

Autumn/Winter Vaccination Programme 2025/26

Information for Care Home Managers

23rd September 2025

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Public Health
Agency

Improving Your Health and Wellbeing

Agenda

- 1. Overview of 2025/26 programme**
- 2. Seasonal vaccination uptake rates**
- 3. Role & expectation of health care workers re: vaccination**
- 4. What you can do to improve vaccine uptake**
- 5. Are you ready**
- 6. Pharmacy**
- 7. Managing an outbreak**

Overview of 2025/26 programme

Delivery

Community pharmacies – Care Home Residents and Staff

- Programme commences: 6th Oct 2025
- Programme ends:
 - 31st Jan 2026 (Covid-19)
 - 31st March 2026 (flu)

*****HSCWs, inc. care home staff, no longer eligible for Covid-19 vaccine*****

Flu	COVID-19
65's and over	75's and over
All Care home residents & staff	Where there is a resident over the age of 75 then all residents in that care home are eligible If all the residents are under the age of 75 then only those who are immunosuppressed are eligible
Clinically at risk individuals (6mths +)	Immunosuppressed individuals (6mths +)
Pregnant women	
Health and social care workers	
Pre-school children	
School children (up to year	

Immunosuppression for homes where there are no residents under 75yrs old.

- This information will be sent out in a separate communication via email
- If in doubt check with residents GP and inform pharmacist in advance

Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, including patients undergoing chemotherapy leading to immunosuppression, patients undergoing radical radiotherapy, solid organ transplant recipients, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients, HIV infection at all stages, multiple myeloma or genetic disorders affecting the immune system (e.g. IRAK-4, NEMO, complement disorder, SCID).

Individuals who are receiving immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy including, but not limited to, anti-TNF, alemtuzumab, ofatumumab, rituximab, patients receiving protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors, and individuals treated with steroid sparing agents such as cyclophosphamide and mycophenolate mofetil.

Individuals treated with or likely to be treated with systemic steroids for more than a month at a dose equivalent to prednisolone at 20mg or more per day for adults.

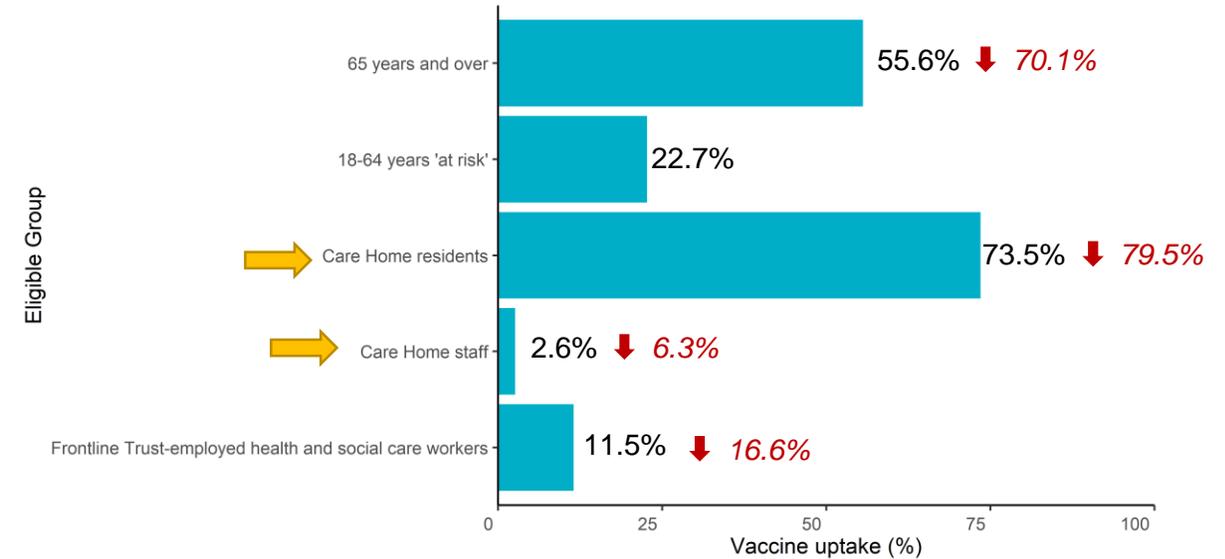
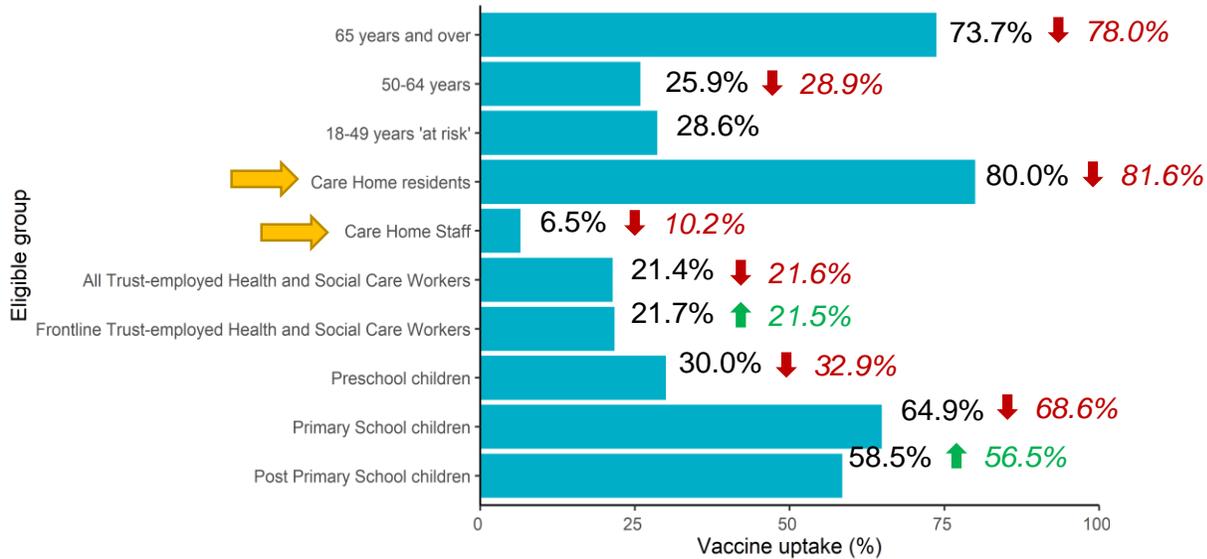
Anyone with a history of haematological malignancy, including leukaemia, lymphoma, and myeloma.

