

# Seqirus Media Monitoring

## 28th Aug 2020

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### Seqirus mentions

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#### UQ vaccine scientists report positive results from pre-clinical testing

Pre-clinical testing of The University of Queensland's COVID-19 vaccine has produced positive indications about its potential effectiveness and ability to be manufactured. "In hamster models, the vaccine combined with the Seqirus MF59 adjuvant, provided protection against virus replication, and reduced lung inflammation following exposure to the virus. It also induces a strong T-cell response and showed strong results when it came to data relating to manufacturability."

<https://www.manmonthly.com.au/news/uq-vaccine-scientists-report-positive-results-pre-clinical-testing/>

Additional sources: ([RACGP](#)) ([Pharmaceutical Technology](#)) ([Indian Express](#))

### Industry News

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#### Novacyt launches test to differentiate COVID-19 and flu

Clinical diagnostics company Novacyt launched a test on Thursday to differentiate between COVID-19 and common winter diseases. Novacyt said its "Winterplex" test panel included two gene targets specific to COVID-19, as well as gene targets for influenza A&B and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-novacyt/novacyt-launches-test-to-differentiate-covid-19-and-flu-idUKKBN25N0N7>

### Pandemic Influenza News

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No News Recorded

### Academic studies

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No News Recorded

### Pediatric influenza news

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#### Why Getting Flu Shots for Children Is Crucial This Year

While getting your children an annual flu shot is always recommended, experts say that this year it is especially important because the paths of COVID-19 and influenza may collide. Therefore, public health officials are urging parents to get the vaccine for their offspring to prevent not only a double whammy of respiratory diseases, but also to alleviate a potential crunch in clinics and hospitals from sick patients

<https://www.newsmax.com/headline/flu-shot-children/2020/08/27/id/984131/>

#### How to keep kids safe this fall during COVID-19

Parents need to prepare their children for going back to school in the U.S., whether in person or not. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends flu shots for children ages 6 months and older. Uribe notes that the flu shot will be of particular importance this year with the COVID-19 pandemic. "If we can prevent more flu that will help," says Dr. Uribe. Flu shots typically become available mid-to late-September.

<https://patch.com/illinois/elmhurst/how-keep-kids-safe-fall-during-covid-19>

### Over 65's influenza news

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**Uptake of flu vaccinations for Isle of Wight over 65s fallen over last five years**

With the British Government talking of doubling up on flu vaccinations this winter, they might have a fight on their hands as the uptake for over 65s has been dropping over the last five years. Analysis by the BBC Shared Data Unit found that the proportion of the most vulnerable vaccinated over the age of 65 has been falling over the past five years (excluding a blip in 2018 when it rose again). On the Isle of Wight, the percentage of over 65-year-olds who have been having the flu vaccination has dropped each year over the last five, now 7.4 per cent lower than five years ago.

<https://onthewight.com/uptake-of-flu-vaccinations-for-isle-of-wight-over-65s-fallen-over-last-five-years/>

### **When — and Where — to Get Your Flu Shot**

The latest worry for doctors and health experts across the country is the possibility of a “twindemic” — an overlap between coronavirus outbreaks and flu cases during the upcoming 2020-2021 flu season — that could sicken countless Americans and overburden the nation's health care system. Older adults in particular are at higher risk of severe illness from both COVID-19 and influenza, which experts say makes getting a flu shot this year — including timing your shot and choosing the right type of vaccine — more important than ever.

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2020/flu-shot-schedule.html?intcmp=AE-HP-TTN-R2-POS2-REALPOSS-TODAY>

## **General Influenza News**

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### **Flu: Why we still need to worry about it this winter**

Health officials are ramping up efforts to ensure everyone who needs a flu vaccine has one. The UK's largest flu-immunisation programme so far will see 30 million people offered the vaccine. The idea is to prepare for a winter that could see the annual flu season coincide with a surge in coronavirus. The Department of Health and Social Care says it has additional national supply of the adult vaccine to ensure demand does not outstrip supply.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53847025>

*Additional sources: (Yorkshire Evening Post) (Sunderland Echo) (Metro) (iNews.co.uk)*

### **Fears of flu and Covid-19 straining the NHS this winter grow as data shows number of at-risk adults getting free influenza jab is the lowest in eight years with just 45% uptake ...**

