

Seqirus Media Monitoring

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Seqirus mentions

GPs postpone flu jabs for over-65s due to vaccine shortage in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, two GP practices in Co Antrim are experiencing a shortage of flu jabs, with one forced to cancel appointments for over-65s planned for this weekend. The development comes as health chiefs had previously admitted to some "logistical issues" in the roll-out of a new vaccine UK-wide for over-65s, raising concerns of a potential shortage in supply last month. In response to actions taken by the GP surgeries, the PHA has defended its implementation of this year's regional flu vaccination programme, emphasising that vaccination supplies are in place

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/gps-postpone-flu-jabs-for-over65s-due-to-vaccine-shortage-in-northern-ireland-37432400.html>

Health reassure Islanders over supplies of flu vaccine

In Jersey, there will be enough flu vaccine to go around this winter, the Health Department has said, following reports that GPs and pharmacies were struggling to meet demand. A number of Islanders have contacted the JEP in recent days to say that they have been unable to get the vaccine and have instead been added to waiting lists. However, Linda Diggle, head of preventative programmes at Health, said there was not a shortage of the vaccine, just a different process in place this year for over 65s, who are for the first time being given a special vaccine specifically aimed at ageing immune systems.

<https://jerseyeveningpost.com/news/2018/10/18/health-reassure-islanders-over-supplies-of-flu-vaccine/>

Industry News

Novel Intranasal Influenza Vaccine Shows Tolerability, Safety, and High Immune Response

NasoVAX, a replication-deficient adenovirus-based nasal spray flu vaccine, has demonstrated tolerability and safety as well as higher cellular immune response compared with a common injectable vaccine. This research was presented at IDWeek 2018

<http://www.medicalbag.com/medicine/new-nasal-flu-vaccine-performs-well-with-no-serious-side-effects/article/808423/>

Can an antiviral drug help you fight the flu?

In Atlanta, Dr. Jesse Couk, an infectious disease physician at Piedmont Hospital Atlanta, says if you think you have flu, get to the doctor. "You should get testing right away," Dr. Couk says. "Flu symptoms come on pretty suddenly. So you may be feeling well and you sort of feel it coming on in the course in an hour, the fever and chills, taking over. That's the time to go get tested." An antiviral medication like Tamiflu or Relenza can help. But, first, Couk says, you want to make sure you actually have the flu, not something else.

<http://www.fox5atlanta.com/health/fox-medical-team/can-an-antiviral-drug-help-you-fight-the-flu->

Pandemic Influenza News

The cost and challenge of vaccine development for emerging and emergent infectious diseases

In The Lancet Global Health, Dimitrios Gouglas and colleagues present a cost analysis for vaccine development for epidemic infectious diseases. Such an analysis is crucial to serve as a guide to

harmonise finite funds and monetary needs to achieve CEPI's goal of successful testing through phase 2a of at least one vaccine per targeted pathogen. Although not part of CEPI's mandate, the eventual objective is successful vaccine licensure.

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(18\)30418-2/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(18)30418-2/fulltext)

An Unknown 'Disease X' Could Become an Epidemic. Can We Find It Before It's Too Late?

Earlier this year, the World Health Organization listed "Disease X" among the diseases most in need of research and development. Disease X is not a specific illness, but rather a hypothetical epidemic that could be caused by a pathogen that we don't yet realize affects humans. Experts at the World Health Summit in Berlin this week warned that we're not prepared to find such a disease at its likely animal source, or spot it quickly when it starts making people sick. Veterinary pathologist Tracey McNamara said there is little to no surveillance of wildlife diseases, and the divide between the public health sector and animal health sector makes it very difficult to recognize and respond to a novel threat.

<http://www.livescience.com/63862-disease-x-animal-source.html>

Academic studies

Novel DNA vaccine design offers broad protection against influenza-A H3N2

Researchers developed a novel DNA influenza vaccine based on four micro-consensus antigenic regions selected to represent the diversity of seasonal H3N2 viruses across decades. The DNA vaccine protected mice against a lethal challenge with more than one influenza-A H3N2 virus and protected them from severe H3N2-related illness despite the lack of an exact sequence match between the vaccine immunogen and H3 immunogen. The findings are reported in a new Special Issue on DNA Vaccines in Human Gene Therapy

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-10-dna-vaccine-broad-influenza-a-h3n2.html>

Additional sources: (EurekAlert!)

Giving Flu Shots in Pharmacies Could Up Vaccination Coverage

Administering influenza vaccines through pharmacies in addition to traditional locations can increase vaccination coverage in the event of an epidemic, according to a study. Sarah M. Bartsch, MPH, from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, and colleagues simulated the impact of different influenza epidemics and the impact of utilizing pharmacies in addition to traditional locations for vaccination for 2017.

