

Dear Early Years settings and providers,

**\*\*Update on the annual flu vaccination programme for preschool children and how you can help support this programme- Please read and share\*\***

All children aged 2 and 3 years old (on 31 August 2022) are eligible for a free flu vaccination in the form of a nasal spray. This is usually given at the GP practice. However, not all parents are aware of this or take up the offer.

**Less 2–3-year-olds have been vaccinated against flu than in 2021.**

**We are seeing increases in the number of younger children contracting flu and higher hospitalisation rates**

Flu is a common infection in babies and children and can be very unpleasant for them. Children under the age of 5 have the highest hospital admission rates for flu compared to other age groups.

When flu comes round this autumn and winter more young children are likely to catch it than usual. This is because the coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions also stopped flu and young children in particular won't have natural immunity from catching flu before.

Having the vaccine helps to protect the children themselves. It will also help reduce the spread of flu, helping to protect family members, and others in the local community. More information can be found via this link: [Immunising preschool children against flu - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunising-preschool-children-against-flu)

Please find attached further information on the flu vaccine for early years' providers, as well as a leaflet and poster for parents. Please share this information with parents and carers at your setting.

Other groups are also eligible for a free flu vaccine. Please share this email among your staff for information as they may be eligible. Further information is available here: [The flu vaccination: who should have it and why - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-flu-vaccination-who-should-have-it-and-why)

- aged 2 and 3 years on 31 August 2022
- school aged children (all primary school aged children (reception year to year 6) and eligible secondary school aged children) These are usually offered at school.
- those aged 6 months to under 50 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- all those aged 50 years and over
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers / in receipt of carer's allowance / or main carer of an older or disabled person
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- frontline health and social care staff