The number of vulnerable people getting free flu jabs in England is at an eight-year low, raising fears of an outbreak coinciding with a second wave of coronavirus. Last winter just 45 per cent of people under 65 with serious health conditions, who are offered the vaccine for free on the NHS, received the jab. This has tumbled from a peak of 52.3 per cent in the winter of 2013 and is the worst uptake since Public Health England's records began in 2012. This winter's flu drive is expected to be so large – and also delivered in a socially distanced way – that ministers are considering training more health workers to carry out the jabs and to make it possible to get them on a drive-through basis.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8669617/Flu-fears-vaccine-uptake-risk-adults-falling.html>

*Additional sources: (The Telegraph)*

### **Leading GPs insist upcoming flu jab campaign is the most important ever**

Two of Northern Ireland's top GPs have urged as many people as possible to get their flu jab this year amid the Covid-19 pandemic but fear the logistical challenges of administering it. The government plans to double the number of people who receive the influenza jab. The aim is to increase the number of vaccinations from 15m to 30m across the UK.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/health/leading-gps-insist-upcoming-flu-jab-campaign-is-the-most-important-ever-39484594.html>

### **"Tricky moment" for Europe as schools reopen, but not a driver of COVID-19 - WHO**

Europe is entering a “tricky moment” with the new school year, and while classrooms have not played a major role in spreading coronavirus, there is growing evidence of youth infecting others at

social gatherings, the World Health Organization said. Older people and at-risk groups must protect themselves with a flu vaccination as winter approaches, a season when more hospitalisations and deaths may be expected

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-who-europe/tricky-moment-for-europe-as-schools-reopen-but-not-a-driver-of-covid-19-who-idUKKBN25N1FL>

### **Rite Aid CEO warns that 'flu and Covid is not going to be a pretty picture' this fall**

Rite Aid CEO Heyward Donigan told CNBC on Thursday the U.S. health situation could be worrying this fall as people are at risk of becoming sick with both Covid-19 and seasonal influenza. Donigan, a former health-care executive who joined Rite Aid in 2019, urged Americans to get flu shots this year. She noted that less than 50% of Americans received the flu shot last year.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/08/27/rite-aid-ceo-heyward-donigan-on-risks-of-coronavirus-flu-this-fall.html>

### **Winter flu jab rollout remains 'up in the air' as GPs warn extra support needed to keep Covid safe**

In Ireland, a rural GP has warned "one size will not fit all" in relation to the rollout of the winter flu jab as concerns grow about where patients will be safely vaccinated during the pandemic. Dr John McSparran said they were considering the use of a parish hall with a one way system to administer the vaccine, adding that "no real clarity" had yet been given by the Department of Health about the scheme.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2020/08/27/news/winter-flu-jab-rollout-remains-up-in-the-air-as-gps-warn-extra-support-needed-to-keep-covid-safe-2048532/>

### **Concerns about the flu jab must be addressed if Government is to double uptake this winter**

In the UK, myths and concerns about the flu vaccine must be tackled to address a decline in uptake among some "at risk" groups, experts say. Academics and charities believe legitimate concerns around side effects, religious barriers and a "complacency" around the effects of flu are putting people off. Others say the Government has failed to deliver an effective strategy - leaving rates languishing below the WHO recommended 75 per cent take-up for vulnerable categories.

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/health/concerns-about-flu-jab-must-be-addressed-if-government-double-uptake-winter-2953827>

### **UK flu jab rates prompt complacency warning**

Complacency over the flu jab risks overwhelming the NHS, experts warn, as data reveals the scale of the challenge in expanding the vaccination programme. The government wants to increase the number of people vaccinated from 15 million to 30 million amid fears coronavirus cases will rise again in the autumn. Local authorities in England saw an average 45% of people with serious health conditions under 65 take up the offer of a free vaccine last winter, data shows. That represents a drop from 50% in 2015.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53889184>

### **Coronavirus: 'Scared' patients urged to get vaccinations**

In the UK, people are being urged to get the jabs they missed, as well as flu vaccines when they become available next month. There are some fears winter may lead to more Covid-19 cases. Vulnerable groups are being warned they could put themselves at greater risk if they fall ill with conditions such as flu and get coronavirus. "Vaccinations are some of the most important things that you can do to prevent against those preventable diseases," said Teresa Owen, executive director of public health for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-53921659>

### **Health board plea for people to protect themselves against the flu this winter**

A health board has urged people to protect themselves against the flu this winter as new figures show that the level of flu vaccinations in Wales has fallen. Data gathered by the BBC's Shared Data Unit reveal that none of the 22 Welsh local authorities hit their flu vaccination targets from 2019. In Wales, the number of at-risk under 65s vaccinated against the flu in authorities across the country stood at 44.4 per cent, down from 51.4 per cent in 2014.

