



**Ministry of  
JUSTICE**

National Offender  
Management Service



*Department  
of Health*

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SHA Flu Lead Directors  
PCT Immunisation Leads

**Gateway Reference: 12966**

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Dear Colleague

**The swine flu vaccination programme – Prisoners in the clinical risk groups - 2009-2010**

This letter provides information for prison health care teams to assist you in delivering the swine flu (influenza A (H1N1v) 2009) vaccine to those **prisoners** in the clinical priority groups. This follows the letter from Ian Dalton on 3 November to PCTs, which is attached (**Gateway 12907**).

**Identification of prisoners**

Identification of prisoners in the swine flu vaccine clinical priority groups should be made using existing electronic databases such as SystmOne and EMIS, or paper-based systems. For clinical priority groups for swine flu vaccine and clinical risk group READ codes specification and dataset see Annex A.

Checking that the information on your electronic databases is correct and up to date will help you accurately identify prisoners in clinical priority groups who have not already been vaccinated in the community. You will also need to check all new prisoners at reception to identify those who are in the clinical priority groups and require vaccination.

Please remember that it is important to also offer seasonal flu vaccine to those prisoners in risk groups for seasonal flu. **See annex A** The vaccines can be given simultaneously, albeit at different sites and preferably in different limbs.

### **Ordering pandemic flu vaccine**

Swine flu vaccine orders will be made through your local PCT. You and your PCT should work out a local approach to vaccine orders and delivery.

It is important that you let your PCT know how much vaccine you will need for prisoners in clinical priority groups, once you have identified them. You will also need to take into account the turnover of prisoners, and re-order for new prisoners in clinical priority groups as they enter prison.

The swine flu vaccine and all consumables are free of charge to prisons.

Different PCTs may take different approaches to orders and delivery of swine flu vaccine to prisons. All PCTs will order swine flu vaccine via the ImmForm website ([www.immform.dh.gov.uk](http://www.immform.dh.gov.uk)).

- Some PCTs may order vaccine for prisons and then arrange for the vaccine to be delivered to the prison after it arrives in the PCT.
- Other PCTs may wish to order vaccine and have it delivered direct to their prison. In such cases:

The prison receiving vaccine directly will need to be added to the **ImmForm** database. In order to be added to the ImmForm database, the prison will need a unique **Movianto** account number.

To obtain a Movianto account, the prison must apply as soon as possible by emailing [vaccine.supply@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:vaccine.supply@dh.gsi.gov.uk).

This email should include details of the prison's named contact person for vaccine, a telephone number, and full address of the prison. The Department of Health will advise the person requesting the account number of their new Movianto account details.

Once this Movianto account is set up, the Department of Health will add the prison to the ImmForm database, so that the PCT can make orders on behalf of the prison. The PCT will order by selecting the account number of the prison and inputting the amount needed via the ImmForm website.

Prisons which already have a Movianto account in place should already be on the ImmForm website.

### **Delivery of pandemic flu vaccine**

Please ensure that your prison has adequate cold chain arrangements in place, so that you can safely receive and store vaccine once available. Guidance detailed in **Chapter 3** of The Green Book (Immunisation against infectious disease) should be followed (attached).

Please ask your local PCT what the arrangements are for ordering and receiving Baxter vaccine for prisoners who are allergic to egg products.

Vaccination of prisoners is the responsibility of prison healthcare staff.

Governors will make local arrangements for setting up clinics in the prison.

### **Monitoring of pandemic flu vaccination**

Monitoring of prisoner vaccination should be done locally using your existing electronic databases such as SystmOne or EMIS, or a paper-based system. The data on prisoner vaccination will then be collated and analysed centrally at a later stage.

Thank you for your dedicated and professional response to pandemic flu so far, and for your continued efforts during the next wave.

Yours sincerely



**Richard Bradshaw**  
**Director of Offender Health**

## Annex A

### Swine Flu Vaccination Programme Details

#### 1. Swine Flu Clinical priority groups

The clinical priority groups were identified by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and communicated in the CMO letter of 13 August 2009. They are prioritised as they are at greatest risk of complications if they become infected with swine flu, and hence the initial focus on protecting individuals in these groups.

