

To: PCT Immunisation Coordinators
SHA Immunisation Leads

cc: Regional Directors of Public Health
RCGP
BMA

23 December 2010

Gateway reference no: 15372

Dear colleagues

SEASONAL FLU VACCINE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

I am writing to clarify the advice for the seasonal flu vaccination of pregnant women as set out on page 6 of the CMO letter of 23 June¹ and page 197 of the Green Book – *Immunisation against infectious disease*². Pregnant women who previously received the monovalent H1N1v vaccine should be offered the trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine.

The chapter on influenza in the Green Book– *Immunisation against infectious disease*³ and other material for the 2010/11 flu season advised that: ‘pregnant women not in the other clinical risk categories above and who have not already received the monovalent H1N1v vaccine should receive the trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine for the 2010/11 influenza season.’ This should not exclude women who received the monovalent vaccine last year from receiving the trivalent seasonal vaccine if they are pregnant now.

As a precautionary action, and taking account of the length of time since such women were last vaccinated with the monovalent vaccine, I am clarifying that **all pregnant women who request the trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine should be offered it, irrespective of whether they have already received the monovalent H1N1v vaccine.** We are aware that some pregnant women may have been turned away by GPs when they have requested the trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine, in line with the previous advice. In future, such women should be offered a repeated dose of seasonal influenza vaccine in subsequent influenza vaccination programmes under agreed JCVI guidelines.

¹ http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_116943.pdf

²

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_079917

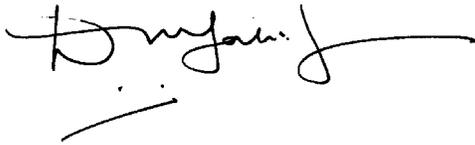
³

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_079917

Please note we are not recommending a recall of all such women. The Green Book chapter on influenza will be modified to remove the guidance that such women should not be offered a trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine.

I would be grateful if recipients of this letter could alert their GPs to this new advice and recommend that should a pregnant woman who previously received the monovalent H1N1v vaccine request the trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine, then they should be given it.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Salisbury', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Professor D M SALISBURY CB
FRCP FRCPCH FFPH
Director of Immunisation