

12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**FAO: CCG, GP and pharmacy colleagues, East of England.**

Dear colleagues,

**Re: Helping us to vaccinate care home staff this year.**

This year's flu vaccination programme is well underway, and it is more important than ever with the added risk of flu and COVID-19 co-circulating.

Care home residents are a particularly vulnerable priority group and, in addition to vaccinating this group, we can also protect them by making sure those caring for them are also vaccinated to minimise spread in care home settings.

GPs and pharmacists across the East of England have been doing fantastic work to vaccinate care home residents and uptake is progressing well.

However, uptake for care home staff is much lower with only 21.7% of directly employed staff and 15.6% of agency/bank staff vaccinated across the region as of 26<sup>th</sup> October.

Health and social care staff employed by a registered residential care/nursing home are eligible for a free vaccination and should be vaccinated by the GP practice where they are registered as a patient. Both care home residents and staff can both be vaccinated for flu by a visiting GP if they are registered at that GP practice. Pharmacy can also vaccinate both staff and residents.

With a sustained focus on this group, we can make a big difference to their uptake and the risk of flu in a care home setting.

***What we can do to vaccinate more care home staff:***

We have been working to support systems with their delivery plans and communications for this group. There are a number of things you could do to help improve the uptake:

1. When visiting care homes, **offer the vaccination** to eligible care home staff registered with your GP practice, or to all eligible staff for pharmacy colleagues.
2. Make sure all your **staff members know this group are eligible**, so this group are offered an appointment when they contact your practice or pharmacy.
3. **Promote the vaccination** for carers on your website and opportunistically.

Thank you for your continued dedication to vaccinating and protecting patients in your area and for your assistance in achieving the aims of the 2020/21 flu immunisation programme.

Best wishes,



Oliver Jackson

Head of Flu Programme Delivery, NHS England and NHS Improvement – East of England

