

**NHS WESTERN ISLES**  
**DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH STRATEGY**  
**HEALTH PROTECTION**

**Annual Influenza and Covid-19 Booster Vaccination  
in NHS Western Isles 2021**

**Version 1.1**

**July 2021**

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## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In 2019/20, NHS Western Isles implemented the Vaccination Transformation Programme (VTP) such that the delivery of the influenza vaccination programme moved into the remit of the NHS Western Isles Board, with the service delivered to eligible groups by the Community Nursing team operating within GP practices. This year, season 2021/22, the influenza vaccination programme delivery will build on the successes of last year through the provision of advance information to the population and the Board being responsible for the call and recall for all programmes via the Primary Care team.
- 1.2 Following the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), season 2021/22 will see the requirement for the Board to deliver Covid-19 Booster vaccination alongside the influenza vaccine. Early indication is that the vaccines can be delivered concurrently and it is thought that concomitant delivery will work to increase uptake of both vaccines within the population.
- 1.3 The vaccination programmes will be delivered from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, in order to maximise protection through the winter months in those who are the most vulnerable. Delivery will take place in two stages and follow the guidance from the CEL 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.
- 1.4 The vaccination programme will see a mixed model of delivery throughout the Western Isles. Where possible, vaccinations will be delivered to eligible groups within their GP practice, however, due to the implications and challenges of COVID-19, centralised clinics will also take place in the localised community setting. There may also be the need for vaccinations out-with normal working hours and provision of a 7 day week service.
- 1.5 The potentially serious nature of both Covid-19 and influenza infections will be emphasised in all communications. Additionally, the national communications will be employed and supported by local communications in both English and Gaelic languages to further encourage uptake, and we would expect to achieve the Scottish Government set targets for vaccinating our population.
- 1.6 The influenza and Covid-19 booster programmes will include delivery of vaccination to all eligible groups defined within the national CMO letters. The vaccination programme will include planning for delivery of the influenza vaccine to the extended groups (i.e. secondary school pupils, teachers and

pupil facing support staff, independent contractors and those aged 50-64 years of age) throughout NHS Western Isles.<sup>1 2</sup>

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In Scotland there is an annual vaccination programme which aims to reduce the impact (morbidity and mortality) of influenza particularly in high risk groups. In order to protect staff, patients and families from influenza, it is recommended that all those in an identified eligible group of the population should be offered, and encouraged to take up, vaccination against seasonal influenza. Historically, the uptake of influenza immunisation amongst those eligible in NHS Western Isles is low. The Scottish Government advises that staff should work hard to encourage the populations recommended to receive vaccine uptake this offer, and recommend early vaccination by the end of November.
- 2.2 The JCVI has identified that a two dose Covid-19 vaccine schedule will provide the population with good protection against severe Covid-19 disease. However, recognising the limitations in evidence of protection beyond six months, the JCVI has, as a precaution, issued interim guidance recommending that the population of Scotland be offered a further booster dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to maintain and enhance current levels of protection in our population. We are awaiting further advice as to which vaccines will be used for this booster programme.
- 2.3 The Health Protection Team (HPT) has collaborated with NHS Western Isles Community Nursing team since the 2019/20 flu season, where they worked on a successful transition of the flu vaccine delivery under the auspices of the VTP.
- 2.4 Whilst uptake varied by eligible groups, season 2020/21 realised increased uptakes for those aged 65 and over (↑5.8%), those in an 'At risk' group (↑4.6%), Health care workers (↑9.8%) and in primary school aged children (↑7.0%). Uptake was decreased in those aged 2-5 years not yet in school (↓7.3%) and in women who were pregnant without an identified risk (↓17.1%) and pregnant women with an identified risk (↓6.1%).

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish childhood and school flu immunisation programme 2021/22

<sup>2</sup> Adult flu immunisation programme 2021/22 (scot.nhs.uk)

- 2.5 However, whilst the VTP transition was successful, uptake figures continue to remain below the Scottish Government's national target of 75% (target is 65% for children aged 2-5 years not yet in school) for all programmes with the exception of children aged 5-11 years in primary school, which surpassed the national target by 8.4%.
- 2.6 Covid-19 vaccination was delivered by the community nursing team, supported by other vaccinating staff, in centralised clinics across NHS Western Isles and in GP practices for the most vulnerable in the rural areas. The vaccination programme has been a great success, drawing on support from partner agencies throughout the islands to enable NHS WI to be the first Board in Scotland to complete on the delivery of first doses to the local population. NHS Western Isles leads on uptake across all eligible cohorts and continues to deliver second doses to all those eligible.
- 2.7 COVID-19 has resulted in the requirement to adapt service delivery of the influenza programme in season 2021/22. GP services are challenged with space due to physical distancing requirements, patient flows and the return to routine practice. Planning for the delivery of the influenza and Covid-19 booster programmes will give consideration to those who require concomitant/single vaccination, GP remobilisation plans, and the need for centralised clinics.

