

Dear Manager/Director of Nursing/NUM

Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccination for Aged Care Facility (ACF) Residents in 2018

I am writing to strongly recommend that all residents of your facility receive free seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccine (as appropriate) and that your staff are also vaccinated against influenza this winter.

Outbreaks of influenza in aged care facilities (ACF) can spread quickly, cause serious disease, and be difficult to control. In 2017, 535 NSW residential care facilities reported influenza outbreaks resulting in at least 7132 cases, 694 hospitalisations and 301 deaths. Vaccination may not always prevent influenza in the elderly, however vaccinated residents are less likely to require hospitalisation or die if they catch influenza. Your local public health unit can advise on treatment and prevention measures during outbreaks.

All persons aged 65 years and older are eligible to receive **free** seasonal influenza vaccine. Persons aged 65 years and older and persons with underlying medical conditions are at particular risk of complications from influenza, including pneumonia.

The Australian Government has recently announced that two new higher immunogenicity influenza vaccines will be available in 2018 for the vaccination of adults aged 65 years or older: **Fluzone High Dose®** (Sanofi Pasteur) and **Fluad®** (Seqirus). It is recognised that, in rare cases, ACFs might have a small number of residents who are aged under 65 years of age. For these residents, **Afluria Quad®** (Seqirus) will also be available to order.

Ordering influenza vaccine

- Pre-orders for influenza vaccine may be placed now online at: <https://nsw.tollhealthcare.com/>
- **Deliveries of influenza vaccine will commence when vaccine becomes available in mid-April 2018.**
- If you have not already registered for online ordering, orders can be placed by completing the enclosed vaccine order form and faxing to the NSW Vaccine Centre on **1800 041 528**.
- A register template is also enclosed to assist your facility to record the influenza and pneumococcal vaccination status of residents.
- Only the Manager; or Care Manager; or Director of Nursing; or Nursing Unit Manager; or Operations Manager; or any person assigned with the role of managing a Residential Facility is authorised under Section 10(4)(d) of the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 to order influenza vaccine annually (prior to and during each influenza season) and pneumococcal vaccine (throughout the year) free of charge for eligible residents.

The *Australian Immunisation Handbook*, 10th edition, www.immunise.health.gov.au also recommends annual influenza vaccination for staff of ACFs. Consideration should be given to purchasing influenza vaccine from the private market or encouraging staff members to attend their own general practitioner for vaccination. **Influenza and pneumococcal vaccines provided free for residents under the Australian Government funded program must not be used to vaccinate staff members.**

Resources

Several resources have been developed to help you to reduce the possibility of transmission of influenza in your facility:

- Influenza Info Kit – contains an outbreak coordinators handbook, posters and fact sheets designed to assist residential aged care services and carers in making decisions about the prevention and control of

influenza <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/publications-articles/resources-learning-training/influ-info-influenza-kit-for-aged-care>

- A Practical Guide to assist in the Prevention and Management of Influenza Outbreaks in Residential Care Facilities in Australia (CDNA)
www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-flu-guidelines.htm
- NSW Health – Residential and Aged Care Facilities Resources – including a brochure for staff explaining the benefits of influenza vaccination
www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Influenza/Pages/residential-care.aspx

Please also find included the NSW Health 'Staff Influenza Vaccination' pamphlet containing information for residential care staff regarding influenza vaccination. This pamphlet should be made available to your staff, and can be accessed either online (available in 8 different languages) or through the Better Health Centre. Please go to www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Influenza/Pages/residential-care.aspx for PDF versions and/or details on how to order copies of the pamphlet.

Cold chain management

To facilitate effective vaccine storage and management, all facilities that provide immunisation services are required to comply with the *National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'* (2013, 2nd edition) <https://beta.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-strive-for-5-2nd-edition>. When vaccines are repeatedly exposed to temperatures outside the recommended +2^oC to +8^oC temperature range, the loss of potency is cumulative and cannot be reversed. Sub-optimal vaccine cold chain management may result in your residents receiving non-potent influenza and pneumococcal vaccines therefore placing them at significant risk of contracting these diseases.