<https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/18679273.betsi-cadwaldr-university-health-boards-plea-people-protect-flu-winter/>

### **Spain's nationwide flu campaign brought forward "to protect the vulnerable"**

Spain's Ministry of Health has agreed to bring the nationwide flu campaign forward 'to advance vaccination as much as possible' and 'protect the vulnerable.' Health Minister, Salvador Illa Roca, said "the objective is 75 per cent coverage for health workers and people over 65; and 60 per cent for pregnant women and people at risk."

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/08/27/spains-nationwide-flu-campaign-brought-forward-to-protect-the-vulnerable/>

### **Flu shots crucial in 2020**

The Balearic Government bought 180,000 doses of the flu vaccine in June, which is 37% more than usual, because of the coronavirus pandemic. Getting a flu jab is crucial this year because not only will it immunise people against flu, it will also prevent the total collapse of hospital services and stop people contracting flu and coronavirus at the same time, according to Dr Jordi Reina, Head of Virology at Son Espases Hospital.

<https://www.majorcadailybulletin.com/news/local/2020/08/27/71531/flu-shots-crucial-majorca.html>

## **Burden of disease**

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### **When Viruses Collide: Flu Season During Pandemic**

The medical community is about to find out how prepared it is for the double whammy of influenza and COVID-19 that has been predicted for the fall of 2020. The complexities of diagnosis, management of vulnerable patients, and overflowing medical centers that have made the COVID-19 crisis so brutal may all be exacerbated by the arrival of seasonal influenza. The flu vaccine is "extra important this year," especially in patients with existing respiratory disease, but COVID-19 has thrown up barriers to vaccination. But just as COVID-19 may hinder flu vaccines, it may also be helping to mitigate flu transmission.

<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/936406>

## **Flu Surveillance in Animals**

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### **News Scan for Aug 27, 2020 - Avian flu in Australia, Russia**

Animal health officials in Australia reported new avian flu outbreaks in commercial birds involving two separate strains, low-athogenic H7N6 and highly pathogenic H7N7, according to notifications from the World Organization for Animal Health. Russia recently reported three highly pathogenic H5 avian flu outbreaks in village and backyard poultry in Omsk Oblast, located in southwest Siberia, according to an OIE report.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/08/news-scan-aug-27-2020>

### **Avian influenza found at fourth Victorian farm**

Avian influenza has been confirmed at a fourth poultry farm in Victoria's Golden Plains Shire, which has been placed under quarantine. The egg farm, which has about 37,000 birds on-site, will be "depopulated" and decontaminated by Agriculture Victoria specialists after the H7N7 strain was detected.

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6899317/avian-influenza-found-at-fourth-farm/>

Additional sources: ([thecourier.com.au](http://thecourier.com.au))

### **Bird flu Victoria: Chickens, emus culled after influenza outbreak**

Thousands of emus and chickens will be killed after an outbreak of bird flu in regional Victoria. Veterinarians from Agriculture Victoria are on the farm in Kerang, three hours north of Melbourne, to euthanise the emu chicks. The dramatic move came after 200 birds came down with avian influenza earlier this week, spreading to the emu farm in Kerang and an egg farm in the Golden Plains Shire.

<https://www.news.com.au/technology/science/animals/bird-flu-victoria-chickens-emus-culled-after-influenza-outbreak/news-story/8ca3de5de347d5efdd16344c0a8b11d6>

### **Avian influenza detected at emu farm near Kerang**

A strain of avian influenza has been confirmed at an emu farm near Kerang. The farm owners reported sick birds to Agriculture Victoria and testing found low pathogenic H7N6 avian influenza. This is a different strain to that affecting poultry farms in Golden Plains Shire,

<https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/6897730/avian-influenza-detected-at-emu-farm/>