Dear Colleagues

Influenza Programme 2013
Preparation for this year’s flu season is well underway with flu kits to be distributed in February and the annual media campaign to begin in April.

As always, the focus is on encouraging as many as possible of those eligible for free flu vaccines to be immunised. Last season over 1 million doses of influenza vaccine were distributed.

New Zealand’s flu season could begin in early winter this year if it follows the pattern seen in the United States. Pre ordering is now available. Please ensure that you identify your eligible populations in preparation for pre-calling. When ordering vaccine please be aware that vaccine is only available in multiples of 10 doses.

A claim form is attached to this GP Fax or you can download one from www.influenza.org.nz. You can also order online at www.hconline.co.nz. Please compete and send in your order form now, as the flu programme can begin when all practices have vaccine available.

FLUVAX (over 9-years-old) and FLUARIX (under 9-years-old) are again the two funded vaccines available in New Zealand. These vaccines will protect against most of the strains that are currently circulating in the Northern Hemisphere. The exception is the B/Victoria lineage of viruses, though this is not expected to be a significant strain in the 2013 influenza season in New Zealand.

The vaccines available in New Zealand during 2013 will provide protection against the following strains:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
- A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2) – like virus
- B/Wisconsin/1/2010 - like virus

The eligibility criteria for funded influenza vaccine remains the same; pregnant women, people over 65 and those with eligible long term health conditions, except for Canterbury where children under 18 are also eligible for free flu vaccine.

Pertussis
The claims system is now updated and the immunisation benefit for Boostrix can be claimed for pregnant women 28 weeks to 38 weeks gestation.

2012 Summary
In 2012 there were 5793 reported cases of pertussis (confirmed, probable and suspect) including 311 hospitalisations. The highest numbers of cases were reported in Canterbury (1209), Capital and Coast (680) and Nelson Marlborough (670) DHBs.

In 2012, 415 cases of pertussis (confirmed, probable and suspect) were reported in infants with 184 of these being hospitalised (44 percent).

There were two deaths from pertussis in 2012, one three-year-old and an infant. Both had underlying medical conditions.
Current outbreak (August 2011-25 January 2013)
New cases of pertussis continue to occur at high rates. Since the current outbreak began in August 2011 to 25 January 2013, there have been a total of 7702 cases (confirmed, probable and suspect) including 420 hospitalisations.

Infants (under one year old) are the population at highest risk of serious outcomes and since the start of the outbreak have accounted for 542 cases (7 percent) and 256 of all hospitalisations (61 percent). Of the 177 cases reported in the past two weeks, 17 cases (10 percent) were infants.

Vaccine package changes – Boostrix and Infanrix-IPV
GSK is changing the vaccine packs for the funded Boostrix vaccine. Boostrix is a reduced-antigen combined vaccine, approved for booster vaccination against pertussis, diphtheria and tetanus.

Boostrix is funded for children at age 11 years as part of the National Immunisation Schedule and for pregnant women between 28 and 38 weeks gestation until the current pertussis outbreak is over.

The pack change will affect both the Boostrix single and 10 dose packs. The new packs will have a “government programme” label on the box and the 10 dose pack is needle free enabling it to be 20 percent smaller. The new packages will be distributed in the next few months, once the existing stock has been used up.

GSK will send out letters later this month advising practices that Infanrix-IPV packaging is also changing. The new, smaller pack will be available from the end of March/early April depending on when the current stock has been distributed.

Please note, only the packaging for the Boostrix and Infanrix-IPV vaccines has changed. The vaccine formulation, indication and components remain unchanged.

E-learning update
The survey is open until 7 February 2013 and we would welcome your input. It takes around 10 minutes to work through and everyone who completes the survey will go into a draw to win a $150 voucher for a meal at a restaurant of their choice. To participate go to www.elearning.malatest.net. Thank you if you have already completed the immunisation e-learning tool survey.

Childhood obesity survey
The Ministry is inviting health practitioners to complete a short survey on management of childhood obesity. The survey will provide the Ministry with information around training and service development needs of primary care physicians caring for children who are overweight or obese. It will also give important feedback about service availability and management practices around the country.

The survey is online and would not take more than a few minutes to answer. A link to the survey was sent to all General Practitioners in the RNZCGP newsletter, Epulse, on 29 January 2013 and will be sent weekly thereafter for six weeks. The survey questionnaire can be completed on line at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dGpLTzVITYJFmRmpUc25VeVRG1NeVVZWUE6MA

Those who participate will go into a draw to win a $100 voucher of their choice. Results of the draw will be announced towards the end of March.

Typhoid vaccines
Sanofi-aventive New Zealand have advised VIVAXIM® and TYPHIM Vi™ are now back in stock and available for ordering through Healthcare Logistics. Sanofi recalled the Typhim Vi typhoid vaccine in September.

Primary Vaccinations
A reminder that primary courses of vaccinations are fully funded for all adults as well as those under 18 years old if they do not have a record of previous immunisations. This is particularly relevant to refugees and migrants new to New Zealand.

Adults are eligible for Td, IPV, MMR, HPV (if started before aged 20 years) and Hepatitis B (if the person is a household and sexual contact of a Hepatitis B carrier). The list of fully funded vaccinations is on page 22 of the Immunisation Handbook 2011.

If you have any queries about anything in this update, please email immunisation@moh.govt.nz.
2013 Seasonal influenza vaccine order form

(Failing to complete in full may affect the processing of your request)

TO: Healthcare Logistics TOLL-FREE FAX: 0508 408 358
Date: ____________________________ Healthcare Logistics Customer Number: ____________________________

Surgery name: ____________________________________________
Contact name: ____________________________________________
Delivery address: __________________________________________
Contact phone: ____________________________________________

Customer purchase order number (if applicable): ____________________________

Important key messages for influenza 2013

FLUVAX® and FLUARIX® are the two influenza vaccines available to order this season.

- FLUARIX® is approved for use in individuals aged 6 months and over
- FLUVAX® is approved for use in individuals aged 5 years and over but should preferably not be used or used with caution in children aged 5-8

The Ministry of Health recommends FLUVAX® should not be used in children under 9 years of age.

Please estimate the total number of children in your practice who are likely to be vaccinated this season and order below (note: only children with underlying medical conditions are eligible for free vaccine).

I would like to order:

☐ DOSES for children under 9 years of age (FLUARIX® [1117594], only available in multiples of 10).

☐ DOSES for individuals 9 and over (FLUVAX® or FLUARIX® [1117616], only available in multiples of 10).

You will be supplied the doses that you commit to in writing (please remember we cannot split boxes).

A medium chilly bin holds up to 80 doses; a large chilly bin holds up to 200 doses.

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NOTE: Some orders may have a temperature logging device included with the shipment. Do not be concerned if your shipment does not contain a temperature logging device.

Refund for unused stock
A refund will be available for a total of 10 units of unused stock of either FLUVAX® and FLUARIX® from any one account. Unused stock must be returned by August 31st, 2013 to be refunded. Thereafter surgeries should contact their immunisation coordinator for information on safe disposal.

For any further information on ordering, please phone Healthcare Logistics Customer Services 0508 425 358.

For online ordering go to www.hconline.co.nz