

2024 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program

Aged Care Facilities

Please distribute to all doctors and staff in your facility

1. All residents should receive the 2024 seasonal influenza vaccine and, as appropriate, pneumococcal vaccine (Prevenar 13).
2. Fluad® Quad is an enhanced quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV), registered for use in adults aged 65 years and over.
3. Pre-order influenza vaccine online at nsw.tollhealthcare.com from **9am Monday 4th March 2024**. Deliveries will begin when the influenza vaccine becomes available. Pre orders close at **4.30pm Friday 15th March 2024**.

Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for ALL residents

- Vaccination is recommended for everyone aged 65 years and over to reduce the risk of influenza complications and to prevent influenza outbreaks in aged care facilities.
- More information about key at risk groups will be published in the ATAGI 2024 *Statement on the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines* available from early March at <https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-technical-advisory-group-on-immunisation-atagi>.
- All residents in aged care facilities are eligible for free influenza vaccine.
- **Vaccinating from mid-April provides protection before the peak season takes place.**
- In 2024, Fluad® Quad, an enhanced QIV, will be available for use in residents aged 65 years and over. For residents under 65 years, a regular quadrivalent vaccine can be ordered.

COVID-19 and other vaccines

- Influenza vaccines can be given on the same day as COVID-19 vaccines.
- Take the opportunity to ensure residents are up to date with **pneumococcal** vaccinations as recommended in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#).
- A pneumococcal [Clinical Decision Tree](#) for vaccination providers is available on the Australian Government website at <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-immunisation-program-pneumococcal-vaccination-schedule-from-1-july-2020-clinical-decision-tree-for-vaccination-providers>.
- If co-administering influenza and COVID-19 vaccines, consider offering other vaccines on a separate visit to reduce the risk of adverse events.
- For more information visit <https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/advice-for-providers/clinical-guidance>.

Staff influenza vaccination

- All providers of Australian Government subsidised residential care must fund an annual vaccination program that offers a free vaccine to staff and volunteers.
- Staff are strongly recommended to receive a seasonal influenza vaccine to protect themselves and residents that they care for against influenza.
- Government funded vaccines provided for residents must NOT be used to vaccinate staff or volunteers.

Ordering influenza vaccine

- From **9am Monday 4th March 2024**, the government funded influenza vaccines can be **pre-ordered online** at: nsw.tollhealthcare.com. **Pre-orders will close at 4.30pm, Friday 15th March 2024**, after this date we will return to routine ordering and delivery.
- If your facility does not already have a vaccine account, please complete the online vaccine ordering account registration form at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/vaccine-ordering.aspx>.
- **Orders must be made online. Orders that are sent by email or fax will no longer be accepted.**
- Please call the NSW Vaccine Centre on **1300 656 132** prior to submitting an online registration form to confirm if your facility has an existing vaccine account.
- Subsequent orders can be made online once you have received your initial order, however **subsequent orders** will only be delivered once all pre-allocated flu orders have been distributed. There may be limits placed on orders to ensure equitable vaccine distribution to all providers in NSW.
- Only the person assigned with the role of managing a Residential Facility is authorised under Section 10(4)(d) of the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 to order influenza and pneumococcal vaccines.

All vaccinations must be reported to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

- Reporting of all vaccinations to the AIR is mandatory.
- Providers must apply for access to the AIR via Provider Digital Access (PRODA). Further information about PRODA is available at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/business/services/proda-provider-digital-access. Providers will also need to complete the *Australian Immunisation Register Application to Register as a Vaccination Provider*, an application form is available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/application-air-provider.aspx.

Preparing for the 2024 winter flu season

- Resources on the NSW Health webpage will help you prepare for the upcoming flu season, and reduce the possibility of influenza transmission in your facility:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Influenza/Pages/resources-residential-care.aspx>

Cold Chain Management

- Vaccines must be stored between +2°C to +8°C in accordance with the *National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5'* available at: www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-vaccine-storage-guidelines-strive-for-5.
- Vaccines **MUST** be stored in their original packaging; this helps to protect them from temperature fluctuations and UV light.
- Report any cold chain breaches to your local public health unit on 1300 066 055. Further information is available in the cold chain breach protocol available at www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/ccb-protocol.aspx.

Adverse events following immunisation (AEFI)

- To report any AEFIs, please download the National AEFI Reporting Form at the TGA website at www.tga.gov.au/resources/resource/forms/national-adverse-events-following-immunisation-aefi-reporting-form#aefi-form and contact your local public health unit on 1300 066 055.

Further Information

- Call your local public health unit on 1300 066 055 or visit: www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu.aspx.
- Australian Government Department of Health: Responsibilities of residential aged care providers: www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/residential-aged-care/responsibilities-of-residential-aged-care-providers.