### **3. OBJECTIVES FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR**

- 3.1 The objectives for staff influenza vaccination for 2020/21 season are:
- To identify and reflect on key success factors of staff influenza vaccination programme season 2019/20 delivery strategy and where possible adopt an improving/ redesign approach.
  - To deliver a complete immunisation service run by the NHSWI Board. This will include call/recall, delivery of the vaccine and provision of accessible clinics to suit the population's needs.
  - To provide a safe and robust service to the population by having a resilient service, staffed by the community nursing team.
  - To reduce vaccine waste by aligning ordering of vaccines to the scheduled clinics.

## 4. SCOPE

4.1 The following eligible groups, as defined by the CMO (2021), are included as the cohorts for the influenza immunisation programme 2021/22:

- Children aged 2 to 5 years of age and not yet in school
- Children aged 5 to 11 years in primary school aged education
- All women who are pregnant
- All those aged 65 years and under with an 'at risk' condition
- All those aged 65 years of age and over
- All frontline Health and Social Care workers.

4.2 And extended to include:

- Independent contractors (general medical, dental and optometry practices and community pharmacies)
- Teachers and pupil facing staff
- Secondary school pupils
- All those aged 50 to 64 years of age.

4.3 The following eligible groups as defined by the CEL (5<sup>th</sup> July 2021) are included as the advised cohorts for the Covid-19 Booster immunisation programme 2021:

### STAGE 1

- Adults aged 16 years and over who are immunosuppressed
- Those living in residential care homes for older adults
- All adults aged 70 years of age and over
- Adults aged 16 years and over who are considered as clinically extremely vulnerable
- Frontline Health and Social Care workers

## STAGE 2

- All adults aged 50 years and over
  - All adults aged 16-49 who are in an Influenza 'At risk' category
  - Adult household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals
- 4.4 Call and Recall for season 2021/22 influenza immunisation programme is currently under review.
- 4.5 The Vaccination Holding Centre role within the influenza immunisation programme is currently under review.

## 5. CONSTRAINTS

- 5.1 Season 2021 runs from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021. However, the Covid-19 booster vaccine requires a 6 month gap between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> doses, therefore, concomitant vaccine will be limited to those eligible between 13<sup>th</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 as influenza vaccination is a priority. There will be a continued requirement for Covid-19 vaccination beyond 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, observing the required 6 month gap.
- 5.2 It is thought nationally that season 2021/22 will see an increased uptake in vaccination following on from the impact of Covid-19. Recognising that the Western Isles has the lowest uptake for influenza vaccination in Scotland for the over 65s age group historically, and the potential impact of a surge in Covid-19 disease in our local population, it is ever more important that uptake of the influenza vaccine is increased this year.
- 5.3 **Staffing.**
- 5.3.1 The main immunisation staff group will be the community nursing team for the delivery of vaccinations to all groups with exception of children aged 5 to 18 years of age in primary and secondary school aged education. The community nurses will deliver the influenza immunisations to identified cohorts at scheduled GP practice clinics and centralised clinics across NHS Western Isles. Support for community nursing teams will be identified from Bank staffing by 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

