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National Childhood Flu Immunisation Programme: Recommendations for General Practitioners

GPs are requested to implement the seasonal influenza programme as outlined in the Direct Enhanced Service Specification (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/dess-sfl-and-pneumococcal-1920.pdf>). As part of this GPs are required to call in those children who are eligible for flu vaccination, and to undertake recall for those children in clinical risk groups for influenza.

Because of the phasing of supplies, PHE recommends planning the childhood vaccination programme using following priorities:

- Children in high risk groups aged 6 months to 2 years – these children should be called and offered quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (QIVe)
- Children in high risk groups from 2 to 18 years should be prioritised and offered LAIV (unless contraindicated). Those aged 2-3 years and age 11-18 years should be called in and offered LAIV or a suitable quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV)
- Healthy children aged 2-3 years should be called and offered LAIV as the practice receives stock. Two year olds who are receiving vaccine for the first season are a higher priority than 3 year olds.

CHIS letters will only be sent to eligible 2 year olds in the first instance.

Responsible ordering will help support the direction of stock to those with greatest immediate need as it becomes available. Practice staff are asked to only order vaccine needed for the forthcoming week, even if this is below the maximum quota and to avoid stockpiling. Close adherence to the vaccine storage in the cold chain is essential to avoid vaccine wastage.

Further details on eligible groups can be found in 'The Green Book':
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/influenza-the-green-book-chapter-19>

An information leaflet is being developed for parents to explain which children are eligible for vaccination and where this will be delivered and will be posted shortly on the PHE website.