08/23 DJ/HHE/HH

NHS
Shropshire Community Health
NHS Trust
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY1 3GZ
01743 730028

Email: shropcom.immunisationteam@nhs.net
Website: www.shropscommunityhealth.nhs.uk

Dear Parent/Guardian

Your child's annual 2023/2024 LAIV Nasal Influenza Immunisation (Flu Spray) is now due.

All **Primary school-aged children, including children in Specialist Schools, in Reception Year to Year 6 (aged 4 to 10 years old on 31st August 2023)** will be offered the vaccine.
All **Secondary school-aged children, including children in Specialist Schools, in Year 7 to Year 11 (aged 11 to 15 years old on 31st August 2023)** will be offered the vaccine.

This vaccination programme is in place to help protect your child against flu. Flu can be an unpleasant illness and sometimes causes serious complications. Vaccinating your child will also help protect more vulnerable friends and family by preventing flu from spreading. The vaccination is free and recommended for young children and will be given by a quick and simple spray up the nose. Our immunisation team will be responsible for ensuring children receive the Fluenz Nasal Spray in schools.

Please complete the attached consent form, (<u>one for each child at this school</u>) detach from the letter and return the completed consent form to the school within **one week** to ensure your child receives their vaccination. **Community clinics will be available for children to access during the school holidays if they do not receive the Flu spray on the day we are in school.**

If you do not wish for your child to receive the live nasal vaccination, they can receive the injectable Inactivated Porcine-free Vaccination – the injectable vaccine is not administered in school, please contact the Immunisation Team to arrange a clinic appointment, if this is your preference.

If you have any queries, contact the School Aged Immunisation Team. Frequently asked questions and answers can be seen on the next page.

The NHS Friends and Family Survey is a way of gathering your feedback about your experience and helps to drive improvement in our service. To complete the online survey please use the following link: http://www.shropscommunityhealth.nhs.uk/fft-survey.

Yours sincerely,

Debbie Jones
SAIS Clinical Team Lead

If your child becomes wheezy or has their asthma medication increased after you return this form, please contact the Immunisation Team via school on the day.

If you decide you do not want to vaccinate your child against flu, please return the form indicating **<u>No consent.</u>** This will help us plan and improve the service.

►► Why should children have the flu vaccine?
Flu can be a very unpleasant illness in children causing fever, stuffy nose, dry cough, sore throat, aching muscles and joints, and extreme tiredness. This can often last several days.

Some children can get a very high fever, sometimes without the usual flu symptoms, and may need to go to hospital for treatment. Serious complications of flu include a painful ear infection, acute bronchitis, and pneumonia.

►► My child had the flu vaccination last year. Do they need another one this year?
Yes; the flu vaccine for each winter helps provide protection against the strains of flu that are likely to circulate this year and which may be different from last year. For this reason, we recommend that even if vaccinated last year, your child should be vaccinated again this year.

►► How will the vaccine be given?
For most children, it is given as a nasal spray.

►► Who will give my child their vaccination?
Children aged two and three years will be given the vaccination at their general practice (GP) usually by the practice nurse.
Children in **Primary schools from Reception to Year 6** will be offered the vaccination in school.
Pupils in Secondary schools from Year 7 to Year 11 will be offered the vaccination in school
Children who attend specialist schools will be offered the Flu Nasal Spray from Reception up to their 16th birthday.

►► How does the nasal spray work?
The nasal spray contains viruses that have been weakened to prevent them from causing flu but will help your child to build up immunity. When your child comes into contact with flu viruses, they will then be less likely to get ill.

►► Are there any side-effects of the vaccine?
Serious side-effects are uncommon. Children may commonly develop a runny or blocked nose, headache, general tiredness, and some loss of appetite. This may last a few days.

The vaccine is absorbed quickly in the nose so, even if your child sneezes immediately after having the spray, there's no need to worry that it hasn't worked.

►► Are there any children who shouldn't have the nasal vaccine?
Children should not have the nasal vaccine if they:

- Are currently wheezy or have been wheezy in the past three days (vaccination should be delayed until at least three days after the wheezing has stopped)
- Are severely asthmatic and had a previous ITU admission for asthma **or** have regular **oral** steroids to control their asthma.
- Are currently being treated with oral steroids or have received a course in the previous 14 days.
- Have a condition, or on treatment, that severely weakens their immune system or have someone in their household who is immunosuppressed.
- Have severe egg allergy. Most children with egg allergy can be safely immunised with nasal flu vaccine. However, children with a history of severe egg allergy with anaphylaxis should seek specialist advice. Please check with your GP.
- Are allergic to any other components of the vaccine.

►► Does the nasal vaccine contain gelatine derived from pigs (porcine gelatine)?
Yes. The vaccine contains a form of porcine gelatine, Nasal Flu remains the most effective vaccine for this age group, however an alternative is available: Please contact The Immunisation Team on 01743 730028. **Please do not complete this form for the alternative vaccine.**