- 5.3.2 Children aged 2 to 5 years of age will be invited to attend clinics at GP practices across NHS Western Isles. Delivery of flu vaccinations to this age group was incorporated into the established Routine Childhood Immunisation/CTAC clinics, which resulted in an increased uptake in season 2019/20. Flexibility will be available to parents when booking children into clinics, and space will be made available at alternative venues should this is the preferred option.
- 5.3.3. The School Nursing team will be responsible for the organisation and delivery of the vaccination programme to primary school aged children aged 5 to 11 years of age and secondary school aged 12 to 18 years in schools throughout the Western Isles. The School Nursing team will make alternative arrangements for the immunisation of children who are eligible but do not attend school i.e. those who are home schooled. The team will also be responsible for vaccinating those that require a second dose of inactivated vaccine to complete their first course of the influenza vaccination and mop-up across the Western Isles.
- The school team will also be responsible for the influenza vaccination of teaching and pupil facing support staff. Delivery is planned to be carried out within the schools when they are attending to vaccinate pupils.
- 5.3.4 Vaccination of nursery staff will be carried out by a blend of the Community Nursing team and the School Nursing team. Nurseries attached to schools will have vaccine delivered by the School Nursing team, with staff from independent nurseries to be vaccinated by Community Nurses.
- 5.3.5 The Occupational Health team will be responsible for the organisation and delivery to the eligible Health and Social care workforce, and for the extended occupational groups such as independent contractors, Optometry and Community Pharmacy.
- 5.3.6 Peer vaccinators will continue to be used to support the Occupational Health team throughout NHS WI, thus allowing for easy accessibility to vaccinations and to maintain increased uptake in staff.
- 5.3.7 Midwives will coordinate the delivery of influenza and Covid booster vaccination to pregnant women. The midwifery team will offer vaccination to all pregnant women from 12 weeks gestation within the identified influenza

vaccination period 13<sup>th</sup> September to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, and beyond as required.

- 5.3.8 Primary care will work closely with the Community Nursing, School Nursing, Occupational Health and Midwifery teams to schedule influenza and Covid booster immunisation clinics via the national SIRS and NVSS systems. An overview of scheduling is provided in Appendix 1.
- 5.3.9 Primary care staff are responsible for the call and recall of all eligible groups with exception of primary and secondary school aged children, and pregnant women. Centralised letters will be sent to all those in the 2 to 5 years of age programme and school aged children will receive school packs.
- 5.3.10 Work continues on the call/recall requirement for all other programmes, with two options available:
1. Local control or
  2. The national system – NVSS.
- This will be determined by end of July 2021.
- 5.3.11 The Primary Care team will carry out any required pre attendance Covid-19 checks/screening with patients 24 hours in advance of scheduled clinic appointments.
- 5.3.12 The Pharmacy Department will provide staff to organise national ordering and receipt of influenza vaccine deliveries into the Western Isles Hospital Vaccine Holding Centre via Movianto. The Pharmacy Dept. will work closely with the Primary Care team to ensure that vaccine deliveries are made in advance of vaccination clinics. It is foreseen that aligning delivery to scheduled clinics will reduce wastage of both influenza and Covid-19 vaccines.
- 5.3.13 Community nursing will provide dedicated vaccination staff to deliver Covid - 19 and influenza vaccinations across the Board. Should further staff be required to achieve government targets, it may be possible to release staff, such as Peer vaccinators, from clinical areas who are trained and experienced in vaccination to assist in the delivery of mass vaccination programmes.

## 6. PROGRAMME APPROACH

6.1 There will be four models of delivery for season 2021/22:

6.1.1 **Delivery of vaccination in GP practices** : In season 2021/22 the community nursing team will work closely with Primary Care to provide a plan of attendance at GP practices across all areas (East, West and South teams) by

July 2021. The Lead Community Nurse will share it with the influenza vaccination planning group. Forward planning will enable scheduling of clinics, for local call and recall of eligible patients, coordination of concomitant vaccination and allow sharing with the VHC for vaccine ordering and control.

Scheduling of clinics in GP practices can be carried out Monday to Saturday and be done out-with normal working hours, where suitable. Scheduling of Sunday vaccination clinics is possible and can be done where agreed.

6.1.2 Community Nurses will deliver vaccines to the patients attending GP practice clinics and will record vaccination at the point of delivery on the VMT system. The Community Nurses will only record vaccination on GPIT EMIS standardised template for those children aged 2-5 years and not yet in school. There may be a requirement for using white circle sheets for inputting data into Topas. PPE use and cleaning in between patients will follow current guidance.

6.1.3 **Centralised Clinics**: In season 2021/22, the community nursing team will work with Primary Care to provide a plan of attendance at centralised clinics across all areas (East, West and South teams) by July 2021 to the Lead Community Nurse who will share it with the influenza vaccination planning group. This will allow for sharing with Primary Care to enable scheduling of clinics, for local call and recall of eligible patients, and to the VHC for vaccine control.

6.1.4 Scheduling of centralised clinics can be carried out Monday to Saturday and be done out-with normal working hours. Scheduling of Sunday vaccination clinics is also possible and can be done where suitable.

6.1.5 Community Nurses will deliver vaccines to the patients attending centralised clinics and will record vaccination at the point of delivery on the VMT system. There may be a requirement for using white circle sheets for inputting data into Topas. This need will be clarified depending on the identified scheduling system to be used at the end of July 2021. PPE use and cleaning in between patients will follow current HPS guidance.