<http://www.empr.com/news/pharmacy-flu-shot-vaccination-rates-coverage-influenza/article/808358/>

Pediatric influenza news

More than half of parents believe myth about flu shot, survey finds

Researchers from the Orlando Health Arnold Palmer Hospital recently conducted a study to assess parents' attitudes about the flu vaccination. "We know that there are a lot of myths and misconceptions about the flu," study coauthor Jean Moorjani said. They surveyed 700 adults in America. After analyzing the results, they found more than half of parents with children under age 18 believe their child can get the flu from the flu shot and a third of them think the shot does not protect against the flu.

<https://www.news965.com/news/national/more-than-half-parents-believe-myth-about-flu-shot-survey-finds/DhEf9QocE5PMeUjwqsUcjM/>

Additional sources: (Springfield News-Sun) (U.S. News & World Report) (My Dayton Daily News)

NHS Fife urges parents to vaccinate children against flu

Every year in Scotland, children are hospitalised for the treatment of flu or its complications. Parents in Fife are being urged to act now to reduce the risk of their children contracting flu this winter. The vaccine is being offered to all primary school aged children in Fife, as well as children aged 2-5

years who are not yet in primary school.

<https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/health/nhs-fife-urges-parents-to-vaccinate-children-against-flu-1-4816281>

Vaccinate the 'super spreaders' to protect against flu

Meilyr Sion, actor and author of Welsh children's books, is giving his support to the 'Beat Flu' campaign this year, Meilyr said: "It's important we do what we can to protect children against infections and illnesses like flu, because as we all know, children are very good at spreading germs."

<http://www.thebangoraye.com/4868-2/>

CHP investigates influenza A outbreak at kindergarten in Kwai Tsing

In Hong Kong, the Centre for Health Protection is investigating an influenza A outbreak at a kindergarten in Kwai Tsing. The outbreak involves 10 boys and 10 girls aged 3 to 6, who have developed fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose since October 12. Nineteen of them sought medical attention. Five patients required hospitalisation and three of them were discharged after treatment.

http://7thspace.com/headlines/544303/chp_investigates_influenza_a_outbreak_at_kindergarten_in_kwai_tsing.html

Mom who suddenly lost her 4-year-old son to the flu: Please get vaccinated early

In the U.S., a mom and physician was left shocked and heartbroken after her healthy 4-year-old son died within two days of showing flu symptoms. He was scheduled to receive his flu shot during a routine checkup days later, mom Laura Sidari said. She is pleading with other families to be proactive about getting flu shots as soon as possible.

<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/10/18/mom-whose-unvaccinated-son-died-flu-please-get-shot-early/1681771002/>

Doctors Can't Believe Some Parents Still Think Flu Shot Gives Kids The Flu

A national survey in the U.S. found that more than half of parents surveyed think their child can get the flu from the flu vaccine. In case there are any Canadian parents who think the same thing, two doctors who want to set the record straight once and for all.

https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/10/17/kids-flu-shot-safe_a_23564005/

You're Not 'Flu Shot People'? Then You're Not Touching My Baby

A reader is concerned that her in-laws claim not to be 'flu shot people' and will put her new baby's health at risk. She has been trying to convince them to get vaccinated, to no avail. She is advised to take a gentler approach, and rather than give them an ultimatum, "explain the idea of creating a protective bubble of health around the baby."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/style/flu-shots-advice.html>

Over 65's influenza news

MPs to demand flu jabs for all care home workers to reduce the infection risk for the elderly

All social care workers in homes should have the flu jab, MPs said - after it emerged at least three quarters were an infection risk to the elderly last year. The Commons Science and Technology committee said a Public Health England survey of care homes showed at best a quarter of care home staff had taken the vaccination last year.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/7521673/flu-jabs-for-all-carers/>

General Influenza News

Call for compulsory flu jab for care staff in high-risk hospital areas

The flu vaccine should be mandatory for doctors, nurses and care staff in high-risk parts of hospitals such as intensive care, cancer wards and emergency departments, according to a new report. The needs of patients must take priority over the personal choice of hospital staff in order to protect

overall population health, says the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/call-for-compulsory-flu-jab-for-care-staff-in-high-risk-hospital-areas-1.3666910>

Additional sources: ([Evening Echo](#))

Seasonal Flu: public health information campaign launches on October 26th

In France, a new public health information campaign on the flu vaccine will launch on October 26th. It targets both health professionals and patients, particularly those in an at-risk group, and uses TV ads, direct mailing, brochures, posters and vouchers

<http://www.lemoniteurdespharmacies.fr/actu/actualites/actus-socio-professionnelles/181018-grippe-saisonniere-lancement-de-la-campagne-d-information-du-public-le-26-octobre.html>

