



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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Adult Social Care Delivery Directorate
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To:

Local Authority Chief Executives
Directors of Adult Social Services
Care home providers and managers
Domiciliary care providers and managers

31 August 2023

Flu and COVID-19 autumn vaccine programmes brought forward

Dear Colleagues,

Today, NHS England has announced that it is bringing forward the rollout of this year's Autumn/Winter Flu and COVID-19 vaccination delivery programme to begin on 11 September.

This has been done as a precautionary measure taken to protect the most vulnerable from illness during winter following the identification of COVID-19 variant BA.2.86. Therefore, the NHS has been asked to accelerate delivery of the programme to vaccinate eligible people more quickly. The eligibility criteria remain unchanged for both the Autumn 2023/24 COVID-19 cohorts¹, and flu cohorts².

Vaccination teams will now begin contacting providers to arrange visits and have been asked to ensure that all residents in care homes are vaccinated by 22 October. It's vitally important that care home staff should now commence the consenting process for residents, if not already done so.

Visits are also an opportunity to offer vaccination to new residents and to care home staff who have not yet received a prior dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. In care homes,

¹ [JCVI statement on the COVID-19 vaccination programme for autumn 2023, 26 May 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-statement-on-the-covid-19-vaccination-programme-for-autumn-2023)

² [National flu immunisation programme 2023 to 2024 letter - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-flu-immunisation-programme-2023-to-2024-letter)



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visiting teams will also be encouraged to offer co-administration of both COVID-19 and flu vaccines to both residents and staff where possible.

Staff are encouraged to book their vaccinations as early as possible via Local Booking Services from 11 September, and the [National Booking Service](#) (NBS), from 18 September. Appointments can also be booked online on the NHS App, or by phoning 119.

For managers, we have a range of materials which you can use to help promote vaccinations for staff including Q&A leaflets, posters, and stickers. You can download digital versions at the Campaign Resource Centre³.

Understanding the uptake of both COVID-19 and flu vaccination remains vital to the successful delivery of the campaign, as well as our knowledge of attitudes towards vaccination. The Capacity Tracker (CT) remains an essential tool in this regard, and I would like to thank you for your continued support in providing timely and accurate vaccination data as part of the monthly mandated collection. It is especially useful for managers to update CT immediately following a vaccination team visit. If you require any assistance with using CT or would like to report an issue, please contact necsu.capacitytracker@nhs.net.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Claire Armstrong
Director of Adult Social Care Delivery

³ [Winter Vaccinations | Campaigns | Campaign Resource Centre \(dhsc.gov.uk\)](#)