To support effective cold chain management, NSW Health has developed the attached '*Vaccine Cold Chain Management Minimum Requirements for Aged Care Facilities*'. It would be appreciated if you would please distribute this information to all staff responsible for vaccine storage and cold chain management.

Adverse events following immunisation

There is an increased risk of injection site reactions and systemic symptoms associated with **Fluzone High Dose®** and **Fluad®**. Please report any adverse events following immunisation to your local Public Health Unit.

Contacting your local Public Health Unit

Please contact your local public health unit on **1300 066 055** should you require assistance or have any queries about this information.

Yours sincerely



Dr Vicky Sheppard

Director, Communicable Diseases
15 March 2018

- Encl:
- Order form (for ACF that do not already order online)
 - Vaccine cold chain minimum requirements for ACFs
 - Register template
 - Staff Influenza Vaccination pamphlet



Health

**AGED CARE FACILITY
INFLUENZA and PNEUMOVAX
VACCINE ORDER FORM**

Fax to 1800 041 528

Enquiries regarding orders/dispatch: 1300 656 132

PROVIDER DETAILS

Date:	Vaccine Account <u>Number</u>
Name of Facility/Organisation:	
Delivery Address:	Opening Hours (for delivery):
Phone:	Fax:

Name of person authorised* to order vaccine (please print clearly):

*Authorised persons are: the Manager or Care Manager or Director of Nursing or Nursing Unit Manager or Operations Manager or any person assigned with the role of managing a Residential Facility

VACCINE	Eligibility	Doses required
Influenza	<i>All individuals aged 65 years and older</i>	
	<i>Individuals 5 years and older with medical risk factors Aboriginal individuals 15 years and older</i>	
Pneumovax	<i>All people aged 65 years and older Aboriginal people aged 50 years and older</i>	

Cold Chain Management Minimum Requirements for Aged Care Facilities

This guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the [National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5' \(2nd ed\) 2013](#).

- Cold chain is the system of transporting or storing vaccine within the safe temperature range of +2°C to +8°C (strive for 5°C which is the midway point).
- Cold chain breach is the exposure of vaccines to temperatures outside the recommended range of +2°C to +8°C, excluding fluctuations up to 12°C lasting less than 15 minutes when restocking, cleaning the fridge or stock taking.
- Ensure that the temperature of the fridge that will be used for vaccine storage (and other temperature sensitive medications) is stable (within +2°C to +8°C) and monitored at all times using a battery operated minimum/maximum thermometer.
- Twice daily temperature checking and recording of the fridge using a battery operated minimum-maximum thermometer is required for at least 1 week prior to the delivery of vaccines.
- Allocate a staff member to be the key contact and responsible person for cold chain management.
- Ensure that all staff have an awareness of the main cold chain management requirements.
- In the absence of the delegated person (for example during leave), ensure that a back-up person has been nominated for vaccine cold chain management and monitoring of the twice daily fridge temperature recordings.
- Refer to the NSW Health PowerPoint presentations on vaccine ordering and cold chain management that can be used for staff education sessions and are available at:
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/immunisation-providers.aspx>
- The minimum/maximum thermometer must be reset after recording the fridge's current, minimum and maximum temperatures on the vaccine temperature chart.
- A vaccine temperature chart can be ordered (free of charge) from Immunise Australia at:
<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/IMM77-cnt>
- The minimum/maximum thermometer must be calibrated annually and the battery changed as per the manufacturer's instructions (refer to 'Strive for 5' section 6.3 'Thermometers')
- If a domestic fridge is used to store vaccines, it should be dedicated to vaccine storage (and temperature sensitive medications as appropriate) only (that is no food etc is to be stored with the vaccines)
- Domestic fridges should be modified to ensure a consistent temperature can be maintained (see the Strive for 5 guidelines).
- Bar fridges and cyclic defrost domestic fridges must NOT be used.
- Vaccines must be refrigerated immediately after delivery. The transport cold chain monitors (heat and cold monitors) must be checked on arrival of the vaccines. If the cold chain monitors are noted to be activated, contact the NSW Vaccine Centre on **1300 656 132**.
- If a cold chain breach is noted (i.e. the temperature has been outside +2°C to +8°C , excludes fluctuations up to 12°C lasting less than 15 minutes as specified above) , quarantine the vaccines in the fridge and notify your local PHU immunisation staff on **1300 066 055** as soon as possible. Place a label on the fridge door "Do not use vaccines" until advice has been received from the PHU.

