



'Be wise, immunise' - Care Home flu and COVID-19 vaccinations from 1 October 26/27 communications toolkit

(v2. 24/09/26)

Be wise, immunise!

The 'Be wise, immunise' flu and COVID-19 campaign for the North East and North Cumbria encourages all eligible groups to get their recommended vaccinations.

This **care home campaign toolkit** has been developed specifically to support care homes to encourage uptake of flu and COVID-19 vaccinations among residents and staff.

It includes ready-to-use and adaptable materials for care home managers, staff, residents and their families, helping to explain the benefits of vaccination and encouraging people to take up their vaccinations when offered.



Download our campaign assets

All campaign assets for flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are now available to download on the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) [toolkit page](#).

Once again, we are asking colleagues and partners across the region to join us and help to spread the word - **Be wise, immunise**.

Not only that but by working together we know that our messages are stronger and can reach further – which means more people get vaccinated and are then protected against flu and COVID-19 which can cause serious illness.

Background

Flu is associated with thousands of deaths each year in England, with recent UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) estimates ranging from around 3,500 to almost 16,000 flu-attributable deaths in the last three years - and many more people are admitted to hospital. It is estimated that last winter the flu vaccination prevented between 96,000 and 120,000 hospital admissions due to flu - [UKHSA report](#).

Care home staff work with some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. It is important that both staff and residents get their winter vaccinations to help protect themselves and each other during winter.

Flu and COVID-19 outbreaks can have a serious effect on care homes. As people age, their immune response to vaccination can become weaker. Outbreaks can lead to hospital admissions, visitor restrictions and disruption to daily life, affecting residents' independence and quality of life. It also puts extra pressure on staff and makes it harder for care homes to keep services running safely.

Flu and COVID-19 can cause severe complications, but vaccination offers the best protection. When staff and residents get vaccinated, they help protect themselves and those around them, while helping care homes stay open and function safely through winter.

So, how you can help?

We want to work together this winter to protect the most vulnerable members of our community and the people who work with them through vaccination, helping prevent serious illness and hospitalisation from virus like flu and Covid-19.

Within this toolkit you will find communications resources to help you promote winter vaccinations to residents and staff.

What's included?

Website/newsletter information for:

- Families and friends of care home residents

- Care homes staff vaccinations
- Supporting care home staff having conversations with residents about vaccines

Social media messaging

Care home poster

Information and content on this [toolkit page](#) can be used on websites, social media, or other communication channels.

If there's something missing from the toolkit, or you would like something specific for your own organisation or channel - or simply have an idea on how we could better reach people or share our messages – then please get in touch.

For further help or advice on using the toolkit or if you need support to tailor assets, please contact either: Andrea Jones, andrea.jones2@nhs.net or Abbie Mulgrew, abbie.mulgrew@nhs.net

Website/newsletter copy – for family members of care home residents

Help protect someone you love this winter

If someone close to you lives in a care home, a conversation with them could make a real difference this winter.

Flu and COVID-19 can be serious for older people. Last winter, thousands of people in England were admitted to hospital with flu. Vaccination is one of the best ways to reduce the risk of serious illness. It can also help reduce the spread of viruses in their care home.

A little encouragement goes a long way

Your family member or friend may be unsure about having a vaccine or may simply need some reassurance. Hearing from someone they trust can help them decide.

If they're offered the flu and COVID-19 vaccines, talk with them about taking up the offer. It's a simple step that can help protect them and the people around them.

There's nothing to book

The person you care about doesn't need to arrange an appointment. NHS vaccination teams will visit care homes to offer the free vaccines.

It's their choice

Your loved one can choose whether to have the vaccines. Before giving them, a GP, nurse or pharmacist will explain what's involved and ask for their consent.

If your loved one is unable to make this decision for themselves, the healthcare professional will follow a process to decide what is in their best interests. They may ask you about your loved one's wishes and what matters to them.

Who can have the vaccines?

Everyone living in an older adult care home is eligible for a free NHS flu vaccine and a free NHS COVID-19 vaccine this autumn. Free flu vaccines are also offered to people aged 65 and over, pregnant women, carers, frontline health and social care staff, and people with certain long-term health conditions.