Flu vaccination uptake too low, even for healthcare workers

In France, the Health Ministry reports that barely half of at-risk people and a quarter of healthcare workers get vaccinated against the flu. The Minister has launched a charter to encourage health professionals to get vaccinated. French people seem well informed, however some vaccination myths persist

http://www.sciencesetavenir.fr/sante/la-vaccination-contre-la-grippe-insuffisante-meme-chez-les-soignants_128722

€4.4 million flu jab campaign starts next week in southern Spain

In Southern Spain, health authorities will begin their annual vaccination campaign on Monday, October 22, to provide protection for those most at risk from influenza in Andalucia. Around 1.35 million doses of the influenza vaccine have been reserved ahead of the campaign, a 10 per cent increase on last year's doses.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2018/10/18/e4-4-million-flu-jab-campaign-starts-next-week-in-southern-spain/>

Get your influenza vaccination today and get rewarded at Kmart Pharmacy

As the influenza season gets underway, Kmart Pharmacy is encouraging its customers to get vaccinated against the disease. Members of Kmart's Shop Your Way program are eligible to receive \$5 cash back in SYW points for a no-cost influenza vaccine administered at a Kmart Pharmacy in the United States and Puerto Rico, and may also be eligible for Pharmacy Rewards.

<https://www.pharmacist.com/article/get-your-influenza-vaccination-today-and-get-rewarded-kmart-pharmacy>

“Respect Influenza,” health officer says

In Canada, Influenza vaccine clinics kicked off this week and Alberta Health Services says getting the once-a-year shot is not just precautionary – it's protection. “People don't necessarily respect it, in terms of how severe it can be,” said doctor Judy MacDonald with AHS.

<http://www.cochraneegle.com/article/respect-influenza-health-officer-says-20181018>

BBMP sets up team to monitor and assess H1N1 cases in Bengaluru

In Bengaluru, officials have recommended that people presenting with symptoms of the flu quarantine themselves in order to avoid spreading the infection further. People who are exhibiting any signs or symptoms of the infection are being given tamiflu tablets as a precaution and to prevent any further spread of the same.

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/bbmp-sets-team-monitor-and-assess-h1n1-cases-bengaluru-90194>

Flu shot season begins in Israel

The Health Ministry urges Israelis ages six months and older to get vaccinated, particularly pregnant women and those suffering from chronic diseases including obesity, heart problems, diabetes and Down syndrome. "The vaccines available in Israel today are highly effective and safe," said Health Ministry Director Moshe Bar Siman Tov. "The rates of immunization coverage in Israel are relatively high compared to other countries, but in recent years there have been an increase in parents who

chose not to vaccinate their children."

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Flu-shot-season-begins-in-Israel-569738>

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Health Trust professionals lead the way by getting flu jabs

In England, health professionals at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals aim to be flu free this winter as in just three days, 1,650 nurses, doctors and others have volunteered to get their flu jab. The Trust, which runs three hospitals in the region as well as outpatient services at various community sites, is on a mission to vaccinate all staff members directly involved in patient care and treatment.

<https://www.doncasterfreepress.co.uk/news/health/doncaster-and-bassetlaw-health-trust-professionals-lead-the-way-by-getting-flu-jabs-1-9402982>

MPs 'shocked' by low flu vaccine rates among social care staff

In the UK, MPs say they have been shocked to discover that only 25% of social care staff looking after the elderly and vulnerable are vaccinated against flu. A report from the House of Commons science and technology select committee says it is as important for social care staff including those who work in care homes to be vaccinated as it is for hospital staff – if not more so. The MPs were also disturbed to find that data on flu vaccine takeup by social care staff is not routinely collected.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/oct/18/mps-shocked-by-low-flu-vaccine-rates-among-social-care-staff>

Compulsory flu jab urged for staff in emergency wards

The flu vaccine should be compulsory for all healthcare professionals working in high-risk areas such as emergency departments and cancer wards, experts have said. In a report, the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland said all medics who come into direct contact with patients in hospitals and communities have a responsibility to be immunised against flu. The Influenza Vaccination of Healthcare Workers report recommended that healthcare workers who decline the vaccination, which is available free to healthcare workers, on medical grounds should wear a mask in winter or move to lower-risk areas.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/compulsory-flu-jab-urged-for-staff-in-emergency-wards-dsr0tz9lw>

Vaccinate yourself against flu this winter

In England, NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group is encouraging those eligible to get their flu vaccination and help minimise the spread of flu this winter. Pregnant women, parents of children aged two and three years old, adults over 65, and those with underlying health conditions, or a learning disability are eligible for free flu vaccinations, either via their GP or pharmacist. These groups are at particular risk from flu, and the vaccination is still the best protection against an unpredictable virus.