The **clinical risk groups**, in order of priority are:

- a. Individuals aged six months and up to 65 years in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups<sup>1</sup>
- b. Pregnant women
- c. Household contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- d. People aged 65 and over in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups

<sup>1</sup>Current seasonal flu risk groups are as follows: chronic respiratory disease, including asthma that requires continuous or repeated use of inhaled or systemic steroids or with previous exacerbations requiring hospital admission; chronic heart disease, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease, diabetes requiring insulin or oral hypoglycaemic drugs, immunosuppression.

For full details on clinical at-risk groups for swine flu vaccine please refer to **Chapter 23a** of the Green Book, attached.

#### 2. Seasonal Flu At-risk groups

- Aged 65 or over,
- Aged six months or over in a clinical risk group (For full details see **Chapter 19** of the Green Book, attached).

#### 3. Vaccines

The UK has purchased two different swine flu vaccines, Pandemrix (from GSK) and Celvapan (from Baxter).

Pandemrix, manufactured by GSK, is an adjuvanted inactivated vaccine. There are separate vials of adjuvant and antigen that need to be mixed in order to reconstitute the vaccine. The vaccine comes in multidose vials (ten 0.5 ml doses per vial) and contains a preservative, thiomersal. Once reconstituted, the vial can be used for up to 24 hours. Each box of Pandemrix contains 500 doses.

Celvapan, manufactured by Baxter is an unadjuvanted inactivated vaccine. The vaccine comes in multidose vials (ten 0.5ml doses per vial) and does not

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contain thiomersal. After removal from the fridge the vaccine needs to be used within three hours. Each box of Celvapan contains 200 doses.

For further details see **Chapter 23a** of the Green Book, and DH publication **The swine flu vaccines – their preparation and administration: a practical guide for health professionals**.

#### **4. Vaccine Storage**

As with all vaccines, it is important that swine flu vaccines are distributed and stored between +2°C and +8°C. Under no circumstances should they be frozen. Vaccines should not be stored in direct sunlight.

For further details see **Chapter 23a** of the Green Book.

#### **5. Vaccine dosage and schedule**

Please see **Chapter 23a** of the Green Book for full details of vaccine dosage and schedule.

The two vaccine products are not interchangeable and the same vaccine product must be used if a two-dose schedule is being followed.

People who have had laboratory confirmed Influenza A(H1N1)v infection do not need to be vaccinated with swine flu vaccine. However, vaccine can be given to these individuals with no ill effects. In the absence of a laboratory confirmed diagnosis of Influenza A(H1N1)v infection, individuals should be vaccinated.

#### **6. Vaccines in pregnancy**

JCVI recommended that pregnant women should be given Pandemrix since a one-dose schedule with this vaccine appears to give adequate levels of antibodies and thereby confer more rapid protection than would be afforded by a two-dose schedule. Expert scientific advice is clear that thiomersal-containing vaccines do not present a risk to pregnant women or their offspring.

More detailed advice is within **Chapter 23a** of the Green Book, and in the letter from Professor David Salisbury on 2 November (**Gateway 12902**), attached.

#### **7. Contraindications**

There are very few individuals who cannot receive the swine flu vaccine.

The vaccines should not be given to those who have had:

- a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine, or
- a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to any component of the vaccine.

Pandemrix® should not be given to those who have had:

- a confirmed anaphylactic reaction i.e. marked dyspnoea or hypotensive symptoms (collapse/loss of consciousness) to egg products (as the vaccine is prepared in hens' eggs).

Celvapan® is grown in mammalian cells and does not contain egg.

For more information on contraindications, precautions and adverse reactions please refer to the Green Book **Chapter 23a**.

## 8. Consent

Consent must be obtained before administration of all vaccines. Further guidance is given in **Chapter 2**, pages 7 to 15 of The Green Book (Immunisation Against Infectious Disease 2006). There are no legal requirements for consent to be in writing.

Health professionals involved in immunisation must ensure that:

- Parents/carers should have access to information on the swine flu vaccine
- That there is sufficient opportunity for them to discuss any issues arising
- And that they are properly informed of the benefits of the vaccines, the possible side effects and how to treat them.

