



Department
of Health

*From the Chief Medical Officer,
Professor Dame Sally C Davies FRS FMedSci*

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To early years practitioners

11 September 2017

Dear Colleague

Childhood influenza immunisation programme

I am writing to seek your help in raising awareness of the childhood influenza immunisation programme. Staff working in your sector can play a valuable role in talking to parents about the benefits of influenza vaccination.

In 2013, we started a phased roll-out programme to extend the offer of influenza vaccination to children. The vaccine is given as a nasal spray. This is quick and painless and no injection is involved. Not only does the influenza vaccine help to protect the children themselves, but by reducing the spread of influenza it will also help protect family members and others in the community. The influenza vaccine also promotes a healthy environment in nurseries and preschools by reducing the risk of spread of influenza to others including staff.

This coming winter, all children aged two and three can get the vaccine at their general practice. This is usually administered by the practice nurse. Previously children aged four, were offered the vaccine at their GP surgery, but this year these children will be offered the vaccine at school.

The programme continues to be rolled out, and children in reception class and years 1-4 in primary school will also offered the flu vaccine.

I would be grateful for your support in helping to publicise the programme. Further information for the early years sector has been produced by Public Health England. This can be found along with materials to give to parents that can be downloaded or ordered for free at www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-flu-programme

If you would like any further information about the programme please e-mail immunisation@phe.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally C Davies'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Sally' written in a larger, more prominent script than the initials 'C Davies'.

**PROFESSOR DAME SALLY C DAVIES
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**