



## Sussex Flu Vaccination Update

5 October 2020

### Shielded patients and households offered protection with free flu jab

Vulnerable people, including those that have previously been shielding due to coronavirus, are being urged to take up the free flu jab offer this winter or face the risk of serious illness.

The NHS is offering all COVID-19 shielded patients the free flu jab this year to protect them from getting serious ill, along with their household members to reduce the chance that flu is passed on in their home.

“Just” the flu? There’s no “just” about it. Every year the flu virus kills people and hospitalises many more. This year it is even more important people who are most at risk of flu have their free flu vaccination.

Those who are vulnerable to flu are also vulnerable to COVID-19, so the NHS is offering to protect people who were on the [shielded patient list](#) in the early stages of the pandemic with the NHS funded flu vaccine.

Anyone of any age who is a household member or a carer of a person who was shielded, is also eligible for the flu vaccination for free this year. Shielded patients’ “household members” are offered the vaccine to reduce the chance of them passing on flu on to someone who is vulnerable, as flu can easily spread even if someone is not showing symptoms.

If people in these groups have not already been contacted by your GP please call the GP practice you are registered with or your pharmacy to book an appointment

**Allison Cannon, Chief Nurse Officer for Sussex NHS commissioners said:** “Flu can be really serious and can be easily spread to those who are more vulnerable, that’s why we are offering all COVID-19 shielded patients and their households the NHS funded flu jab for free.

“If you live with someone who is on the NHS Shielded Patient List, or if you expect to share accommodation with them on most days over the winter, making close contact unavoidable, then you should ask your pharmacist or GP for a free flu vaccination.”

There have been national headlines about access to GP practices, but the NHS in Sussex wants to reassure that GP practices are open and are providing face to face appointments for those who clinically need them – including to provide flu vaccination clinics.

Information on the free flu vaccine is available in [Easyread](#) formats and in a [variety of languages](#).

### Eligibility for the NHS funded (free) flu vaccination

- people aged 65 years or over
- those aged from six months to less than 65 years of age, in a clinical risk group
- all pregnant women (including those women who become pregnant during the flu season)
- close contacts of individuals with a weakened immunity system
- all children aged 2-3 years, and all primary school aged children
- people living in long-stay residential care homes or other long-stay care facilities
- carers, those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance, or who are the main carer of an older or disabled person (note: for unpaid carers (family/friends), Action for Carers provide more information on the Surrey Carers flu voucher scheme)

### New groups in 2020:

- children in school year 7 (in secondary school)
- household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List
- health and social care workers
- people aged between 50 and 64



The flu virus kills thousands every year.  
The flu vaccine is the best protection  
for you and those around you.

**JUST GET YOUR FREE FLU JAB**

Ask your pharmacist or GP if you're eligible.



help us  
help you