Physicians’ Update

6 November 2017
Vancouver Public Health

Influenza Campaign 2017-2018
Influenza campaign is well underway. Vaccine has now been distributed to all community immunizers interested in offering this vaccine. More vaccine is available.

Inventory Update:
Pediatric products: **Flumist** inventories have largely been distributed to community immunizers. We are not expecting additional inventory until mid to late November. We are now out of **Fluzone QIV**. Additional inventories of **Flulaval-tetra** are available.

Adult products: **Agriflu** continues to be available in limited quantities. Due to national decisions, some of our Fluviral order was replaced with the quadrivalent product, **Flulaval-tetra**, which can now be offered to all ages.

Re-ordering influenza vaccine: Please re-order based on your current needs within your offices rather than historic patterns. Please bring cold chain supplies when coming for vaccine pickup. We order a large quantity of coolers and gel blankets every fall but this has mostly run out.

Your offices can order over the phone or fax in the forms located at this site: [http://www.vch.ca/for-health-professionals/communicable-disease-control/physician-immunization-resources](http://www.vch.ca/for-health-professionals/communicable-disease-control/physician-immunization-resources)

This next section is based on questions we have received this season:

1. **Influenza vaccine products for pregnant women**: Pregnant women are recommended to be immunized at all stages of pregnancy and can be offered any publicly funded **injectable** vaccine product available in your office. They do not need a thimerosal free product. Flumist is contraindicated in pregnancy.

2. **Influenza vaccine products for seniors**: Seniors should be offered Agriflu, Fluviral or Flulaval-tetra. Fluad is not publicly funded for seniors but is available for purchase at the VCH Travel Clinic (604-736-9244). Fluzone High Dose is also available for purchase at the VCH Travel Clinic and many pharmacies.

3. **Differences between Fluzone High Dose (HD) and Fluzone QIV**: Fluzone QIV is a publicly funded vaccine for children 6 months to 17 years of age. It protects against four strains of influenza viruses (two A and two B strains). This vaccine contains 15 ug of each of the four vaccine antigens. Fluzone HD is a product that is licensed and recommended for seniors but NOT publicly funded. It is a trivalent vaccine which protects against three strains of influenza viruses (two A and one B strain). It also contains 60 ug of each of the three vaccine antigens (or four times the dose contained in Fluzone QIV). We have been asked whether seniors can be offered ‘double dose’ of Fluzone QIV as it is perceived by immunizers to offer similar protection to seniors as Fluzone HD. We do not recommend this practice as the products are not equivalent and there is no safety or immunogenicity data from multiple doses of Fluzone QIV given to seniors. Also, Fluzone QIV is intended for children.

Thanks again for recommending influenza vaccine and immunizing your patients. Please do send further questions our way.