

Our Ref: RS/sc
Your Ref:
Date: 15 May 2015

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**To: Principals of all Primary Schools in
Northern Ireland**

Dear Colleague,

FLU VACCINATION PROGRAMME 2015 FOR ALL CHILDREN

In autumn 2015 we will again be offering the vaccine to all children in P1 to P7 inclusive. This letter and attached document includes important information about that campaign. However I would like to start by saying, on behalf of the Public Health Agency and the Health and Social Care Trust School Nursing Teams, a very big thank you for your help and co-operation in delivering last autumn's flu vaccine programme to all primary school children. The campaign went extremely well and overall we achieved an uptake of 80% in primary school children in Northern Ireland which was a significantly higher uptake than other parts of the U.K. We could not have done this without the very significant help, support and co-operation provided by all the schools.

Once again the vaccine to be used for the vast majority of children is an intranasal one and is given as a spray up the nose; however a very small number of children will require an injection. The aim of this programme will be that children will be better protected against flu leading to both health benefits and also less time off school. Given that the spread of flu occurs more frequently amongst children the programme should also help to protect staff.

Whilst last year's campaign, which was supported by the Education Authority was very successful, it was nevertheless still extremely challenging for our school nursing teams to deliver. To try and help things run more smoothly this year we have prepared the attached document which sets out details of the programme and how as a school you can support the school nursing teams. We would appreciate if you could review the document in preparation for the delivery of the 2015 Flu programme.

There is a very good history of schools working closely with School Health for the benefit of the children and last year we received excellent cooperation from the majority of schools. There were, however, a few problems, such as changing the date at the last minute, which caused significant challenges with such a tight schedule, or the room provided being unsuitable. We hope the enclosed guidance will help improve the delivery of this programme in 2015.

Improving Your Health and Wellbeing

Your local School Health Teams will be in contact with you shortly to agree time schedules for planned delivery in the autumn term.

Many thanks in anticipation of your help and co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Smithson'.

Dr. Richard Smithson
CONSULTANT IN COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

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