

< Effective 6 September 2024 Review Date 1 March 2025 >

Guidance for vaccination in care homes during respiratory type outbreaks

Purpose

The aim of this guidance is to support decision-making about proceeding with vaccination in care homes in Northern Ireland with an ongoing respiratory type outbreak. It helps to ensure residents can receive the vaccines they need to protect them from respiratory viruses. It should be used by care home managers and community pharmacy vaccination teams.

What should be considered when assessing if vaccination should proceed in a care home with an outbreak?

The care home should contact the PHA duty room for advice on PHA Health Protection Duty Room (HPDR) at PHA.DutyRoom@hscni.net A risk assessment will then be carried out and a joint decision is made about proceeding with vaccination during the outbreak.

Can a community pharmacy attend and offer vaccination at a care home where a respiratory type illness outbreak is ongoing?

Yes, if the risk assessment deems it safe to do so.

Who is responsible for communicating the outcome of the risk assessment to community pharmacy?

It is the responsibility of the care home to communicate with the community pharmacy in an outbreak situation and advise them of the decision to proceed or to postpone vaccination.

Can an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19/ FLU be vaccinated?

Yes. Residents may be vaccinated provided they are well, do not have any symptoms at the time of vaccination, and that infection control procedures can be maintained. The vaccine reduces the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and death. If the person to be vaccinated has a high temperature, wait until they are feeling better before having the flu vaccine.

Can a care home undergoing terminal clean proceed with vaccination?

Yes.

Can a care home with a recently closed outbreak proceed with vaccination?

Yes.

For further information contact PHA Health Protection Duty Room (HPDR) at PHA.DutyRoom@hscni.net