**NHS national flu immunisation programme guidance to manage locally held vaccine stock in primary care providers and NHS Trusts**

The flu immunisation programme continues to play a critical role in protecting those who are most at risk of complications and/or severe disease should they develop influenza. It is important to ensure the continued delivery of vital NHS public health services.

While there are no known central supply issues of flu vaccine stock, it may be necessary for CCGs, Primary Care Networks (PCNs), General Practitioners or NHS Trusts to facilitate the transfer of locally held vaccine stock from one NHS provider to another to ensure the continued delivery of the flu immunisation programme in the event of acute local supply issues.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has the role of regulating the supply of medicines. Routinely, medication can only be distributed between providers where a wholesaler licence exists, however the MHRA has confirmed that with regards to the flu vaccines in the 2020/2021 flu season, during COVID-19, it would not prevent the transfer of locally held flu stock for the NHS Flu immunisation programme, in the circumstance of acute, temporary, local supply issues, provided that:

* The CCG, PCN, General Practice or NHS Trust believes the transfer of flu vaccine(s) is necessary to support the continued delivery of the NHS flu immunisation programme either in primary care or NHS Trusts during the COVID-19 response and will ensure the effective use of available resource;
* The CCG, PCN, General Practice or NHS Trust that is holding the vaccine stock has assurance that the flu vaccine has been stored in the correct temperature-controlled conditions;
* confirmed daily record keeping of temperature monitoring is available;
* The CCG, PCN, General Practice or NHS Trust that requires locally held flu vaccine stock can verify the assurances given; and
* the flu vaccine(s) can be transported appropriately under the right cold chain conditions.

CCGs, PCNs, Primary Care and NHS Trust providers should refer to Public Health England’s protocol for the ordering, storing and management of vaccines <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protocol-for-ordering-storing-and-handling-vaccines>.

Please be aware that errors in vaccine administration and/or vaccine related incidents should be reported to the regional NHSEI public health S7a commissioning team.

An open consultation is underway on changes to Human Medicine Regulations to support the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines which considers provisions for wholesale dealing of vaccines, ending Friday 18th September 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/distributing-vaccines-and-treatments-for-covid-19-and-flu/consultation-document-changes-to-human-medicine-regulations-to-support-the-rollout-of-covid-19-vaccines>. Changes to regulations resulting from this consultation may supersede any guidance in this document.

Community Pharmacies are already able to transfer medicines to other healthcare providers without a wholesalers licence under specific circumstances, and should refer to the relevant guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/repeal-of-wholesale-dealer-licence-exemption-for-pharmacists>.

The NHS Specialist Pharmacy Service has made available guidance on the use of Patient Group Directions in Primary Care Networks. This can be accessed at <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/patient-group-direction-use-in-primary-care-networks/>

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