

From: Bonnie.Jones@health.govt.nz <Bonnie.Jones@health.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, 5 June 2019 4:46 PM

Subject: Influenza vaccine supply issue

Kia ora koutou,

The Ministry has been informed by PHARMAC of a shortage of influenza vaccines.

The distribution of influenza vaccine in New Zealand has reached near record levels.

Around 1.26 million doses of the influenza vaccine have been distributed already this winter. This is close to last year's all-time record of 1.3 million doses for the entire season, and exceeds the number of doses distributed each year in 2016 and 2017.

It is pleasing that providers have again committed to delivering influenza vaccine to many of their patients, exceeding the Ministry of Health's influenza vaccine distribution target.

Due to continued high demand for the influenza vaccine, there is now very limited stock left.

To ensure that those most in need can get the influenza vaccine, the Ministry of Health is asking General Practices and Pharmacists to ensure they closely manage their stock levels and **only vaccinate those who are eligible for publicly funded vaccines:**

- Pregnant women
- Those aged 65 and over
- Children aged 4 and under with serious respiratory illnesses
- People with severe asthma, heart disease, diabetes and other serious health conditions that make them more susceptible to influenza.

There is still some stock of the paediatric influenza vaccine, Fluarix Tetra. Providers are asked to continue to target this to eligible children between 6 and 35 months of age.

For more detailed information on eligibility criteria, see www.influenza.org.nz.

Around half of the influenza vaccines administered in recent years have been publicly funded, with the rest purchased by individuals or provided through workplaces.

Washing hands, safe sneezing, and staying home if you are unwell are other ways we can reduce the spread of winter illnesses including influenza.

If providers can please email influenza@auckland.ac.nz with their current stocks of influenza vaccines, that will assist us in managing remaining supplies.

Kind regards,

Bonnie Jones
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