

## Flu Issue 9

### South East Region

#### Updates for week ending 28/10/22

##### Flu Statistics

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) publishes weekly official statistics in the 'National Influenza and COVID-19 Report', which summarises information from the surveillance systems that are used to monitor seasonal respiratory illnesses:

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2022-to-2023-season](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2022-to-2023-season)

Nationally, and in the South East Region, there are signals in multiple disease surveillance systems of increasing influenza activity.

In England in week 42:

- through Respiratory DataMart, influenza positivity continued to increase to 5.2% compared to 4.8% the previous week.
- emergency department (ED) attendances for influenza-like illness have increased.
- the rate of admissions to sentinel hospital Trusts held stable at 0.72 per 10,000 versus 0.76 per 100,000 last week.
- however, influenza admission rates in the under 5-year-olds and over 85-year-olds have increased and are higher than other age groups.

Influenza A(H3N2) makes up the majority of subtyped virus. Sequencing shows that detected A(H3N2) are well matched by the vaccines. UKHSA continues to monitor A(H1N1) detections and the match to the strain included in the flu vaccines.

##### Vaccination of 2 and 3 year-olds

In light of the above, children remain high priority for vaccination. Please ensure you have ordered vaccine and are booking in your 2 and 3 year olds for flu vaccination. The second invitation letter from the national call and recall will be going to parents of unvaccinated children this week. Our local letter has been deferred for now.

##### Healthcare Staff vaccinations

It has come to our attention that some healthcare staff may be receiving flu vaccinations via their GP practice so as to have it at the same time as their Covid vaccine. We fully support efforts to co-administer the flu and covid vaccines but please remember that GP practices can only vaccinate healthcare staff registered with the practice or those in an eligible group (outside some narrowly defined groups listed in the enhanced service occupational health offer). Likewise, community pharmacies are not contracted under the NHS flu service to provide flu vaccination to healthcare workers e.g. trust employees, unless they have a separate occupational health to provide the service on behalf of the employer. Operating outside of the enhanced/advanced service will mean you will need separate indemnity cover, and

will not receive an item of service or dispensing fee, or be able to claim reimbursement of the flu vaccine.

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If you have any feedback or queries relating to this communication, please contact:

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