6.1.6 Adoption of a Covid centre is due shortly in the Stornoway area, it may be possible, in future, to carry out vaccination clinics within the centre. This will

support the availability of vaccination in the main town area and reduce the impact on GP practices.

**6.1.7 Primary and Secondary School vaccinations (including staff):** The School Nursing team will schedule and deliver the influenza vaccination to primary

and secondary school aged children and staff in all schools across the Western Isles. The team will also schedule and deliver staff vaccination to nursery staff where a nursery is attached to the school at point of attendance.

The School team will provide a schedule to the Lead Health Visitor for sharing to the influenza planning group by July 2021. This will allow for sharing with HPT to inform nationally for centralised letters, to Primary care to enable scheduling of clinics, and to the VHC for vaccine control.

**6.1.8** The School team will deliver the vaccines within the schools and record vaccine delivery on the white circle sheets, which will be returned to Primary care for inputting into SIRS. The School team will record staff vaccination onto the VMT system at point of delivery and may/may not be required to use white circle sheets, dependent on the scheduling system. Primary care will create a returns list of children vaccinated, and return to practices timeously, to enable GP practices to update their records. There is no requirement for Primary care to create returns for vaccinated adults as this is automated from VMT.

**6.1.9 Vaccination of Pregnant women:** Midwives will arrange for vaccination of pregnant women at their antenatal clinic appointment, or sooner should this be requested/required. The midwifery team will maximise delivery of the influenza vaccination within the first eight weeks of the programme, aiming to have the majority of pregnant women vaccinated by the end of November (some may not be eligible until later in the season) across NHS Western Isles. Midwives will work closely with Primary care to schedule the delivery of Covid-19 vaccination to those eligible.

**6.1.10** Midwives must record vaccinations onto VMT and into Badgernet at the point of delivery. Midwives are not required to inform GPs of vaccination as this is automated from VMT.

## 7. PROMOTION

- 7.1 Promotion and awareness of the national influenza and Covid-19 booster programmes are important to the success of the programme. Awareness of the influenza and covid-19 vaccines, risks and benefits is vital prior to and during the campaign to increase population uptake. The Health Promotion team and Communications Manager will assist with the local influenza and

Covid-19 campaign, aligning it to the national season 2021/22 campaign where possible.

- 7.2 The following promotions will take place:

- Influenza and Covid-19 vaccination information will be published on multiple media platforms.
- Influenza and Covid-19 vaccine availability will be promoted in local media and press.
- Influenza and Covid-19 vaccine information will be put onto the public viewing screens in all NHSWI areas.
- Reminders of clinic appointments in advance of clinics at different areas will be explored.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that we:

- Continue to support the community nurses in delivery of the vaccine within GP practices
- Support the adoption of alternative delivery models such as centralised clinics where required.
- Support the ability for the Peer Vaccinators to be released for supporting mass vaccination clinics where required.
- Strengthen and support the midwifery delivery and recording of vaccination.
- Have a strengthened Health Promotion input to the 2021/22 campaigns.

Board Meeting 25.08.21

Agenda item: 9.2

Purpose: For Assurance

- Frame all campaign material with factual and mutual benefit messages to include identifying 'flu' by its full name - '*Influenza*' – to emphasise the potentially serious nature of the disease.

Board Meeting 25.08.21

Agenda item: 9.2

Purpose: For Assurance

## Appendix 1: NHSWI Immunisation Programme Scheduling Overview

Scheduled Appoin	12-Jul	19-Jul	26-Jul	02-Aug	09-Aug	16-Aug	23-Aug	30-Aug	06-Sep	13-Sep	20-Sep	27-Sep	04-Oct	11-Oct	18-Oct	25-Oct	01-Nov	08-Nov	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov	Onwards
Submission of School vaccination dates	←→																					
Submission of HSCW vaccination dates	←→																					
Submission of 2-5 years and all Adult eligible cohort dates (inc. Midwifery info)	←→																					
Submission of Covid vaccination dates	←→																					
Cohorts identified and shared with Primary care	←→																					
Invites (both programmes) to be sent out to arrive 14 days in advance of appointment					← Invites continue on a rolling basis with concomitant vaccination where possible →																	
Influenza Vaccination Delivery										← Flu programme completed by 30th November →												
Covid Booster Delivery										← 3rd dose to be delivered 6 months after 2nd dose →												