

Over 50s to be offered COVID-19 booster and flu jab this autumn

On coronavirus (COVID-19) boosters, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has now published its final recommendations for this autumn's programme.

Under the advice, those eligible for a further dose will be:

- all adults aged 50 years and over
- those aged 5 to 49 years in a [clinical risk group](#), including pregnant women
- those aged 5 to 49 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression
- those aged 16 to 49 years who are carers
- residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults
- frontline health and social care workers

In addition, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) will be widening the offer of the free flu vaccine to more eligible groups. These additional groups will only be eligible once the most vulnerable, including previously announced pre-school and primary school children, those aged 65 years and over and those in clinical risk groups, have been offered the jab.

The additional groups set to be offered the free flu vaccine in England will be:

- all adults aged 50 to 64 years
- secondary school children in years 7, 8 and 9, who will be offered the vaccine in order of school year (starting with the youngest first)

The NHS will announce in due course when and how eligible groups will be able to book an appointment for their COVID-19 autumn booster, and when people aged 50 to 64 years old who are not in a clinical risk group will be able to get their free flu jab.

People in these groups are asked not to come forward until further information is announced.

Commenting on the autumn COVID-19 booster programme, Professor Anthony Harnden, Deputy Chair of the JCVI, said:

We have provided our final recommendations for the autumn programme to ensure the NHS and wider health system has time to plan a vaccine rollout well ahead of the winter season.

The COVID-19 boosters are highly effective at increasing immunity and, by offering a further dose to those at higher risk of severe

illness this autumn, we hope to significantly reduce the risk of hospitalisations and deaths over the winter.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at UKHSA, said:

Widening the eligibility for the flu vaccine will help reduce the number of people getting seriously ill and ease pressures on the NHS, particularly during the busy winter period.

It is also important that everyone eligible for the COVID-19 booster gets the jab when invited, including pregnant women, who are among those at higher risk. Having COVID-19 during pregnancy can lead to complications. Getting the vaccine, including a booster, offers the best possible protection for you and your baby.