

## Update on Flu Vaccination Programme in Forth Valley

The flu vaccination programme is now underway in Forth Valley. Like all areas across Scotland, due to Covid-19 a very different approach is being taken this year to maintain physical distancing and help keep people safe.

Children between the ages of 2 and 5 will continue to be vaccinated at their local GP Practice and primary school children will be vaccinated at their local school by NHS Forth Valley's immunisation team. A number of local GP practices, including several in more rural areas, are also offering the vaccine to adults in some of the higher risk groups. Around 40 local pharmacies across Forth Valley are providing the vaccine to staff working in the care sector (including staff who deliver care in people's homes) and certain patients receiving support for substance misuse. Care home residents will be vaccinated by staff working in local care homes. Pregnant women and people undergoing chemotherapy will be able to get vaccinated at existing clinics and appointments and healthcare staff will be able to get vaccinated at work. Other people who are eligible for a free flu jab will be offered an appointment at a 'community hub' – larger venues, such as town halls, which have the space and facilities required to deliver the vaccine safely in line with national Covid-19 requirements.

Everyone who is eligible will be sent a letter inviting them to attend an appointment and these letters have already been issued for the very first community hub clinics which take place this week. If the appointment time doesn't suit or if people have any difficulty in getting to their appointment they will be able to phone or email NHS Forth Valley's local flu helpline to make alternative arrangements ([fv.adultflu@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.adultflu@nhs.scot) /01324 614692 or 01324 616050). We recognise that demand for a flu vaccine this year is expected to be high, and we will continue to explore the use of additional premises, should the need arise.

We will continue to highlight the importance of taking up the offer of a free flu jab, especially with the ongoing risk of Covid-19, and encourage local people to get vaccinated over the coming weeks and months. The more people who get vaccinated against flu, the more it will protect the population, and help avoid placing additional pressure on the NHS during the busy winter period. By everyone playing their part, we can help stop the spread of the flu virus this winter and continue to protect our NHS for those who need it the most.

More information can be found on the NHS Forth Valley website [www.nhsforthvalley.com/flu](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com/flu) and on NHS Inform [www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation/vaccines/flu-vaccine](http://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/immunisation/vaccines/flu-vaccine)