Flu vaccine FAQs for care staff

Why should I get the flu vaccine?

Flu is a serious virus that can cause severe respiratory illness. In England, an average of 13,500 people die every year from flu, and thousands more need hospital treatment. For people in at-risk groups, such as older people or those with an underlying health condition, flu can be a serious disease and can cause death.

As someone delivering social care, you will be caring for many people in these at-risk groups. Getting the vaccine will mean you are much less likely to spread flu to them and will help to protect those you are caring for this winter.

We want to ensure that those delivering care and those being cared for are as well-protected from the flu virus as they can be. Having the flu vaccine provides the best protection and helps prevent people from getting flu themselves and from spreading it to other people.

Do I need it every year?

New flu vaccines are produced every year to protect against the strains most likely to be in circulation, which is why people are advised to be vaccinated every year. Also, the protection from the vaccine you had last year will decrease over time.

Is it safe?

The flu vaccines used in the national vaccination programme have a good safety record. The vaccines are thoroughly tested before they are made available in England.

What are the side effects?

You may have a mild fever and aching muscles a few days after having the vaccine and your arm may be sore at the injection site. The flu vaccines used for adults in the UK do not give you flu.

When can I get it?

The best time to have a flu vaccine is in the autumn, from October to end of November, so you're protected as soon as possible before the flu season starts.

How do I get it?

As a social care worker, you may be provided access to the flu vaccine by your employer. If they don't provide one, you can get one for free on the NHS. You may need to present proof of your employment at your local GP or pharmacy when

receiving the flu vaccine. If you are asked to provide proof, you could use a letter from your employer, an ID badge or a payslip.

The link for booking is here: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/vaccination-and-booking-services/book-flu-vaccination/

Further information here: https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine/