



## 2020 GOVERNMENT-FUNDED INFLUENZA IMMUNISATION PROGRAM (WA) INFORMATION FOR VACCINATION PROVIDERS

10 March 2020

### KEY MESSAGES

- Annual vaccination is the single most effective measure to prevent influenza and its complications.
- Protection against influenza starts to wane within 3 to 4 months following vaccination.
- Providers will be informed through the on-line ordering system, and by fax and email, once ordering opens (planned early April).
- All products supplied are quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIVs) and are latex free.
- The dose of influenza vaccines for all ages is 0.5mL, including for young children.
- For adults aged ≥65 years, the adjuvanted QIV, Flud® Quad, is recommended over standard QIVs.
- All vaccines administered should be recorded in the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

**The influenza virus strains included in the 2020 seasonal influenza vaccines in Australia are:**

- A (H1N1): an A/Brisbane/02/2018 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- A (H3N2): an A/South Australia/34/2019 (H3N2)-like virus;
- B: a B/Washington/02/2019-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus;
- B: a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus.

**National Immunisation Program (NIP) Influenza Vaccines (WA)**

COHORT \ VACCINE	Vaxigrip Tetra 0.50 mL (Sanofi)	Fluarix Tetra 0.50 mL (GSK)	FluQuadri 0.50 mL (Sanofi)	Afluria Quad 0.50 mL (Seqirus)	Flud Quad 0.5 mL (Seqirus)
Influenza (6 months to 5 years)	✓	✓	✓	x	x
Influenza (5 to 65 years) *	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Influenza (>65 years)	x	x	x	x	✓

\*Funding only for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, pregnant women and people who have certain medical conditions. See eligibility section below.

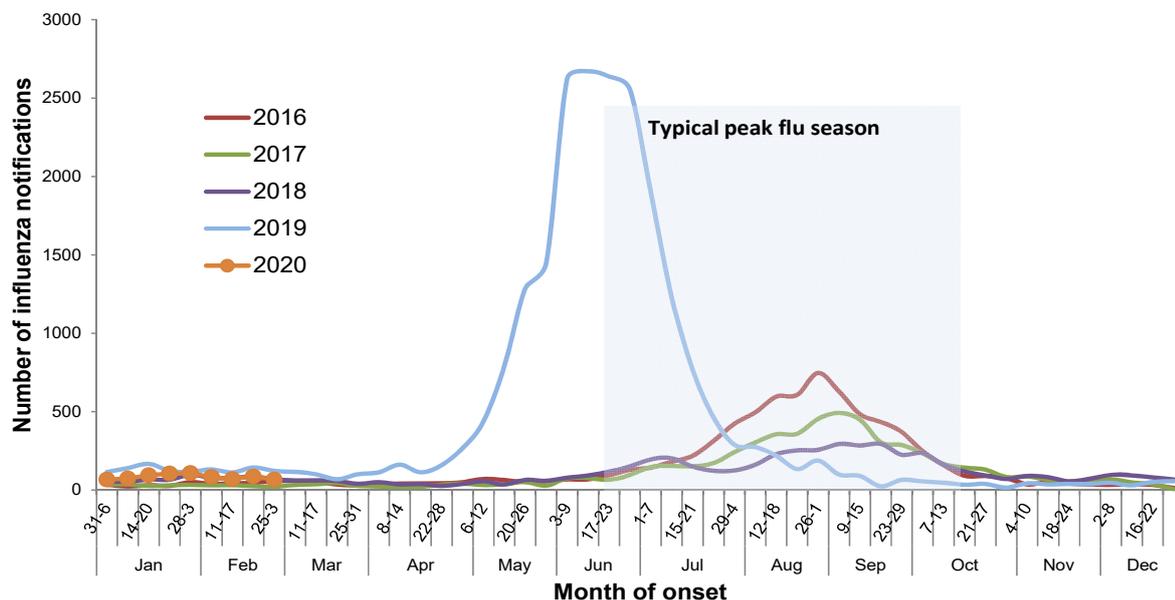
**Ordering Influenza Vaccines**

- A reminder that all 2019 formulation influenza vaccines have expired and should be disposed of immediately to avoid administration errors. Use the *Cold chain breach and vaccine wastage report* form to report expiry, which is found at [http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Cold-chain-management to report wastage](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Cold-chain-management%20to%20report%20wastage).
- The on-line ordering system will be updated with messaging regarding influenza ordering, including product availability for respective cohorts.
- WA Health will inform providers by fax and email once influenza vaccines are ready for ordering. This is anticipated to be early April 2020.
- Initial influenza vaccine orders will coincide with routine delivery schedules (metropolitan provider collects will not be available for the first four to six weeks).

## Optimal timing of influenza vaccinations in Western Australia

While protection is generally expected to last for the whole season, protection against influenza starts to wane within the first 3 to 4 months following vaccination.

Influenza notifications reported in 2020 YTD are low and similar to levels reported in the interseasonal period (see figure). WA providers are encouraged to recommend influenza vaccination during May and early June in order to maximise protection during the typical peak influenza season (see figure). It is never too late to vaccinate, and providers should continue to offer vaccination as long as influenza virus is circulating.



**Figure: Influenza notifications in Western Australia by week, 2016 to 2020\***

\*The graph is a summary of all influenza notifications received by the DoH, Western Australia to the end of the current reporting week, for which cases had date of symptom onset or specimen collection between 23/02/2020 and 01/03/2020. The seasonal threshold defines a value above which may indicate epidemic seasonal influenza activity. The threshold value is calculated based on analysis of seasonal influenza data from the past four years.

## Eligibility for Commonwealth and State-funded influenza vaccines

Eligibility for government-funded influenza vaccines in WA in 2020 includes the following groups:

- 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, hematological 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 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 vaccines administered, including influenza vaccine, should be recorded in AIR, irrespective of the patient's age.

For more information, please visit [https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F\\_I/Influenza-immunisation-program](https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Influenza-immunisation-program).

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

Yours sincerely

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**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL DIRECTORATE**