



How you can help support the Beat Flu campaign Toolkit



How can you help Beat Flu?

There are a number of ways your organisation can get involved in raising awareness of the benefits of influenza (flu) vaccination. This toolkit provides materials to help make this as straightforward as possible, because we know that flu is just one of the many key health messages that you will be sharing.

The Beat Flu campaign generally runs from October to March, with the bulk of activity prior to Christmas. This makes October and November a good time for you to encourage those who are eligible to get their flu vaccination.

Here is a list of suggestions you might like to consider:



Activity	How we can support you
Issue a story to the media highlighting why flu is dangerous for your audience and that there is a free vaccine available.	> A template story is provided.
Post a news feature on your website.	> A template story is provided.
Include information about flu and the vaccination in any organisational outlets you have, such as bulletins/e-bulletins, newsletters or even notice boards.	> The template story provided can be edited to a shorter length if necessary.
Share key information via your social media channels.	> Visual content, a social media guide, example posts and how to tag us is provided. We can also re-share your #beatflu messages to show our followers that you support the campaign.
Share information with any key partners by word of mouth and by leaving information resources at events you attend.	> Posters and other promotional resources are available to download at www.beatflu.org . If you would like hard copies, please let us know.

Working together

The Beat Flu team would be more than happy to discuss any ideas or plans you may have about how to raise awareness.

Everything provided as part of this toolkit is bilingual and also available electronically via email upon request. Please get in touch via beatflu@four.cymru or by calling 01970 636400 and asking to speak to a member of the Beat Flu team.



Template news story

You may wish to use the following news story as a template, which can be easily adapted to suit different purposes – such as issuing a story to the press, or posting a news feature on your website or e-bulletin. Just edit it to suit your needs.



Name of org issues flu warning to name of target group

The annual flu immunisation programme in Wales is now underway — and those eligible for a flu vaccine are being urged by **name of organisation** to get their flu vaccination as soon as possible.

Last year, fewer than half (48.5%) of people in clinical risk groups got protected against flu, a virus which can and does kill every year. People particularly 'at risk' of flu and its complications, such as **those with / who are name of risk group**, are given the vaccine at no cost as part of NHS care. However last year only **X% (insert statistic)** of this group got protected.

People **with / who are name of risk group** are urged to protect themselves and get their vaccine before flu starts circulating.

X, (name of individual) at name of organisation, explains why the flu vaccination is vital for people with

name of risk group: "Flu is a serious illness caused by a virus that affects the lungs and airways. Symptoms generally come on suddenly, and can include fever, chills, headache, cough, muscle aches and fatigue. For **those with / who are name of risk group**, flu can be deadly.

"The best way to protect against catching flu is by having the flu vaccine each year. Make sure you don't put yourself at risk by missing this potentially life-saving opportunity. Flu cannot be treated with antibiotics, so make sure you get your flu vaccine for your own best protection.

"The vaccination also helps prevent the spread of the virus, so getting vaccinated helps keep you and also those around safe. It's a win-win."

Every year flu circulates, but each year thousands of people who are at risk of serious complications

because of age, pregnancy or a health condition fail to protect themselves.

Health officials warn that even if you had the vaccine last year, it is very important to get it again this year. Immunity wanes and the flu virus changes every year so you should have it again now for best protection this winter.

Please speak to your GP surgery or community pharmacy to arrange to have your flu vaccination soon. You can also find out more by visiting www.beatflu.org or www.curwchffliw.org, or finding @beatflu or @curwchffliw.org on Twitter and Facebook.

Vaccine uptake last year in Wales:

65 and over	68.8%	Chronic liver disease	43.8%
Clinical risk groups (6 months – 64 years)	48.5%	Chronic neurological conditions (inc stroke and TIA)	46.4%
Chronic heart disease	48%	Morbidly obese (BMI of 40+)	34.3%
Chronic respiratory disease	48.6%	Pregnant women	72.7%
Chronic kidney disease	52.1%	2 and 3 year olds	50.2%
Diabetes	61.9%	4 to 8 year olds	68.3%
Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment	55.2%	Carers	50.3%

Getting social

The Beat Flu campaign has English language Twitter and Facebook pages (@beatflu), as well as Welsh language Twitter and Facebook pages (@curwchfliw). We also have our own hashtags.

#beatflu #curwchfliw

Please tag us and use our hashtag in anything you share on social media so that your followers know where to find out more about the campaign. It also means we will then be notified about your post, so we can share it or engage with it too!

By following @beatflu or @curwchfliw you can keep up to date and share our content too. Don't forget on Twitter you can add your own comment before you retweet (RT) something, so you can remind your key audience why it is important for them in particular.