Those who require long term immunosuppressive treatment for conditions including, but not limited to, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, scleroderma and psoriasis.

2) Seasonal vaccination: uptake rates

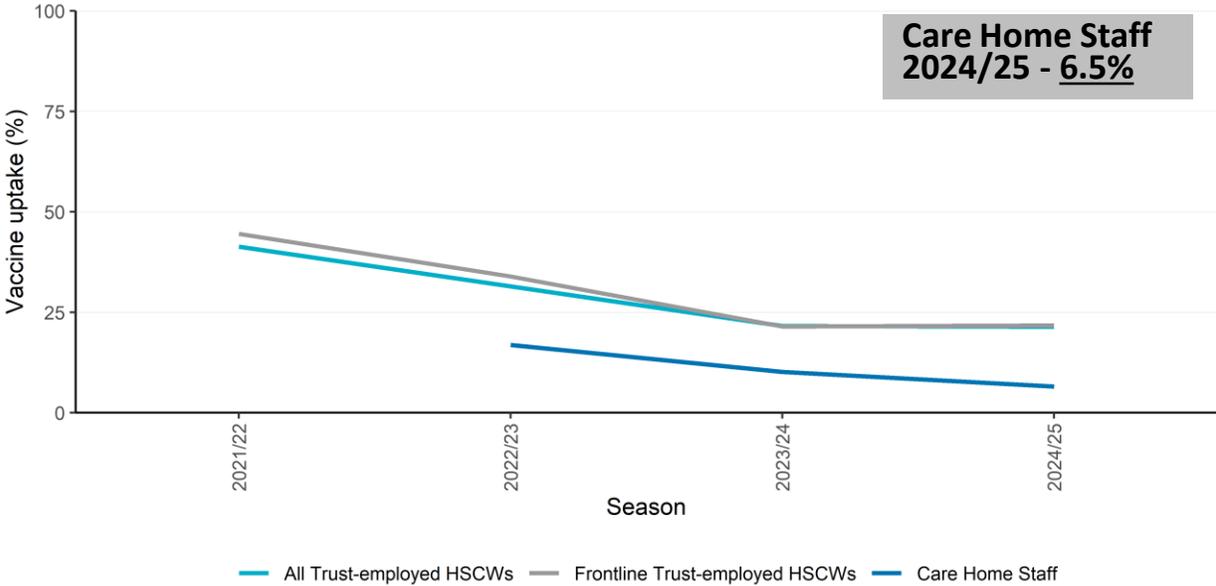
Flu (24/25 and 23/24)

COVID-19 (24/25 and 23/24)