<https://www.thestar.co.uk/whats-on/vaccinate-yourself-against-flu-this-winter-1-9402851>

Commons committee says flu jab should be mandatory for certain nurses

In the UK, MPs have urged the government to consider mandatory flu vaccinations for specific healthcare workers, following news that uptake is as low as 30% in some NHS hospital trusts in England. A report published by the Commons Science and Technology Committee states: 'Despite the 2017-18 season having the highest flu vaccination uptake ever in healthcare workers, significant variation remains. Some hospital trusts only achieved 30-40% uptake, whereas others achieved over 90%.'

<https://rcni.com/nursing-standard/newsroom/news/commons-committee-says-flu-jab-should-be-mandatory-certain-nurses-140456>

Flu jab reminder after Scots winters deaths hit 18-year high

In Scotland, last winter was the deadliest since the turn of the century. National Records of Scotland revealed 23,137 deaths were registered from last December to March – up from 20,946 in

2016-2017. There were 4797 additional deaths last winter, compared with the average number of deaths in the four months before December and after March. The main underlying causes were flu and pneumonia. Chief Medical Officer Dr Catherine Calderwood said: "Flu vaccines are available free to all eligible adults, including everybody aged 65 and older, and protect against a number of different flu strains. Vaccination remains our best defence against flu and I urge people to take up the offer of a free vaccine."

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/health/flu-jab-reminder-after-scots-13429938>

Ministry of Health reminds public to get the flu vaccine

The Ministry of Health in Belize reminds the public that it is the flu season and that the seasonal flu vaccine is now available at all public health centers countrywide. The Ministry encourages specific at-risk groups to get the flu vaccine.

<https://www.breakingbelizenews.com/2018/10/17/ministry-of-health-reminds-public-to-get-the-flu-vaccine/>

Burden of disease

Flu virus arrives in France

The flu virus is starting to appear in France, as illustrated on this map covering the 8th to 14th October period. It is mainly in the northern half of the country, and on the Cote d'Azur near the Italian border

<http://www.boursorama.com/actualite-economique/actualites/debuts-de-la-grippe-en-france-a27f04c571535e6a88f5a94cef8a9413>

Bengaluru: With two more deaths, H1N1 toll touches 8

In Karnataka, two more H1N1 deaths were reported in the state on October 15, taking the toll to eight. On Tuesday, the health and family welfare department updated its Influenza A (H1N1) data, and stated that 542 cases have been reported across Karnataka.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/bengaluru-with-two-more-deaths-h1n1-toll-touches-8/articleshow/66254783.cms>

Arkansas reports first flu death of the season, mass clinic to be held

The Arkansas Department of Health confirms the first death linked to influenza so far this flu season. Public Information Officer Meg Mirivel says it occurred in an adult in the 45- to 64-year-old age range. A mass flu clinic will be held at the State Fair Grounds Hall of Industry

<https://katv.com/news/local/arkansas-reports-first-flu-death-of-the-season>

Several Influenza Deaths in US, Including One Child, as Flu Season Begins

In the U.S., several patients including one child have died from influenza as the first week of the 2018-19 flu season drew to a close, according to news and public health department reports. A child in Florida became the first pediatric influenza fatality this season, according to the Florida Department of Health. Two adults in Kansas have died as a direct cause of influenza. A woman was the first person in Kentucky to die from an ILI, Barbara Fox, public information officer, Kentucky Department for Public Health, said

<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/903556>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

French foie gras makers say they are ready if bird flu returns

French foie gras makers, still recovering from two severe bird flu crises that ravaged flocks, said on Thursday they would be able to face any new outbreak thanks to strict security measures but prices will remain high to make up for increased costs. France, which has one of the largest poultry flocks in the European Union, is one of the countries that was most affected by the H5N8 bird flu virus that spread through wild birds across the continent last year.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-birdflu-france-foie-gras-idUSKCN1MS2NC>

Additional sources: ([WHBL News](#))

S. Korea reports bird flu cases based on wild bird droppings

The South Korean government said Thursday it has detected three cases of bird flu in different parts of the nation and vowed to strengthen quarantine measures. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs said it has confirmed H5 avian influenza (AI) viruses in wild bird droppings collected from Gunsan of North Jeolla Province on Oct. 8 and Cheongju in North Chungcheong Province on Oct. 15.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2018/10/18/0200000000AEN20181018006100320.html>

Additional sources: ([The Korea Herald](#))

Bulgaria reports bird flu outbreak on two farms in south

Bird flu has broken out on a duck farm and a poultry farm in southern Bulgaria, the country's food safety agency said on Thursday. All ducks and chickens at the farms in the village of Voivodovo will be culled, the agency said, without identifying the strain of the virus.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-birdflu-bulgaria/bulgaria-reports-bird-flu-outbreak-on-two-farms-in-south-idUKKCN1MS2FK>