

To: Public Health Commissioning Central Team

NHS Trusts

Operations and Delivery

Heads of Public Health Commissioning

Directors of Primary Care and Public Health Commissioning

Screening and Immunisation Leads

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**For local cascade to:**

- General Practices
- School Age Vaccine Providers
- Community Pharmacists
- CCG Flu leads

7 November

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**CC:**

General Practitioners Committee

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee

**FOR INFORMATION**

Dear colleagues,

**Re: The transfer of excess of QIV/LAIV flu vaccine stock between providers including Primary Care, NHS Trusts and School Age Vaccine Providers on the National Immunisation Flu Programme**

In July 2019, we wrote to all primary care providers regarding the delayed World Health Organisation (WHO) vaccine virus strain recommendation and the fact that subsequently Sanofi Pasteur – one of the manufacturers – delayed their delivery schedule. This letter is attached as Annex A.

Following the previous communication, we have now in addition learned of a temporary delay in the supply of LAIV flu vaccine which will have an impact on the children's flu vaccination programme.

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 QIV flu vaccines recommended for those aged under 65 years in clinical risk groups and for LAIV flu vaccine recommended for the children's programme in the 2019/20 flu season, it would not prevent the transfer of QIV or LAIV vaccine under the given circumstance of 'in short supply' or temporary 'no supply' available provided that:

- the practice, pharmacy, NHS Trust or school provider that is holding the excess QIV /LAIV stock has assurance that the vaccine has been stored in the correct temperature-controlled conditions;
- confirmed record keeping of temperature monitoring is available;



- the practice, pharmacy, NHS or school provider Trust that requests QIV/LAIV is able to verify the assurances given; and
- the vaccine can be transported appropriately under the right cold chain conditions.

Providers and NHS Trusts 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>

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/repal-of-wholesale-dealer-licence-exemption-for-pharmacists>

Transferring flu vaccines between practices is a failsafe measure; in the first instance alternative actions should be explored if a local stock issue is anticipated.

This should include for QIV:

1. Assessing the impact of the phased delivery of QIV flu vaccine and take local action to ensure sufficient supply of the recommended flu vaccine for those under 65 years in clinical risk groups in advance of the season
2. Confirming vaccine delivery dates with the manufacturer/supplier in advance of the season and schedule clinics/appointments at a time that vaccine becomes available. Public Health England and NHS England and NHS Improvement have developed a patient-facing leaflet to support scheduling of clinics/appointments <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-for-people-aged-65-and-under>
3. Following Public Health England advice that, where a patient presents for immunisation and QIVe is unavailable, providers should offer QIVc if they have sufficient stock.
4. Where vaccine is unavailable, discussing the option of receiving the flu vaccine at the local pharmacist with the eligible patient. Please refer to the Public Health England and NHS England and NHS Improvement patient facing leaflet
5. Considering the transfer of vaccines where there is excess stock and in accordance with the advice detailed in this letter. GPs transferring excess stock between other practices and pharmacies should ensure they discuss this in the first instance with the CCG Flu lead and NHS England commissioning team

This should include for LAIV:

6. Considering the excess transfer of complete packs of LAIV vaccines between various providers of the programme in accordance with the advice detailed in this letter, and where the unavailability of vaccine through the ImmForm website would otherwise cause disruption to pre-arranged clinics and sessions.

Yours sincerely



Director of Public Health Commissioning and Operations  
Operations and Delivery  
NHS England and NHS Improvement

**Annex A:**

17 July 2019 Flu vaccine supplies letter from NHS England, NHS Improvement and Public Health England.



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