

Flu update 16 November 2009

Chronic neurological problems

We attach a useful document from the HPA regarding swine flu in people with chronic neurological problems. This should help in interpreting the guidance in the Chief Medical Officer's letter on this year's seasonal flu immunisation campaign, which said (in Annex 5) that people with chronic neurological problems were those with a history of stroke or TIA but that GPs should use their clinical judgement about those with other problems, eg MS and MND etc. This paper suggests to us that for swine flu that clinical judgement should err on the side of giving the immunisation, especially in children, adolescents and young adults. It may be particularly worth considering those with cerebral palsy and those with idiopathic epilepsy.

Derby City contact

City practices – please note that Joanne Lees in the primary care commissioning team is the first point of contact for vaccine re-ordering.

Vaccination clinic – personal experience

John Grenville reports - "I attended my own practice's Swine Flu immunisation clinic on Saturday morning. Four teams (Doctor and nurse/2 nurses + administrative staff member) administered about 450 jabs in 3 hours. The help of the Patient Participation Group in managing patients in the waiting room was invaluable.

A surprising number of people turned up who had not had a seasonal flu jab and most of these accepted a seasonal flu jab at the same time (in the other arm).

There were no acute reactions. I am able to report that there was a minimal feeling of discomfort as the vaccine was injected and that after about 4 hours I had a minimal ache in the arm if I abducted it above the horizontal - I usually get no ill-effects at all from the seasonal flu jab.

The clinicians reported that the solutions are quite viscous and require more force than you might expect to draw up and to inject.

Previously some people have suggested to me that there may be a problem with wastage as one might not get 10 full doses out of a vial. This does not seem to be a problem.

Many patients remain unsure about whether they require one dose or two. This is easily dealt with at the time. Some patients asked whether they would require another dose next year - the answer to this is that we simply don't know yet.

The practice will be holding a debrief and I will pass on any further pearls of wisdom."

John Grenville
Derbyshire LMC

Bruce Laurence
NHS Derbyshire County

Mike Sandys
NHS Derby City