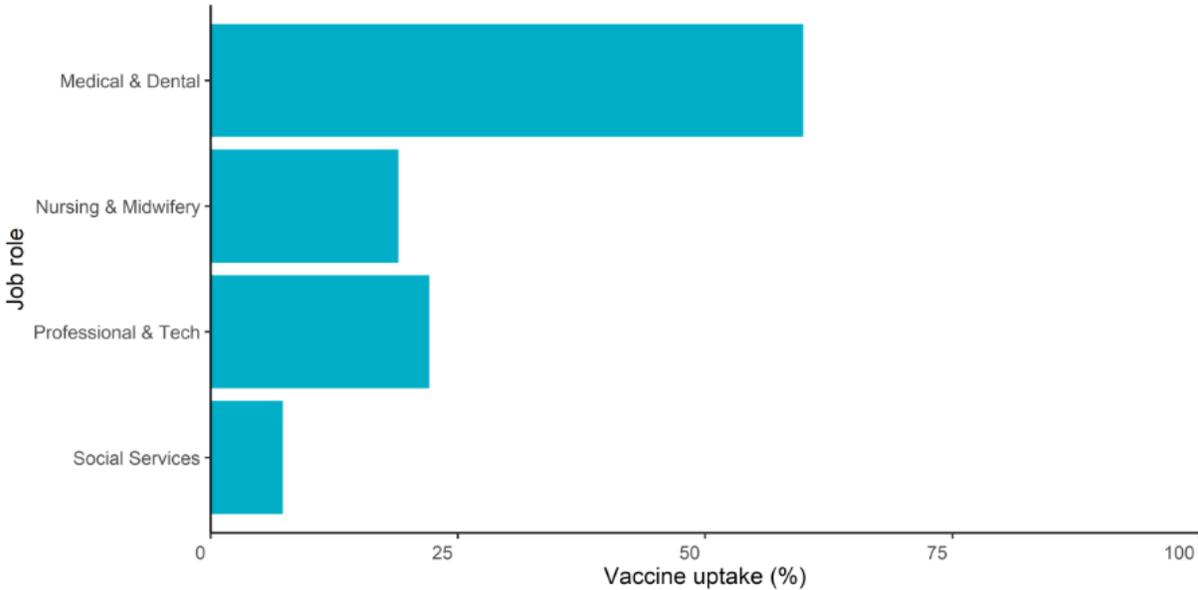


Flu vaccine: uptake rates

N.I HCW Flu vaccine uptake rates – 2021/22 to 2024/25



N.I HCW Flu vaccine uptake rates by job role, 2024/25



3) Role & expectation of HCWs re: vaccination



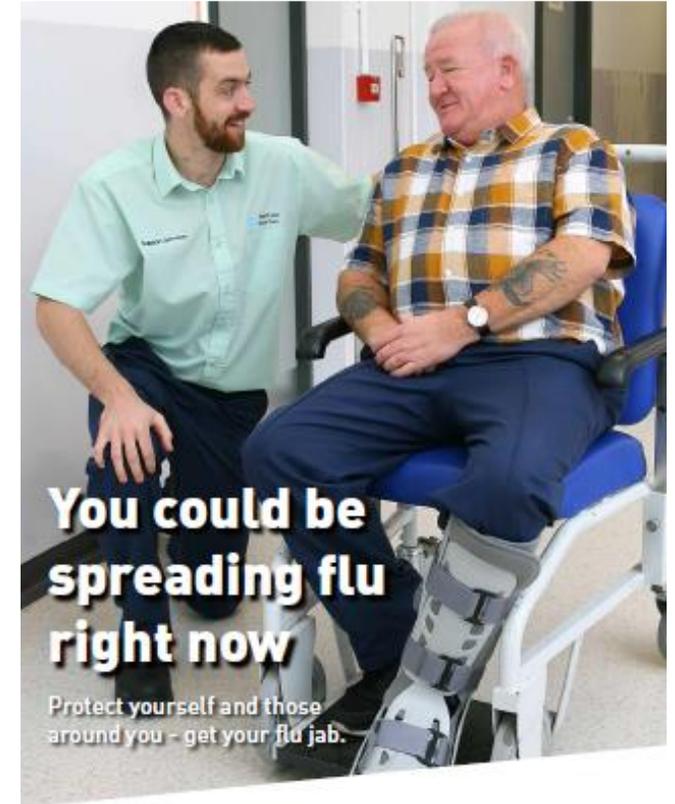
The Code

“I recently went to get my vaccine against RSV as I am pregnant, and the nurse told me it was better not to risk it as it was a new vaccine! So I left without getting vaccinated”

- 6 - Always practise in line with the best available evidence
 - 6.1 – make sure that any information or advice given is evidence based, including information relating to using any health and care products or services
- 20.7 - make sure you do not express your personal beliefs (including political, religious or moral beliefs) to people in an inappropriate way

Role & expectation of HCWs re: vaccination

- health professionals have a **duty of care** to protect patients and service users from infections
- flu vaccination **reduces transmission** of influenza to:
 - HSCWs (those involved in directly delivering Health and Social Care (HSC) services are at increased risk of exposure to influenza)
 - vulnerable patients, who may have impaired immunity and not respond well to immunisation
 - colleagues and family members
- flu vaccine uptake in HSCWs **significantly lowers rates** of flu-like illness, hospitalisation and mortality in elderly individuals in long-term healthcare settings
- flu vaccination **reduces sickness absences** and contributes to delivery of HSC services during winter pressures



4. What you can do to improve uptake

- Be seen to support vaccination: **lead by example**
- Be a champion: **talk positively** about vaccination within the care home; with residents, their families and staff
- **Support access**: encourage **staff** to get the flu jab when the pharmacist is in attendance at the care home (and promote the alternative measures, i.e. Trust vaccination teams or drop-in at local community pharmacy)
- **Celebrate success**: acknowledge wards/areas that achieve high uptake

****Make every contact count****



5. Are you ready?

- Complete online form re: pharmacy pairing
- Read 'Preparing for vaccination clinics'
- Complete Care Home Manager Checklist
- Guidance re: 'Best Interest' decisions
- Provide staff with RQIA registration number if they are being vaccinated in community pharmacy or GP to enable recording



Thank you

Questions

