

Medical & Allied Branch
Dr Lorraine Doherty



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

To:

Chief Executives, HSS Boards/Trusts
Directors of Public Health, HSS Boards (*For onward dissemination to all General Practitioners*)
Director of Nursing, HSS Boards
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services, HSS Boards/Trusts/CSA
GP Medical Advisers, HSS Boards
Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, HSS Boards
All Community Pharmacists
Medical Directors, HSS Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians*)
Nursing Directors, HSS Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses*)
All General Practitioners (*for onward distribution to practice staff including practice nurses*)
Regional Epidemiologists, CDSC (NI)
Occupational Health Physicians

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 0717
Fax: 028 9052 0718
Email: Lorraine.Doherty@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 40 /2006
Date: 2nd October 2006

Dear Colleague

URGENT COMMUNICATION

UPDATE ON SUPPLY OF INFLUENZA VACCINE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

I am writing to clarify the position in relation to the supply of Influenza Vaccine for the Influenza Immunisation Vaccination programme in Northern Ireland. Today, the BBC and other media outlets have carried a story in relation to the shortage of Influenza Vaccines in the UK. This situation does **NOT** apply to Northern Ireland.

The Department has secure contracts in place for the supply of Influenza Vaccine to the Province. All our Influenza Vaccine Supplies have now arrived in the Province and are available for ordering. Some vaccines have already been delivered to GP practices in anticipation of the launch of the programme later this week. There is no need to stockpile and sufficient vaccine will be available throughout the programme.

We have been liaising with the regional media this morning to ensure that a clear message goes out to the public to try and allay concerns in relation to the flu vaccine availability. We will be advising the public that there is no problem with the supply, that they should await an invitation from their General Practitioners for Influenza Immunisation as usual and that there is no need for them to contact practices directly.

I hope this clarifies the situation in relation to Influenza Vaccine availability and assures you that we have enough vaccine to commence and complete our programme as in every other year.

Yours sincerely



Dr Lorraine Doherty
Consultant Epidemiologist / Senior Medical Officer
Chair of the Regional Influenza Working Group

cc:

CMO

CNO

CPO

Dr A McCormick, Permanent Secretary DHSSPS

Mr P Simpson, Deputy Secretary, DHSSPS

Mr D Hill, Deputy Secretary, DHSSPS

Dr J Livingstone, Director Primary Care DHSSPS

Mr A Elliott, Director of Health Development, DHSSPS

Ms C Jendoubi, Director of Primary Care, DHSSPS

Ms J Moore, Deputy Principal, Health Protection Team, DHSSPS

Mr Ivan Mc Master, Principal, GMS Contract Unit, DHSSPS

Prescribing Advisers, Health & Social Services Boards

Directors of Primary Care, Health & Social Services Boards

Regional Drug and Poisons Information Service

Dr Jill Mairs, Regional Procurement Pharmacist

Local Health & Social Care Groups – Chairs/Managers

Dr Philip McClements, NI Prison Service

Dr Brian Dunn, Chair, GPC, BMA

Universities Student Health Services

Occupational Health Departments Boards/ Trusts

NICS Occupational Health Service

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.