What about side effects?

Most people only have a sore arm or feel a little tired for a day or two after vaccination. These mild side effects soon pass, while the protection can last throughout the winter months. More information on the flu and COVID vaccinations can be found here: [Flu vaccine - NHS](#) and [COVID-19 vaccine - NHS](#)

Help protect them this winter

Care home staff work hard to keep the people in their care safe and well. You can play a part too by talking with your loved one about vaccination and helping them to decide, where they can, when the vaccines are offered.

Website/newsletter copy – for care home staff vaccinations

Help protect the people you care for this winter

Every day, you help the people in your care feel safe, comfortable and well. This winter, getting vaccinated is another way you can look after yourself and help protect the people around you.

Flu can be serious, particularly for older people. Last winter, thousands of people in England were admitted to hospital with flu. Getting your free flu vaccine can reduce your risk of serious illness and help reduce the spread of flu in your care home.

If you're also eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, taking up that offer can help protect you too.

Which vaccines can you have?

If you're a frontline care home worker, you can have a free NHS flu vaccine. You can usually get it through your employer, or book through your GP practice or at a community pharmacy via [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk).

You may also be eligible for a free COVID-19 vaccine if you have a weakened immune system. If so, you can book when the NHS invites you or book online.

What about the people you care for?

Everyone living in an older adult care home is eligible for free NHS flu and COVID-19 vaccines this autumn. Residents don't need to book: NHS vaccination teams will visit your care home and will usually offer both vaccines at the same visit.

Having a vaccine is each resident's choice. Before giving a vaccine, the healthcare professional will explain what's involved and ask for the resident's consent. If a resident is unable to make this decision for themselves, the healthcare professional will follow a process to decide what is in their best interests. They may ask family, friends and care home staff about the resident's wishes and what matters to them.

You can help by making space and time for the vaccination team's visit, giving residents time to ask questions and supporting them to make their own decision where they can. Families and friends can offer reassurance too.

A little protection goes a long way

Most people only have a sore arm or feel a little tired for a day or two after vaccination. These mild side effects soon pass, but the protection can last throughout the winter months.

By taking up the vaccines you're offered, you can help protect yourself, the people you care for, your colleagues and those close to you.

Website/newsletter copy – for care home staff and residents

Your support can make all the difference this winter

You know the people in your care. You know when someone has a question, needs more time or would welcome a reassuring conversation. This winter, that support can help residents decide about their flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

Flu and COVID-19 can be serious for older people. Last winter, thousands of people in England were admitted to hospital with flu. Vaccination can reduce the risk of serious illness and help reduce the spread of viruses in your care home.

Make time for a conversation

Someone you care for may feel unsure about a vaccine. Give them time to tell you what's on their mind, answer what you can and help them find reliable information if they have more questions.

A calm conversation with someone they trust can help them feel more confident about their decision.

Residents don't need to book

NHS vaccination teams will visit your care home to offer residents their vaccines. You can help by making sure they know when the team is coming and what to expect.

Having a vaccine is each resident's choice. The healthcare professional will explain what's involved and ask for their consent before giving a vaccine. If a resident is unable to make this decision for themselves, the healthcare professional will follow a process to decide what is in their best interests. You may be asked what you know about the resident's wishes and what matters to them.

Look after yourself too

As a care home worker, you're also eligible for a free NHS flu vaccine. Your employer may arrange it, or you can book an appointment at a community pharmacy through [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk).

Getting vaccinated helps protect you and can help reduce the spread of flu to the people you care for, your colleagues and those close to you. If you're also eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, take up that offer too.

Every conversation counts

When you listen, offer reassurance and information and support residents to make a choice, where they can- you can help the people in your care feel informed and supported this winter.

