

To: 

- community pharmacies
- regional directors
- regional directors of commissioning

NHS England  
Wellington House  
133-155 Waterloo Road  
London  
SE1 8UG

cc. 

- integrated care board chief executives
- directors of public health

15 December 2025

Dear colleagues,

## **2026/27 COVID-19 and adult influenza vaccination service specification now published for community pharmacy**

The [2026/27 COVID-19 and adult influenza vaccination service specification](#) has now been published.

For the first time, we have combined the COVID-19 and adult flu service specifications into one document, although pharmacy contractors can still sign up to only deliver the adult flu vaccination service. We have also streamlined and further aligned the flu and COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The service specification may therefore look and feel different this year. We have summarised the key changes below, but many requirements remain the same.

Today, the government has confirmed acceptance of the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation advice on eligibility](#) for the spring 2026 COVID-19 vaccination programme.

**The announced and authorised eligible cohorts for the COVID-19 spring 2026 programme are:**

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in a care home for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed, as defined in [COVID-19: the green book, chapter 14a](#)

Vaccination should begin from 13 April 2026 and end on 30 June 2026. Priority should be given to care homes for older adults and eligible housebound patients.

We will announce patient eligibility and the start dates for the 2026/27 autumn / winter COVID-19 and adult influenza vaccination campaigns, once these are confirmed.

### **Key changes from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**

- Pharmacy contractors will be commissioned under an advanced service for COVID-19 vaccinations from April 2026. As is the case now, where a pharmacy contractor wants to provide the COVID-19 vaccination service, they will also be required to deliver the flu vaccination service.
- We are increasing the adult flu item of service fee in 2026/27 from £9.58 to £10.06 in line with the GP arrangements.
- There will no longer be an additional £10 payment for the administration of COVID-19 vaccinations to housebound people, but we have increased the COVID-19 vaccination item of service fees. Pharmacy contractors will be able to claim £8.70 per vaccine administered between 1 September 2026 and 31 January 2027 while the flu vaccination campaign is underway; and £10.06 outside the flu vaccination campaign.
- We have retired the current COVID-19 vaccination provisions around surge, pausing of services and designation of sites to align with the flu service requirements.
- There is no change to the requirement to use the National Booking Service (NBS). Pharmacy contractors that are providing COVID-19 vaccinations must use NBS and not a local booking system for appointments and contractors are strongly encouraged to use NBS for adult flu vaccinations and co-administered vaccinations.
- Pharmacy contractors must seek agreement from their commissioner if they want to provide COVID-19 and flu vaccinations away from their premises.
- Pharmacy contractors may be asked by their commissioner to vaccinate the following patients:
  - those who are housebound for COVID-19 and/or flu
  - those who are in a care home for COVID-19 and/or flu
  - those who are under 18 years old for COVID-19 only, where they also have an enhanced DBS check against the adult and children's barred list
  - those who have developed severe immunosuppression when there is no active COVID-19 campaign, but who would benefit from having a COVID-19 vaccination

Pharmacy contractors do not need to agree to provide these vaccinations, but they are strongly encouraged to accept in the best interests of patients. Pharmacy contractors can also ask their commissioner to vaccinate these patients, but they must have their commissioner's approval before vaccinating.

- As previously communicated, we will evaluate the outcomes of the 2025/26 flu vaccination service for 2-3 year olds to inform our future commissioning approach. We will communicate the outcomes of this review in due course.

## How to sign up

- We have introduced registration for both the COVID-19 and adult flu vaccination services, in line with other advanced services. If pharmacy contractors do not register on the appropriate platform before administering COVID-19 or adult flu vaccines, they will not be paid for the vaccines administered while they were not registered.
- Pharmacy contractors that want to provide the COVID-19 vaccination service from the start of the spring campaign must register from 5 January to 2 February 2026 to ensure that they receive supply of COVID-19 vaccine in time for the start of the spring campaign.
- Pharmacy contractors can continue to register for the COVID-19 vaccination service after 2 February 2026, but they are not guaranteed to receive supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine for the start of the spring campaign.
- Pharmacy contractors that want to register for the COVID-19 vaccination service on or before 31 March 2026 must complete their [electronic registration declaration using this form](#) (this form will only be open from 5 January 2026). This is an interim arrangement until 'manage your service' (MYS) registration is available in April 2026. Pharmacy contractors that want to de-register from the COVID-19 vaccination service on or before 31 March 2026 can also [de-register using this form](#).
- MYS will be available for registration and de-registration from 1 April 2026, for both the COVID-19 and adult flu vaccination services. Any pharmacy contractor that has registered or de-registered for the COVID-19 service on the interim form before this date will have their information automatically transferred into MYS. They will not need to re-confirm their registration or de-registration.
- Pharmacy contractors that want to register to provide the COVID-19 vaccination service from the anticipated autumn/winter campaign must do so by 31 July 2026 through the MYS portal. Pharmacy contractors can continue to register after this date, but they are not guaranteed to receive supplies of COVID-19 vaccine in time for the start of this campaign. If they have registered to provide the service for the spring campaign, they do not need to re-register.
- Pharmacy contractors that register for the COVID-19 vaccination service will be automatically registered for the adult flu vaccination service, as this is a requirement of COVID-19 vaccination registration. Pharmacy contractors will not have to register for the adult flu service separately. This will be automatic, regardless of whether they registered using the interim form or the MYS portal.

- Pharmacy contractors that want to provide only the adult flu vaccination service will be able to sign up from 1 April 2026 on the MYS portal. Contractors are encouraged to register to provide adult flu vaccinations by 31 July 2026 to inform planning for autumn/winter.
- The overall deadline for pharmacy contractors to register to provide COVID-19 and/or adult flu vaccinations on MYS is 30 November 2026. If pharmacy contractors do not register by this date, they will not be able to deliver either service in 2026/27.

Please read the seasonal vaccination advanced service specification before you sign up to the programme.

If you have any questions, please liaise with your regional team in the first instance. You can also email the national team at: [england.vacspolicyandcontracts@nhs.net](mailto:england.vacspolicyandcontracts@nhs.net)

We hope community pharmacy contractors will continue to play a vital role in the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination and influenza programmes in 2026/27.

Yours sincerely,



**Caroline Temmink**

Director of Vaccination

NHS England