

Top Tips for Flu Vaccination Champions

What is a Flu Vaccination Champion?

Vaccination Champions play a vital role in protecting staff, patients and communities. By encouraging positive, informed conversations, you can help increase vaccine uptake, reduce the spread and improve protection against flu.

This guide offers practical tips to support you in your role.

Why are Flu Vaccination Champions important?

Flu can place significant pressure on health and social care services during the winter months. Vaccinating frontline health and social care workers is therefore a key priority in Wales. It helps protect staff, their families, colleagues, and patients, and reduce the spread of flu. Getting vaccinated is one of the most effective ways to protect yourself and others during flu season.

Champions are ideally placed to:

- share clear and accurate information
- support informed decision-making
- address misunderstandings and common myths
- support accessible and timely vaccination

What is the different role of Flu Vaccination Champions?

Advocates:

raise awareness about the disease and the benefits of vaccination **but are not** vaccinators.

Peer vaccinators:

raise awareness about the disease and the benefits of vaccination **and offer** vaccination to their colleagues.



Flu facts

You might hear misconceptions circulating about vaccines. If you are a Flu Vaccination Champion, these flu facts can help arm you against these:

- Flu vaccines are quick, safe and can prevent weeks of serious illness. Millions of doses of flu vaccines are given each year around the world.
- Flu vaccines for adults don't contain live viruses, they cannot give you flu.
- Side effects such as tiredness, headache and aching muscles after a vaccine are common and last a day or two.
- If you catch flu, even if you feel well, you could still unknowingly spread flu to people around you, including patients who may be very vulnerable to flu and its complications.
- Flu can be serious for some people and as a healthcare worker you can help protect those in your care by having your flu vaccine each year. Having an annual flu vaccine is one of the best ways to prevent spreading flu and will help reduce the risk of spreading it to colleagues, and others.

How can Flu Vaccination Champions help improve vaccination uptake?

Communication

A key part of the Flu Vaccination Champion's role is to raise awareness of the benefits of vaccines and help keep colleagues updated on opportunities to receive their vaccine(s). As a champion, you are in a great position to guide informed conversation and share accurate information about vaccination to your colleagues.

By actively inviting all eligible staff to have a vaccine you can have a positive effect on vaccine uptake. Personal, positive invitations are one of the most effective ways to improve uptake.

It is recommended that conversations are informed and sensitive to the individuals wants and needs. Try to explore and understand the reasons behind a colleague's decision if they decline a vaccine. This will help you understand to address their personal concerns or misconceptions.

Top tips to help communicate effectively:

Let people know you are a Flu Vaccination Champion.

- Ensure that you are up to date with key facts (see below) and training.
- Use the **Making Every Contact Count** approach to start a positive conversation about flu vaccination, raise awareness of the benefits and signpost people to more information.
- Increase the opportunity for colleagues to receive the vaccine by attending team meetings, visiting different departments, and attending staff events to raise awareness of vaccines and/or administer them.
- Consider hosting a 'vaccine/flu information session' to share key information with your colleagues about the vaccine, and to give staff the opportunity to ask you questions.
- Share staff facing resources that promote flu vaccination and display information in prominent positions such as staff rooms, display boards, recreation areas.
- Remember to respect the confidentiality of your colleagues.
- Respect people's decisions, but if someone opts out of having a vaccine, try to sensitively explore why. If you know the reasons for someone deciding against having a flu vaccine you will be better placed to help them change their mind.

Access

As a Flu Vaccination Champion, you are ideally placed to make it easier for your colleagues to get their vaccine.

Top tips to support access:

- Vary the days and times you are available to vaccinate. This gives staff who are part time, or work nights and weekends more opportunity to get their vaccine(s).
- Be flexible. If staff are too busy to receive the vaccination, make a note and return at a time that will be more convenient for them.
- If you are the Champion for more than one area, you may be able to set up drop-in 'clinics' in areas with high footfall of staff, such as at handover, staff events, team meetings, induction events and training days.
- Consider contacting teams and departments in advance to find out when they would like the vaccine to be available for them and arrange to visit at a suitable time.
- Visit each ward, team, department, or site you cover multiple times to ensure you reach a larger number of staff.
- Advise staff on alternatives to accessing the vaccine e.g. Occupational Health, GP surgery, Community pharmacy.
- Keep a record of staff members vaccinated, including those who might have been vaccinated elsewhere, to ensure staff records are kept up to date and outstanding staff receive further opportunities to be vaccinated.

What makes a great Flu Vaccination Champion?

Great champions are:

- approachable
- able and willing to support and encourage colleagues to have their vaccine
- armed with knowledge (vaccination facts) and advice to pass on to staff
- enthusiastic about the importance of protecting staff
- well-supported by their manager to undertake the role

Support

Seek support from your colleagues to help you, and don't be afraid to ask for help. Immunisation coordinator (or trust flu lead), occupational health team, and other Flu Vaccination Champions are valuable allies and can provide support throughout the year.

The more Flu Vaccination Champions in your organisation, the easier it will be to spread key messages and vaccine facts in a timely way, and to vaccinate more staff. When you're out in different areas of your organisation, talk to any interested colleagues about why you're a Flu Vaccination Champion, what you get out of it and how they can get involved.

Sources of support for Flu Vaccination Champions

Vaccine uptake data

[Surveillance of Vaccines, Vaccine Preventable Diseases and Respiratory Infections \[NHS only\]](#)

Motivational Interviewing: Having Better Vaccine Conversations

[Confident vaccine conversations - behavioural science and Motivational Interviewing approach - Public Health Wales](#)

Public Health Wales webpage

[Immunisation and Vaccines - Public Health Wales](#)

Public Health Wales flu webpage

[About the vaccine - Public Health Wales](#)

Flu guidance and resources for health and social care professionals

[Resources for health and social care professionals - Public Health Wales](#)

Printed and digital resources are available to order/download from [Health Information Resources - Public Health Wales](#)

Flu eLearning modules:

[Immunisation eLearning - Public Health Wales](#)



Further guidance:

- [Health circulars: 2024 to 2027 | GOV.WALES](#) (external site)
- [Making Every Contact Count - Public Health Wales](#)
- [Overview | Flu vaccination: increasing uptake | Guidance | NICE](#) (external site)