**REGISTER OF AGED CARE RESIDENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED
INFLUENZA/PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINE**

AGED CARE FACILITY/ORGANISATION NAME:					
YEAR:					
NAME	D.O.B.	VACCINE	BATCH NUMBER	SIGNATURE	DATE

This form should be retained by the aged care facility as a record of persons vaccinated.

COMPARE THE RISKS FROM INFLUENZA INFECTION

Common symptoms

- fever, sore throat, runny nose, dry cough, headache and muscle ache (1 week or longer)
- croup and bronchiolitis in children

Common complications

- pneumonia
- ear and sinus infections
- myocarditis and pericarditis
- exacerbation of a chronic medical condition (e.g. congestive heart failure, COPD)

Rare complications

- septicaemia
- encephalopathy
- death

Common adverse events from flu vaccination

- soreness/pain, redness and/or swelling around the injection site
- short-term fever, fatigue, and or muscle ache (1-2 days)

Rare adverse events

- urticaria (Hives)

Very rare adverse events

- anaphylaxis
- paresthesias
- Guillain-Barre syndrome (<1 per 1 million doses)

WHERE TO GET VACCINATED

Check with your workplace first as many health care facilities provide influenza vaccination for their staff.

Alternatively, seasonal influenza vaccine is available from your GP and from some community pharmacies.

MORE INFORMATION

YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT
1300 066 055

NSW HEALTH INFLUENZA PAGE
www.health.nsw.gov.au/flu

IMMUNISE AUSTRALIA PROGRAM
www.immunise.health.gov.au

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR IMMUNISATION RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE
www.ncirs.edu.au

STAFF INFLUENZA VACCINATION. PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR RESIDENTS.



Health

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR RESIDENTS

Flu can cause significant risks to those in residential care facilities. It is important that people caring for residents are vaccinated for flu every year.

Vaccination can reduce:

- staff passing the virus onto residents
- deaths and morbidity in residents
- demand for health care services
- taking flu home to family and friends.



FLU FACTS

Did you know:

- one in three health care workers will get flu each year
- three out of four health care workers attend work whilst sick
- health care workers are often the source of infection for residents
- flu is infectious one day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after
- even if you don't show flu symptoms you can spread it to others.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED

All health care staff directly involved in the care of residents should get vaccinated, including:

- administrative staff with patient contact
- doctors
- nurses and carers
- therapists
- religious workers
- cleaning and kitchen personnel
- volunteers
- temporary and part time workers.

WHEN TO GET VACCINATED

Get a shot as soon as vaccines become available. Flu seasons are unpredictable and can begin as early as April and last until October. Shots are most effective before flu season starts and can take about two weeks to take effect but can be given at any time.

FLU VACCINATION IS REQUIRED EVERY YEAR

Annual vaccination boosts your antibody levels to protect you and others from flu. To protect against new strains it is important to get vaccinated each year with updated vaccines as the flu virus can change from year to year.

To limit the spread of influenza:

- wash your hands regularly with soap and water or alcohol hand rub
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- bin your used tissues straight away.

***Even fit and healthy
people can catch the flu.***