

Flu vaccinations now available once more

A total of 317,255 adult flu vaccines have already been delivered across Lothian but anyone eligible who has not yet been vaccinated has been urged to come forward now.

The programme was paused in December so that health boards could prioritise the delivery of Covid-19 booster jabs to address the immediate challenge of the Omicron variant and is now back on track.

Flu vaccinations are on offer again until the end of March for those in high-risk groups to help provide vital protection against the illness.

Jane McNulty, Interim Director of Community Nursing and Primary Care, said: "The flu season runs until 31 March 2022, so it's essential that those that are eligible still get vaccinated and get protected.

"Flu is serious. Every year people are hospitalised with flu, and this winter our immunity may be lower than usual. The annual flu vaccine is the safest and most effective way to help protect against the flu and I would encourage everyone eligible to come forward."

As Scotland moves on from the Omicron variant, NHS Lothian is now able to offer flu vaccinations to those aged over 65 along with those in the following high-risk groups:

- people with an eligible health condition
- pregnant women
- frontline health and social care workers
- adult unpaid carer
- household contacts (aged 16 years or over) of someone with a weakened immune system.

Ms McNulty added: “Due to the impact of coronavirus on the most vulnerable in society, NHS Lothian is asking the public to reduce the impact of seasonal flu on those most at risk. This ensures that the impact of potential co-circulation of flu and coronavirus is kept to an absolute minimum.”

Those who are in these high-risk groups can receive their flu vaccination at a Covid-19 vaccination clinic or at an NHS community pharmacy.

Children aged two to five years have already been offered vaccination through local clinics. School children, primary and secondary, have nearly all been vaccinated in a school setting.

If your child did not receive their flu vaccine and you now want to arrange this, please contact NHS Lothian’s vaccination team on 0300 790 6296.