Social media messaging

Join us on social media so we can remind eligible groups to #BeWiseImmunise
Please tag North East and North Cumbria ICB in your social media posts and use #BeWiseImmunise
Our social media handles are:

Facebook - NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS

X – @NENC_NHS

Instagram – nenc_nhs

TikTok - @nenc_icb

Linked-In - @north-east-and-north-cumbria-nhs

YouTube - North East and North Cumbria NHS

The following pages include social media visuals and messaging for the flu and COVID-19 autumn/winter campaign 2026-27.
Assets are available to download from the [toolkit page](#).

Care home staff

Post	Instagram	Facebook	X	Visual/film
1.	Protect yourself to protect others  Flu can spread easily and can make some people seriously ill. By getting vaccinated, you're helping to reduce the risk of passing flu on to residents,	Protect yourself to protect others  Flu can spread easily and can make some people seriously ill. By getting vaccinated, you're helping to reduce the risk of passing flu on to residents,	Protect yourself to protect others  As a frontline health and care worker, getting your flu vaccination, you're helping to protect residents, colleagues, your family and yourself. Find out more NHS.UK	

	patients, colleagues and your family. Frontline health and social care workers can get their free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	patients, colleagues and your family. Frontline health and social care workers can get their free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	#BeWiseImmunise	
2.	Get your flu vaccine to: ✓ Protect yourself ✓ Protect your patients ✓ Protect your team ✓ Protect each other Flu can spread quickly. Getting vaccinated helps reduce the risk of passing it on and keeps you well this winter. Frontline health and social care workers can get their free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK Protect yourself to protect others this winter ❤️	Get your flu vaccine to: ✓ Protect yourself ✓ Protect your patients ✓ Protect your team ✓ Protect each other Flu can spread quickly. Getting vaccinated helps reduce the risk of passing it on and keeps you well this winter. Frontline health and social care workers can get their free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK Protect yourself to protect others this winter ❤️	Are you a frontline health and social care worker? Get your flu vaccine to: ✓ Protect yourself ✓ Protect your patients ✓ Protect your team ✓ Protect each other Find out more NHS.UK Protect yourself to protect others this winter ❤️ #BeWiseImmunise	

	#BeWiseImmunise	#BeWiseImmunise		
3.	Think the flu jab isn't for you? It is! You get protected and that means you protect your friends, family and those you care for. From 1 Oct, all frontline health & social care workers in England can get a free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK ♥ #BeWiseImmunise	Think the flu jab isn't for you? It is! You get protected and that means you protect your friends, family and those you care for. From 1 Oct, all frontline health & social care workers in England can get a free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK ♥ #BeWiseImmunise	Think the flu jab isn't for you? It is! You get protected and that means you protect your friends, family and those you care for. From 1 Oct, all frontline health & social care workers in England can get a free flu vaccine. Find out more NHS.UK ♥ #BeWiseImmunise	

Care home residents' family and friends

1.	Help protect someone you love this winter ♥ Flu and COVID-19 can make some people very unwell. If you have a loved one living in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines. Vaccination is one of the best ways to help protect them this winter.	Help protect someone you love this winter ♥ Flu and COVID-19 can make some people very unwell. If you have a loved one living in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines. Vaccination is one of the best ways to help protect them this winter.	Help protect someone you love this winter ♥ Flu and COVID-19 can make people very unwell. If you have a loved one living in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines. Vaccination is one of the best ways to help protect them this winter.	
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	Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	
2.	Help protect someone you love this winter ❤️ Flu and COVID-19 can make some people very unwell. If your loved one lives in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines when they are offered. ✅ Help protect them from serious illness ✅ Give them extra protection this winter ✅ Help reduce the spread of flu and COVID-19 Talking it through with you could make a big difference. Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	Help protect someone you love this winter ❤️ Flu and COVID-19 can make some people very unwell. If your loved one lives in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines when they are offered. ✅ Help protect them from serious illness ✅ Give them extra protection this winter ✅ Help reduce the spread of flu and COVID-19 Talking it through with you could make a big difference. Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	Help protect someone you love this winter ❤️ Flu and COVID-19 can make some people very unwell. If your loved one lives in a care home, talk to them about getting their vaccines when they are offered. Find out more NHS.UK #BeWiseImmunise	

Additional assets

Care home - carers poster



Myth Busting Videos (frontline staff)