

Sturgeon told to act on flu vaccine fiasco

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Nicola Sturgeon has been told to act on Scotland's flu vaccine fiasco, after it emerged up to half a million pensioners could be forced to source their own jabs.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said botched procurement by the SNP government had led to pensioners aged between 65 and 74 missing out on the latest vaccination against the potentially deadly bug.

At First Minister's Questions today, she highlighted the case of Perth pensioner Harold Laing, 72, who had to go to his local Boots chemist after being turned away by GPs.

She asked why the SNP government had seen fit to fund the upgraded immunisation for over 75s, but not for pensioners aged 65 to 74, who are also identified as being at risk from seasonal flu.

Last winter, the number of flu deaths rocketed from 71 to more than 300.

Now, with a couple of months to go until the more severe weather hits, the Scottish Conservatives urged the SNP government to ensure more pensioners can access the enhanced aTIV vaccine.

The SNP had previously argued that there is a shortage in supply, something the manufacturer has since denied.

In fact, it stated the only people missing out on the enhanced jab were those who ordered late.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"With only a couple of months before winter really bites, the SNP government needs to get its finger out.

"It's completely unacceptable that more than half a million pensioners are being turned away from their GP and being told to fend for themselves when it comes to accessing this vital medical treatment.

"There was a huge rise in the number of flu deaths in Scotland last year, and that should ring alarm bells for this SNP government.

"Winter shouldn't come as a surprise to the SNP, and nor should an increasing and ageing population.

"There is now only limited time to get on and make sure vulnerable pensioners

aren't being sent out onto the high street to track down their own flu jab."