

Dear Doctor

National Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunisation Program 2008

The annual National Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunisation Program will commence on 3 March 2008.

Influenza and pneumococcal vaccines will be provided free of charge to all:

- persons aged 65 years and older;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and older; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15-49 years who fit the criteria for high risk groups as recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council in the current edition of *The Australian Immunisation Handbook*.

It is important to note that pneumococcal vaccine is NOT recommended annually. The current recommendation is for adults 65 years or over to receive a dose of Pneumovax, with a single revaccination five years later, due to the increased risk of local reactions. Please refer to the current edition of *The Australian Immunisation Handbook* for guidance on revaccination for adults who have received the vaccine prior to turning 65 years of age.

Vaccines will be delivered to you directly from the NSW Vaccine Centre. Influenza vaccine will also be delivered directly to all NSW Nursing Homes to assist you in vaccinating these patients. Orders for vaccines may be placed as often as necessary, however, please forward with your routine vaccine order where possible. An Order Form is attached for your information.

As part of the funding agreement for this program, the Australian Government requires the NSW Department of Health to audit vaccine usage and wastage. In September 2008 the NSW Department of Health will forward an Acquittal Form to your practice and you will be required to forward the following acquittal details to the Department:

- the numbers of each vaccine remaining in the fridge, and;
- a declaration that the information provided is correct.

The administration of influenza vaccine to individuals at risk of complications of infection is the single most important measure in preventing or attenuating influenza infection and preventing mortality. I strongly encourage you to offer influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations to all eligible patients.

Further information on the National Pneumococcal Vaccination Program for Older Australians is available from the Immunisation Infoline on 1800 671 811 or the Immunise Australia Program website at:

<http://immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/older>

Should you have any queries regarding this matter please contact the Immunisation Unit on (02) 9391 9332 or your local Public Health Unit (under "Health" in the White Pages).

Yours sincerely



Darryl O'Donnell
A/Associate Director
AIDS/Infectious Diseases Branch

30 January 2008

Influenza Vaccine Order Form 2008

PLEASE FAX THIS ORDER FORM TO: 1800 041 528

VACCINE ACCOUNT NUMBER

PRACTICE/ORGANISATION NAME

DELIVERY ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE FACSIMILE

PRACTICE/ORGANISATION OPENING HOURS DATE / /

AUTHORISED BY (Print Name) SIGNATURE

Free INFLUENZA Vaccine for the following groups ONLY:

- all persons aged 65 years and over;
- all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and older; and
- all Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 – 49 years who fit the criteria for high risk groups as recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council in the current edition of *The Australian Immunisation Handbook*.

VACCINE	No. to be supplied
Influenza	

- **Acquittal forms will be mailed to all practices in September 2008**

Enquiries regarding orders/dispatch to NSW Vaccine Centre: 1300 656 132