



Public Health
England



Public Health Commissioning
Central Team
Operations and Delivery
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

Protecting and improving the nation's health

To: GPs and Community Pharmacists

Cc: CCG Flu Leads

17 July 2019

Dear Colleagues

Re: Flu vaccine supplies

Each year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) through its Global Influenza Programme makes recommendations on what influenza viruses should be included in vaccines for the forthcoming season.

This year, the WHO delayed its recommendation on one of the strains of the virus, by a period of four weeks, from February, into March.

The [WHO's](#) final recommendation for vaccine manufacturers - to include the use of the A/Kansas/14/2017 (H3N2) virus strain, in response to a recent increase in the proportion of viruses detected which would not be effectively dealt with by its existing vaccine strains - was published on the 21 March 2019.

Manufacturers are responsible for informing providers of any expected changes to delivery schedules.

We understand from manufacturers that the delayed WHO recommendation on vaccine strain has had an impact on their vaccine supply. Sanofi Pasteur have indicated they plan to phase some of the deliveries of the inactivated Quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIV) for those at risk and under 65 years, with some vaccines being delivered by the end of November ahead of when the flu season usually starts.

We are therefore encouraging all primary care providers who have ordered the QIV vaccine to contact their relevant manufacturer to confirm delivery dates and inform scheduling of appointments.

This will enable providers to plan effectively for the forthcoming season.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Ramsay

Head of Immunisation and
countermeasures
Public Health England

Deborah Tomalin

Director of Public Health
Commissioning and Operations
Operations and Delivery
NHS England and NHS Improvement