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To: General Practitioners, Practice Nurses, Practice Managers, Lead Maternity Carers and other Health Professionals

Copy: DHBs, PHOs, Medical Officers of Health, national primary care organisations

From: David Wansbrough, Manager, Immunisation team, Ministry of Health

Subject: **Seasonal influenza vaccine 2010**

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1. Option to start seasonal influenza immunising and claiming from 1 March

Seasonal vaccine is now in the country, arriving earlier than expected. Once your practice has received the vaccine you may choose to start immunising from 1 March focusing on individuals most at risk of serious outcomes from pandemic influenza H1N1 (refer to Ministry fax sent 16 February). Medtech have already updated systems to allow electronic claiming. Users of other practice systems may need to submit manual claims (call 0800 259 138 for forms) until they are notified by their system supplier that electronic claiming is functional.

2. Seasonal vaccine after Celvapan® – 2 doses of Celvapan® or 1 of seasonal needed for H1N1 protection

One dose of seasonal vaccine gives protection against pandemic H1N1 influenza and two other influenza strains. Individuals who have received one dose of Celvapan® can get effective protection from pandemic H1N1 influenza by either:

- a second dose of Celvapan® (at least three weeks after the first dose)
- OR
- a seasonal vaccine.

Individuals should be informed that there is no data about the interaction of these two vaccines.

3. Timing between Celvapan® and seasonal vaccine

- If 1 dose of Celvapan® has been given there should be a four week gap before giving the seasonal vaccine.
- If 2 doses of Celvapan® have been given no time gap is needed before giving the seasonal vaccine.

4. Children: all vaccines are licensed for use in children – two doses needed for children under 9 years

All seasonal vaccines are licensed for use in children from 6 months of age (now also including Inluvac®). This year all children from 6 months to under 9 years old having influenza vaccine should receive two doses of a vaccine containing the pandemic strain regardless of whether they have received a seasonal vaccine in previous years.

Public communications begin on 8 March with a launch from the Minister and television commercials mid March.

For more information

You should have received the 2010 Influenza Kit with the resources you will need for this year's programme – if you have not received a kit email influenza@auckland.ac.nz or go to <http://www.influenza.org.nz/?t=890>
For payment/claiming queries call 0800 458 448 choose option 5.
If you have any queries about anything in this update, please email 0800IMMUNE@auckland.ac.nz or phone 0800 466 863.

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