

**29 August 2012**

**To: Each Pharmacist**

**IMPORTANT NEWS**

**Re: Influenza Vaccination Campaign 2012/2013**

Dear Colleague,

This letter contains important information about the 2012/2013 influenza vaccination campaign.

The World Health Organization has recommended that the seasonal influenza vaccines for the 2012/2013 season (Northern Hemisphere winter) contain:

- an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus;
- a B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus

For the 2012/2013 HSE seasonal influenza vaccination campaign

- ◆ The groups that community pharmacists will be eligible to vaccinate are
  - all those aged 18- 64 years in the at risk groups (as outlined overleaf)
  - all those aged 65 years and older
- ◆ Only one seasonal influenza vaccine will be in use - **Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (Split Virion) BP** manufactured by **Sanofi Pasteur MSD** which comes in packs of 10 pre filled syringes.
- ◆ There will be two additional deliveries to pharmacies to facilitate supply of influenza vaccine.
- ◆ Patient held vaccination record cards will be sent with your vaccine delivery which should be completed and given to your patients after vaccination.
- ◆ New posters for display and a supply of leaflets for your patients will be sent to you shortly.

Seasonal influenza vaccine is provided free for all those aged 65 years and over, those in at-risk groups and healthcare staff (as outlined in the attachment). Those that do not have a medical card or GP visit card will be liable for a fee set by you. Claims for the vaccination of medical card or GP visit card holders in the groups as per the attachment can be made through the PCRS.

The seasonal influenza vaccine supplied by the HSE National Cold Chain Service is specifically for those in the at risk groups. Vaccine for individuals outside of these groups can be obtained through the private market.

Further information about the influenza vaccination campaign including a frequently asked questions section about the enclosed recommendations is available on the National Immunisation website [www.immunisation.ie](http://www.immunisation.ie) and will be sent to you with the information materials.

Additional details can be found in the August 2012 Influenza chapter of the Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland <http://www.immunisation.ie/en/HealthcareProfessionals/ImmunisationGuidelines2008/>

**Actions required by you:**

1. If you are not registered with PCRS for participation in the HSE seasonal influenza campaign and wish to take part in 2012/2013 please contact PCRS. Once registered PCRS will notify the HSE National Cold Chain Service who will contact you about ordering vaccine supply.
2. If you are registered with PCRS
  - place your order for Seasonal Influenza vaccine (Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (Split Virion) BP) for this year's campaign with the HSE National Cold Chain Service.
  - use the returns service provided by the HSE National Cold Chain Service for any remaining 2011/2012 seasonal influenza vaccine.

Maximising uptake among at-risk groups and front-line health care workers is critical in the prevention of morbidity and mortality and your support in this regard is highly appreciated.

If you require any further information or have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelleher', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Kevin Kelleher  
Assistant National Director of Population Health - Health Protection  
Medical Council Registration Number: 19719

**HSE SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION PROGRAMME 2012/2013**  
**At Risk Groups eligible to be vaccinated by pharmacists**  
**at the premises of a retail pharmacy business**

- all those aged 65 years and older
  
- those aged 18 years and older
  - with any of the following
    - chronic illness requiring regular follow up (e.g. chronic respiratory disease including cystic fibrosis, moderate or severe asthma, chronic heart disease, chronic renal disease, diabetes mellitus, haemoglobinopathies, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease including multiple sclerosis, hereditary and degenerative disorders of the central nervous system etc)
    - those who are immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment including those with missing or non functioning spleens
    - morbid obesity i.e. Body Mass Index over 40
  - all pregnant women (at any stage of pregnancy)
  - residents of nursing homes and other long stay facilities
  - healthcare workers
  - carers
  - people who have close, regular contact with pigs, poultry or water fowl

**Groups in red are new for 2012/2013**