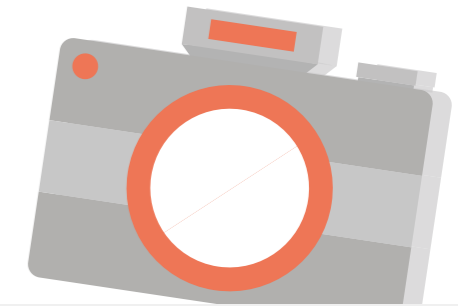
Don't forget to use handles and hashtags relevant to your audience to ensure you reach as many people as possible that need to know about flu and the vaccination. Examples include #pregnant #stroke #ListentoYourLungs



Be visual

We've all heard the saying that a picture is worth a thousand words and social media is no different. Good quality images or videos can help enhance your tweets and really grab your audience's attention. That's why we've included a selection on the Beat Flu website for you to download. There are more available by getting in touch with one of the team.

Did you know that you can link up to 10 twitter handles (such as @beatflu) under each image you tweet? This may help you reach more people and organisations.



Be informative

Use your social media wisely. Keep messages short and simple but make sure they get the point across. Some key messages to focus on could include:

Flu is very serious for those in risk groups. It can kill.	The single best way to protect yourself against flu is with annual vaccination.	The flu vaccination is available free for people in risk groups. Adults can get the flu vaccination at their GP surgery or most community pharmacies.	The flu vaccination protects you as well as others around you from the virus, so the more people who get vaccinated the less opportunity there is for it to spread.
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We've written a few tweets below to get you started. Please amend to make them relevant to your audience and share information about flu and the flu vaccination in any way that you think would resonate with your followers.



General

- Did you know that people die from #flu every year in Wales? If you have XXX you are more at risk so get your flu vaccine soon
- The #flu #vaccine is free for those most at risk. Learn more at beatflu.org or ask your GP surgery or community pharmacy
- It's not too late to get protected against #flu so speak to your GP surgery or pharmacy about having a flu vaccine soon #beatflu
- Eligible for a free flu vaccine? The annual flu vaccine is available from your GP surgery or community pharmacy – don't miss out!

Parents and mums to be

- Mum to be? Protect yourself and your unborn #baby by having your free #flu jab today #beatflu
- Did you know the #flu vaccine for children is a nasal spray? So no scary needles for children to #beatflu this winter!
- Does your child have a long term health condition? Help protect them from #flu with a nasal spray vaccine and #beatflu!

Long term conditions

- #beatflu before it beats you. Get your annual flu vaccine now if you have #diabetes and stay protected this year.
- If you have a long term chest condition like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) get a free #flu vaccine soon! #beatflu
- If you have a heart condition, please remember to get an #flu vaccine to protect your #health and help protect others too #beatflu
- Did you know that people who have had a stroke or a mini stroke should have an annual #flu vaccine? Let's #beatflu

Aged 65 or over

- If you are aged 65 or over don't miss out on getting protected from #flu!

Care home

- New this year - those with regular client contact working in care homes are now eligible for a free #flu vaccination at their community pharmacy. If you're not sure whether this is you, speak to your employer #beatflu

Carer

- New this year - those with regular client contact working in care homes are now eligible for a free #flu vaccination at their community pharmacy. If you're not sure whether this is you, speak to your employer #beatflu



Did you know the flu viruses that circulate and cause illness each winter change and that the flu vaccine is also modified to try and give you the best protection? Is it really worth the risk to not get vaccinated this year?

Flu spreads easily and can be really nasty as you get older. That's why there's a new flu vaccine available to those aged 65 and over this year, which gives even better protection than before. Have you had yours yet?



About flu and Beat Flu

What is Beat Flu?

The Beat Flu campaign is the communications support and awareness raising element of the national Public Health Wales flu programme.

We want to make sure that as many people as possible know about the dangers of flu, and the benefits of having the vaccine - especially those most at risk of being very ill if they catch flu more people will make the right choice, and get their vaccination.

Annual flu vaccination is the single best way to protect against catching or spreading flu and that's why we want more eligible people to get an flu vaccine each year in Wales.

Last year, around 49% of individuals under the age of 65 with a long term health condition, and 69% of people aged 65 or over had the vaccine. So lots of people in Wales are still missing out on this important protection.

Every year, people die as a result of catching flu and last year's flu season resulted in 192 people in intensive care units with flu. This places a great pressure on the health service at a time of year when there are many other health issues to contend with. We need support from organisations like yours who deal closely with people in risk groups to make sure messages about the danger of flu and the benefits of having the vaccine reaches them.

Flu is serious

The best way to protect yourself and others is with annual vaccination

What is flu?

Flu is a viral illness that spreads quickly. It circulates every year and is more common in the winter. Symptoms vary for different people but they tend to start suddenly and can be severe - they usually include fever, chills, headaches, aching muscles, cough and sore throat. It is a serious illness and every year people die from flu.

Some people catch flu and it doesn't make them ill. However, they still carry the flu virus, even though they don't develop the symptoms themselves, and they can still pass it on to others who may be vulnerable and suffer serious complications.

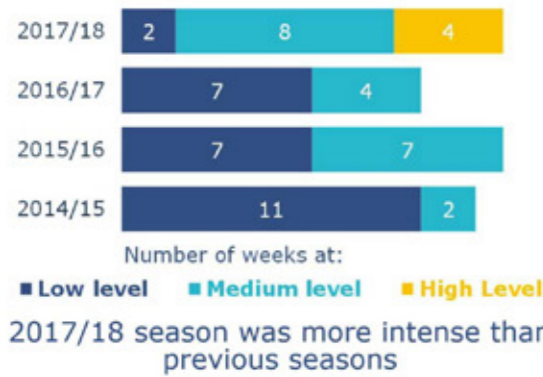
The vaccination not only reduces your chances of catching the virus, it also helps reduce the risk of passing it on to others.



