



## 2019 WA INFLUENZA IMMUNISATION PROGRAM

29 March 2019

Dear WA Immunisation Provider

### KEY MESSAGES

- Government-funded influenza vaccines will be available to order from mid-April 2019 and providers will be informed by fax and email once ordering opens.
- Optimal protection against influenza occurs within 3 - 4 months following vaccination; providers should consider vaccinating in May and early June to ensure optimal protection during influenza season which typically spans July to October in WA.
- The higher immunogenicity trivalent influenza vaccine (Fluad®) is preferentially recommended over quadrivalent vaccine (QIV) for adults aged 65 years and over.
- Eligibility for government-funded influenza vaccines in WA in 2019 is unchanged from 2018 and includes all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals aged 6 months and older.

### The influenza virus strains included in the 2019 seasonal influenza vaccines in Australia are:

- A (H1N1): an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1) pdm09 like virus (*unchanged from 2018*)
- A (H3N2): an A/Switzerland/8060/2017 (H3N2) like virus (*changed from 2018*)
- B: a B/Phuket/3073/2013 like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage) (*unchanged from 2018*)
- B: a B/Colorado/06/2017 like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage) (not included in the TIV) (*changed from 2018*)

### Influenza vaccines available through the WA Immunisation Program in 2019, by age group indication

| Vaccine              | QUADRIVALENT                      |  |                             |                               | ENHANCED TRIVALENT     |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
|                      | FluQuadri Junior 0.25 mL (Sanofi) | FluQuadri 0.50 mL (Sanofi)   | Fluarix Tetra 0.50 mL (GSK) | Afluria Quad 0.50mL (Seqirus) | Fluad 0.50mL (Seqirus) |
| Registered age group |                                   |  |                             |                               |                        |
| < 6 months           | NO                                | NO   | NO                          | NO                            | NO                     |
| 6-35 months (<3 yrs) | YES                               | NO   | NO *                        | NO                            | NO                     |
| ≥ 3 to 5 years       | NO                                | YES  | YES                         | NO                            | NO                     |
| ≥ 5 years            | NO                                | YES  | YES                         | YES #                         | NO                     |
| ≥ 65 years           | NO                                | Registered for use in this age group but enhanced TIV is preferred → |                             |                               | YES                    |

### NOTES:

- \* While it is anticipated that the age indication for Fluarix Tetra® may be extended to include children aged from 6 months of age in the future, the WA government-funded program is supplying FluQuadri Junior for children aged 6 months to less than 3 years and encourages providers to use this stock for children in this age cohort.
- # The age indication for Afluria Quad® has been extended to include children aged from 5 years of age.

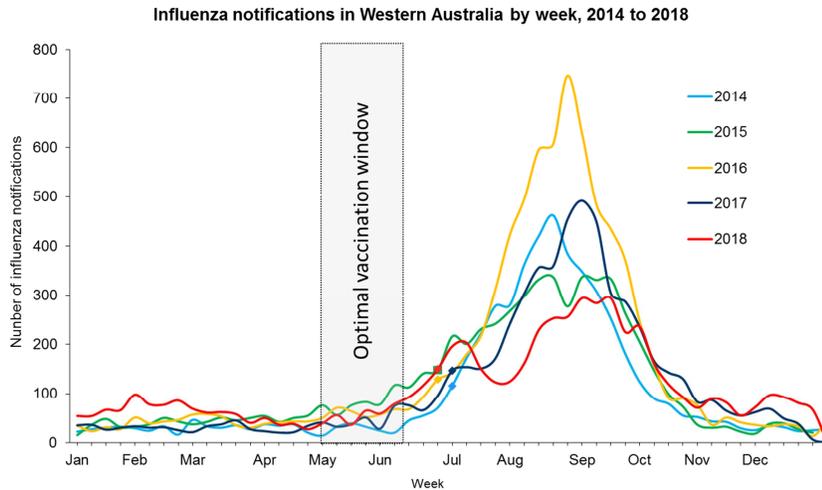
### Ordering Influenza Vaccines

- WA Health will inform providers by fax and email once influenza vaccines are available to order.
- It is anticipated that influenza vaccines will be available to order in WA by mid-April 2019.
- [The online-ordering system](#) will display available products.
- Providers can re-order influenza vaccines repeatedly, coinciding with regularly delivery schedules, so please ensure your initial orders reflect only what you anticipate to administer during the first vaccine delivery cycle of influenza vaccination season.

- Vaccines will not be available for collection from the warehouse.
- You should no longer have 2018 formulation influenza vaccine in your refrigerators as they have expired. Dispose of any 2018 influenza vaccine doses immediately to avoid administration errors, and report this disposal via the *Cold chain breach and vaccine wastage report form* found at [http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Cold-chain-management](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Cold-chain-management).

### **Optimal timing of influenza vaccinations in Western Australia**

Influenza notifications over the last 5 years indicate that influenza circulation in WA is usually highest between July and October each year. While protection is generally expected to last for the whole season, optimal protection against influenza occurs within the first 3 to 4 months following vaccination. The line markers below indicate the beginning of the 4 month period during which most influenza infections were diagnosed; in the years 2014-2018, this period has consistently begun in the last week of June or the first week of July.



Assuming that 2019 will be similar to previous years, WA providers are encouraged to recommend influenza vaccination during May and early June in order to maximize protection during peak influenza season. It is never too late to vaccinate and providers should continue to offer vaccination as long as influenza virus is circulating.

### **Eligibility for Commonwealth and State-funded influenza vaccines**

Eligibility for government-funded influenza vaccines in WA in 2019 is unchanged from 2018 and includes:

- Pregnant women (any trimester)
- All individuals aged 65 years and older
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 6 months and older
- Individuals aged 6 months or over with medical conditions that place them at risk for complications of influenza, e.g. cardiac disease, chronic respiratory conditions, chronic neurological conditions, immunocompromising conditions, diabetes and other metabolic disorders, renal disease, haematological disorders, and children aged 6 months to 10 years receiving long term aspirin therapy.
- All children aged 6 months to less than 5 years. (The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation strongly recommends influenza vaccination for children aged 6 months to less than 5 years.)

### **Recording influenza vaccines in the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)**

AIR is the national whole-of-life immunisation register and all influenza vaccines administered should be recorded in AIR, irrespective of the patient's age.

Thank you for your ongoing assistance in protecting West Australians against influenza.

Sincerely,

Professor Paul Effler, MD, MPH, FAFPHM  
**Senior Medical Advisor**  
**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL DIRECTORATE**