

Memorandum

To:	QCH Medical, Nursing and Pharmacy Staff
Copies to:	IMPS, QSIS
From:	Queensland Specialist Immunisation Service (QSIS)
Contact no.:	3068 5600
Subject:	Seasonal Influenza Vaccine 2020 – Government Funded Program (Patients)

As you are aware influenza season is approaching and staff have an important role in recommending influenza vaccination to our patients and their families. The vaccine is recommended for all persons ≥ 6 months of age and government funded for specific at-risk groups.

The government funded **Quadrivalent Seasonal Influenza (Flu) Vaccine** is expected to be available from **9th April** for the following groups: -

- All children 6 months to < 5 years
- Medical at Risk
 - Cardiac disease
 - Chronic respiratory conditions
 - Chronic neurological conditions
 - Immunocompromising conditions
 - Diabetes and other metabolic disorders
 - Renal disease
 - Haematological disorders
 - Long term aspirin therapy in children aged 6 months to 10 years
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ≥ 6 months of age
- All adults aged ≥ 65 years (recommended high dose/higher-immunogenicity quadrivalent influenza vaccine)
- Pregnant women

Quadrivalent vaccine provides active immunisation against four influenza strains

- A/Brisbane/02/2018 (H1N1) pdm09 - like virus
- A/South Australia34/2019 (H3N2) – like virus
- B/Washington/02/2019 like (B/Victoria lineage) virus
- B/Phuket/3073/2013 like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus

In 2020, four age specific funded Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccines [QIV] will be available through the National Immunisation Program (NIP) for children.

From 6 months of age (until 64 years):

- FluQuadri® vaccine (Sanofi) [IM, 0.5mL]
- Vaxigrip-tetra® (Sanofi) [IM, 0.5mL]
- Fluarix-tetra® vaccine (GlaxoSmithKline) [IM, 0.5mL]

From 5 years of age (until 64 years):

- Afluria Quad® vaccine (Seqirus) [IM, 0.5mL] – 5 years and older

Children under 9 years require two doses at least 4 weeks apart in the first year they receive the vaccine; with a single dose required in subsequent years.

A 2-dose schedule is recommended for all patients in the first year on immune suppressive therapy or following transplant.

Timing of vaccination:

- Before onset of influenza season – peak influenza period is typically June to September
- While protection is generally expected to last for the whole season, optimal protection occurs within the first 3-4 months following vaccination.
- It is never too late to vaccinate – vaccination should be offered while influenza viruses are circulating and vaccine is available.
- There is no evidence to support revaccination later in the same season for individuals who have already received vaccination.
- For further information see: <https://beta.health.gov.au/services/flu-influenza-immunisation-service>

Seasonal Influenza Vaccine is available at:-

1. General Practitioner or local immunisation provider.
2. Outpatients – Prescriber to order vaccine on ieMR, vaccine will be dispensed by pharmacy and can be administered by staff as per medication policy.
3. Inpatients – Prescriber to order vaccine on ieMR, vaccine will be dispensed by pharmacy and can be administered by staff as per medication policy.
4. 2g Immunisation centre – outpatients or inpatients following discharge can present directly to the centre, no appointment necessary.
 - a. Immunisation Centre is open Mon-Fri 8am-4pm.
 - b. Private influenza vaccine is available at a competitive price for those not eligible for funded vaccine
 - c. Parents, family members and siblings can also receive the influenza vaccination (funded or private).

Of Note:

High dose/higher-immunogenicity quadrivalent influenza vaccine is recommended for those aged ≥ 65 years of age. This will be available at the immunisation centre (2g) for staff, parents and family members at QCH.

The seasonal influenza vaccine **does not** provide protection against coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Precautions such as handwashing, social distancing and cough etiquette are important in preventing infection.

Staff Influenza Program:

- The funded staff seasonal influenza program is co-ordinated through IMPS (Staff Immunisation Nurse) and will commence in April.
- Information about the program will be available at <https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/childrenshealth/html/chq-infection>
- The staff program will be funding a quadrivalent influenza vaccine which will NOT be available at 2g immunisation centre. Staff can attend the immunisation centre to access government funded vaccine (if eligible) or private purchase vaccine.
- Staff over 65 years of age can present to immunisation centre for vaccination under the government funded program.