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To: GP Practices

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Dear colleague

Supply of live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), Fluenz Tetra

As you are aware there have been delays to the supply of the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), Fluenz Tetra, that has affected both general practice and the schools programme. AstraZeneca, who produce Fluenz Tetra for the UK, has delayed their delivery of a significant quantity of vaccine that was due to be delivered throughout November. This now means that some schools will have a temporary stop to the programme leaving those children with underlying health conditions who would have been vaccinated in school unprotected until later in the season.

General practices should implement the seasonal flu programme as outlined in the Direct Enhanced Service Specification (www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/dess-sfl-and-pneumococcal-1920.pdf). As part of this practices are required to call in those children who are eligible for flu vaccination, and to undertake recall for those children and young people in clinical risk groups for influenza. Because of the delay in supply PHE strongly recommends the following prioritisation:

- Children in high risk groups aged 6 months to 2 years – these children should be called and offered quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (QIV)
- Children and young people in high risk groups from 2 to less than 18 years should be prioritised and offered LAIV (unless contraindicated).
 - those aged 2 to less than 18 years should be called in and offered LAIV or, where contraindicated, a suitable quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV). Some children aged 4 – 10 years may have been vaccinated through school so practices should offer vaccination to those who remain unvaccinated.
 - Where a practice does not have LAIV available, vaccination of children in high risk groups should **not** be delayed and a suitable QIV should be offered as an alternative.



- Healthy children aged 2-3 years should be called and offered LAIV using the remaining available practice stock. It is reasonable to call two-year olds who are receiving vaccine for the first season before 3 year-olds.
- Where practices see high risk children and have no central QIV stock, they can use locally procured stock and replace it with stock ordered through the ImmForm website.

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':

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 www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-leaflets-and-posters

Yours sincerely



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