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# Adults' Health and Care

## Provider newsletter

9 October 2024

### Seasonal Influenza and COVID-19 Autumn/Winter Vaccination programmes

Flu and COVID-19 infections spread more easily in winter when we spend more time together indoors, and both viruses can cause serious illness. As a frontline care professional, you're more likely to be exposed to these viruses. See the [full list of eligible cohorts](#) who should receive both winter vaccinations.

If you are vaccinated and catch flu or COVID-19 this winter, you are likely to have milder symptoms and recover faster, cutting your risk of being hospitalised. We urge you to come forward for both your flu and COVID-19 vaccines as soon as possible to protect yourself, vulnerable service users, and reduce pressure on the NHS during winter.

For frontline social care workers and staff working in care homes for older adults, your employer will be able to point you in the direction of the most convenient COVID-19 vaccination offer. You can [book online](#) from 23 September.

The seasonal flu vaccine will be offered to all frontline social care staff without an employer-led occupational health scheme through their GP, community pharmacy or by [booking online](#).

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### UKHSA winter readiness (infection prevention) information for care homes in South East England

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has prepared a [briefing pack](#) that provides information for care homes on preparing for the winter season, to try and help avoid cases and outbreaks of infectious disease.

Care home residents and staff are susceptible to infections which increase over the winter months, such as COVID-19, seasonal influenza (flu) and stomach infections (such as norovirus, the 'winter vomiting bug'). These are very infectious and can cause outbreaks due to close contact in residential settings. Good infection control practices can help reduce the risk of outbreaks occurring. This briefing pack provides:

- Key messages for care home managers on winter preparedness, including when and how to report outbreaks to your local UKHSA Health Protection Team (HPT).
- Two checklists on respiratory infections and norovirus readiness.
- Links for posters and further information on RSV, COVID-19, flu, norovirus, shingles, and the health impacts of cold weather.

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### **Reminder to all Care Providers of resources to support occupational health needs of staff and obligations to staff in relation to infection**

Care providers should have a system in place to manage the occupational health needs and obligations to staff in relation to infection. Resources on occupational health provision in care homes to help guide providers have been updated to include information on the new Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccination programme. We would urge you to [look at this guidance](#), which has been summarised by our Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB) colleagues, and use the resources provided. These include a handy staff vaccination [assessment form](#) and tips on how to support staff with vaccinations.

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### **Cold Weather resources for care providers and staff**

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) issued a new adverse weather and health plan in 2023. This plan, which continues to receive regular updates, includes a number of resources for various staff groups and settings to prepare for and respond to cold weather, and protect staff and service users from the health impacts of adverse weather.

[SEE THE ACTION CARDS FOR PROVIDERS](#)

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## **Free Care Home virtual event with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) 10 October**

NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB are hosting a virtual event for care homes to share best practice and ways of working with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS)

You will have the opportunity to speak to members of SCAS about hospital conveyances, falls and patient transport. Nurses will have the opportunity to learn about different healthcare professional response times that you can request.

See the [full agenda for the day and sign up](#) to the event. The Teams link will remain the same throughout the day so you can join the sessions relevant to you.

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