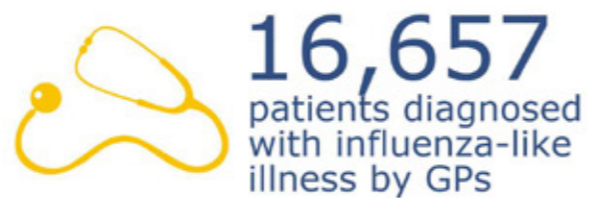
Last year's flu season in Wales 2017-18

Dominant types of influenza

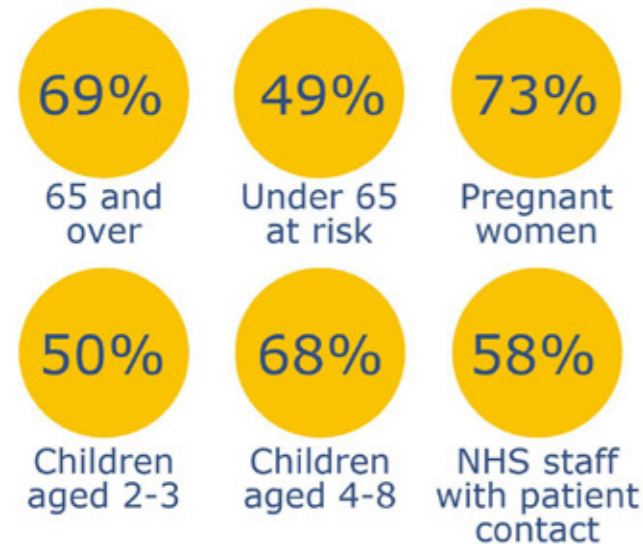
B & A(H3N2)



Age of those affected by influenza



Influenza vaccine uptake



The total number of people immunised against influenza is increasing each year



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Further information

For adults the flu vaccine is an injection and is available free for those eligible at their GP surgery or from many community pharmacies in Wales.



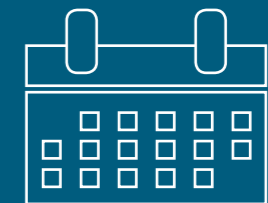
Frontline health and social care workers should discuss how to get their flu vaccine with their employer.



This is the first year that people working in care homes can have their flu vaccination free at their community pharmacy and all those with regular client contact will be eligible.



For children aged two and over the vaccine is usually a nasal spray. Children aged two and three (age on 31 August 2018) will generally get their vaccine at their GP surgery, all children in primary school (reception to school year 6), will be offered their nasal spray vaccine in school - parents or guardians will receive a letter asking for their consent. Children in a risk group not in these school year groups should have their nasal spray/ flu vaccine at their GP surgery.



This year delivery of supplies of flu vaccine will be staggered between September and November - so some people may be asked to wait and return when the most effective vaccine for them is available. It's planned that everyone will be offered vaccination before mid-December, when flu typically starts to circulate.



Having a long-term health condition increases a person's risk of being very ill from flu with the risk of death typically over 10 times higher than in those not in a risk group, and up to 50 times higher for some conditions.



Last winter, **over half of adults under 65** who were at increased risk of flu and its complications did not get their annual flu vaccine.

During last year's flu season (2017/18)

Almost **17,000** people in Wales were diagnosed by a GP with flu-like illnesses.

There were **88 outbreaks** of flu in care homes and hospitals.

192 people in **intensive care** units were confirmed to have flu



This flu season the vaccine offered will depend on a person's age, based on which vaccine works best in their age groups.

Which flu vaccine is recommended for which age group?

The flu vaccine recommended for eligible individuals differs according to the individual's age. The recommended vaccine for those 65 and over (aTIV) will be delivered in phases until November 2018. Therefore, patients may be offered a later appointment than usual but can be reassured they will be vaccinated before flu circulates, typically in mid December.

For the 2018-19 flu season a number of different flu vaccines will be available:

**2 to 17
years**

Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV)

A live flu vaccine, licensed for use from 2-17 years of age, given as a nasal spray. This vaccine is quadrivalent (contains four strains of flu - 2 A strains and 2 B strains).

**6 months
up to 2 years
-
18 to 64
years**

Quadrivalent inactivated vaccine (QIV)

Injectable flu vaccines, some of which are licensed for use from 6 months of age. These vaccines are quadrivalent (contain four strains of flu - 2 A strains and 2 B strains).

**65 years
and older**

Adjuvanted trivalent inactivated vaccine (aTIV)

An injectable flu vaccine that has an adjuvant added to provide a better immune response in those aged 65 years of age and over. This vaccine is trivalent (contains three strains of flu - 2 A strains and 1 B strain).



www.beatflu.org  



GIG
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WALES

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