

MEDIA RELEASE

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Thousands of primary school children set to benefit from nasal flu immunisation

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) community immunisations team will once again begin offering the nasal flu immunisation vaccine to local primary school aged children across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland from 26 October.

Over 72,000 primary school aged children in years 1-6 will be offered the vaccination this winter. Last year, the vaccination was offered to 97,555 healthy primary and secondary school children, and had an uptake of 59.1% (compared to 52.1% the year before) – forming part of the 700,000 children across England to be offered a free flu vaccination for the winter through 12 pilot areas.

The national pilot this year covers primary school aged children only. The team will be visiting 380 schools from October 2016 to early January 2016.

Suzanne Leatherland, Flu immunisations lead for LPT said: “Once again we have a team of over 100 staff that are preparing to deliver the nasal flu vaccination in partnership with schools.

“Information packs have been sent to all schools with dates for immunisation sessions. Parents will also be provided with information to read with their children, sign and return to school. Those children who are home educated or not enrolled at school will be invited to attend a community clinic.”

Dr Tim Davies, Public Health Consultant for NHS England in Leicestershire, said: “Flu can increase the risk of developing more serious illnesses, such as bronchitis, pneumonia or a painful ear infection, especially in the young and those with pre-existing medical conditions. It’s not just a bad cold. In the worst cases, flu can result in a hospital stay, and it can even kill.

“The vaccine is the best possible protection against the flu virus. Not only is the nasal spray needle-free, it also works even better than the injected flu vaccine with fewer side effects.

“It’s quick and painless and will mean your child is less likely to become ill if they come into contact with the flu virus.”

For more information visit www.leicspart.nhs.uk/communityimms and <https://www.healthforkids.co.uk/staying-healthy/stopping-flu/>.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides a range of health and wellbeing services mainly for people living Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Trust serves a population of one million, has a budget in excess of £267 million and employs approximately 5,400 staff. For more information visit: www.leicspart.nhs.uk.

The vaccine may contain trace elements of egg and a medicine called gentamicin. It also contains gelatine that comes from pork. Gelatine is commonly used in a range of medicines, including many capsules and some other vaccines. The gelatine used in Fluenz Tetra® is highly purified and used to stabilise the live vaccine. Very many stabilisers were tried out by the manufacturers and this gelatine was chosen because it was the best product.

For further information about this, see www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccines-and-gelatine-phe-response.

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