## 9 Administration

Vaccines are routinely given intramuscularly into the upper arm of older children and adults. For individuals with a bleeding disorder the vaccine should be given by deep subcutaneous injection to reduce the risk of bleeding.

Please refer to the Green Book **Chapter 23a** for detailed information on administration and disposal, and to the DH publication **The swine flu vaccines – their preparation and administration: a practical guide for health professionals**.

## 10 Adverse Reactions

Monitoring vaccine safety is an important part of all vaccination programmes. Arrangements to report suspected adverse reaction to swine flu vaccines will be through the MHRA special web based reporting system - the swine flu ADR Portal ([www.mhra.gov.uk/swineflu](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/swineflu)) - based on the Yellow Card scheme.

## 11 Consumables

Sufficient needles and syringes to mix and administer the vaccine will be provided to PCTs free of charge. Please contact your PCT to arrange for orders of consumables for your prison.

## Syringes

For the administration of both the Baxter and the GSK vaccine, a dose sparing, orange, 25G, 25mm (1.0") fixed needle 1ml syringe is needed. Each box of contains 200 fixed needle-syringes, and the size of the box is 130mm x 145mm x 414mm.

For the GSK vaccine, a mixing syringe is needed for the mixing of the antigen suspension and the adjuvant. The mixing syringe is 3ml capacity, scale, calibrated to 0.5ml increments. These will be supplied in boxes containing 100 syringes, and the size of the box is 68mm x 113mm x 375mm.

### Size of needle boxes

A green, 21G, 38mm (1.5") needle is needed for mixing the GSK vaccine . There are two manufacturers of these needles, both of which supply 100 needles per box. The dimensions of the boxes (height x width x length are:

88mm x 85mm x 112mm, and 93mm x 82mm x 113mm

## **12 Multidose Vials and Wastage**

Many staff will not be used to using multi-dose vials or the above fixed needle syringes. In order to assist training, the Department of Health, together with the Health Protection Agency, and other vaccine experts have developed a DVD on vaccine administration. This is available online at [www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/index.htm](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/index.htm).

There is also a short slide set available to assist in training vaccinators. This is available on-line at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH\\_107355](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH_107355).

Vaccine wastage is likely to be greater when using multi-dose vials rather than single doses. The fixed needles and syringes supplied will help to reduce vaccine wastage. Local planning should take into account the need to reduce wastage.

For more information please refer to the DH publication **The swine flu vaccines – their preparation and administration: a practical guide for health professionals**, attached.

## **13 Obtaining further supplies of vaccine**

After the initial vaccine deliveries, PCTs can place further orders on your behalf. The amount of vaccine PCTs can order will depend on stock availability. It will also be important to arrange further orders, as you receive new prisoners in clinical priority groups.

## **14 Data Recording and Data Collection**

It is important that the vaccinations are recorded correctly, by brand and dose. There are new procedure READ Codes that should be used when recording swine flu vaccinations. These codes, together with the clinical risk group READ codes specification that help identify individuals in clinical at-risk groups are found at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH\\_107355#\\_10](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH_107355#_10).

The data on prisoner swine flu vaccination uptake will then be collated and analysed centrally at a later stage.

## **15 Information materials and training tools**

Information materials for health professionals are available including the Green Book **Chapter 23a**, key facts, leaflets, consent template, Patient Group Directive (PGD) template and patient vaccine invitation letters, at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH\\_107355](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH_107355).

A long training slide set is available to assist in the training of vaccinators. This is available on line at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH\\_107355](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/InformationandGuidance/Vaccinationprogramme/DH_107355)

## **16 Publicity campaign**

A public campaign for the swine flu vaccine is underway, and materials have been made available to NHS communications teams for local use. It will be important that we give prisoners consistent messages on the new vaccine to avoid confusion. We would therefore advise your prison not to develop their own materials, and to work with their local PCT to ensure that appropriate materials are being used in prisons.

Further materials, including an information leaflet for all recipients of the vaccine, are available on the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk/swinefluvaccinertools](http://www.dh.gov.uk/swinefluvaccinertools).