

If your practice is providing LAIV to children in primary schools, please ensure to enter the vaccination records promptly to avoid another vaccine being administered in error by a different provider.

We will follow-up with GP's following 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. Please maintain records of the schools in which LAIV was provided and the students vaccinated to assist in completion of the review.

Eligible children who are contraindicated or unable to tolerate LAIV and are suitable for a QIV injection may avail of their vaccine from their GP.

### **Recording Vaccines**

To ensure the patient vaccination record is correct, take a moment to check the information entered into your GP Practice Management System or GPVax. In particular:

- Take care when running combined flu and COVID-19 clinics, to ensure that the records entered for each patient are correct and reflect the vaccine(s) administered, particularly if only 1 vaccine was administered.
- Check the recommended interval has elapsed since last vaccination or COVID-19 infection.
  - For recommended intervals, please refer to [Clinical Guidance COVID-19](#).



- For confirmation of the date of last vaccine dose, a 'Vaccination History Search' facility is available via the HSE's 'Health Provider Portal'. Further information is available in the Operational Guidance.
- Select the correct vaccine name e.g. Comirnaty® JN.1 Vaccine is the recommended vaccine for booster dose.
- Check the correct batch number and use-before date is entered.
- GP Practice Management Systems have been reconfigured, and the HSE GPVax system updated, to enable vaccination corrections functionality, effective from 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

### **Fees**

The existing fee rates are being maintained for the administration of the COVID-19 and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme for winter 2024/2025.

- The rate to be paid for COVID-19 vaccinations administered by GPs will remain at €25 per dose;
- 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 eligible 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.

### **Conclusion**

I would like once again to express my sincere gratitude to General Practitioners and their teams for the efficient manner in which the COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination Programmes have been delivered to date.

I would also like to wish you and your team every success in delivering the seasonal vaccinations to your patients over the coming months.

Please be assured of the HSE's continued support at this time and if you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the Vaccinations and Primary Care Contractor Team on 021- 4928787 or by email [vaccinations.primarycarecontractors@hse.ie](mailto:vaccinations.primarycarecontractors@hse.ie)

Yours sincerely,

---

**Pat Healy**  
**National Director**  
**National Services and Schemes**