

## **Health Care Support Workers (HCSWs) and influenza vaccinations**

- The ICB supports the role of HCSWs delivering vaccines where this is legal and safe, in line with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) guidance which supports HCSWs in administering specific vaccines to adults such as the influenza, pneumococcal and shingles vaccines and the nasal influenza vaccine to children, providing they are appropriately trained and have the support of a registered health care professional (GP, pharmacist or nurse in primary care). The RCN does not support HCSWs administering other vaccines such as the remainder of the childhood vaccination programme or travel vaccines. This is due to the clinical decision-making involved.

### **Delegation**

- In order to ensure work is delegated appropriately this should be in line with the RCN principles of accountability and delegation which can be accessed on: <https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/accountability-and-delegation>. These include the questions that need to be asked before any activity is delegated to a HCSW.
  - Is delegation in the best interest of the patient/client?
  - Has a risk assessment been undertaken?
  - Has the support worker been appropriately trained and assessed as competent to perform the role?
  - Does the support worker consider themselves to be competent and confident to perform the role?
  - Is adequate support and supervision available for the support worker?
  - Are robust protocols in place so that the support worker is not required to make a stand-alone clinical judgement?

### **Administration**

- HCSWs must not be put in a position where they have to make stand-alone clinical judgment calls. The HCSW would need to be able to promptly liaise and discuss issues with a registered practitioner, who is available on site.
- Patient Specific Directions (PSD) can be used to support the administration of vaccines by a HCSW. A PSD is a specific, written order by a qualified prescriber who retains responsibility for the safe administration of the vaccine. This could be a doctor or a Non-Medical Prescriber.
- In relation to the flu season, this could be a written and authorised instruction to administer the flu vaccine to a list of individually named patients for a pre-booked vaccination clinic where each patient on the list has been individually assessed by that prescriber. The prescriber must have adequate knowledge of the patient's health and be satisfied that the medicine to be administered serves the individual needs of each

patient on that list. Alternatively, an instruction to administer could be added to the individual patient's electronic EMIS record to administer the medicine by the prescriber. The prescriber must be logged on to provide an audit trail. It must be made before treatment is given and cannot be added retrospectively.

- Please note HCSWs **cannot** work under a Patient Group Direction (PGD). Legislation only makes provision for [specified](#) registered healthcare professionals to use PGDs and this list does not include HCSWs.
- The prescriber must be satisfied that the person to whom practice is delegated has the experience, knowledge and skills to provide the care or treatment involved.
- The prescriber has a duty of care and is professionally and legally accountable for the care he/she provides, including tasks delegated to others.
- The individual administering the vaccine remains accountable for their practice and for any errors they make during vaccine administration.
- In order to aid with some flexibility around workforce for the (COVID-19 and) influenza vaccination programme, key changes were made to the medicine's regulations in October 2020, that affect the mechanisms used for the supply or administration of the vaccine. Key relevant changes included the introduction of the National Protocol which allows tasks to be split between registered and non-registered healthcare professionals throughout the vaccination process from clinical assessment and consent to administration and post vaccination observation. This change is helpful as the splitting of tasks is not permitted within the PGD framework.
- The National Flu vaccine protocol can be used by a single registered healthcare professional undertaking all stages or multiple (registered or non-registered) persons undertaking different stages. However, the clinical assessment under the National Protocol must be undertaken by a prescriber or specified registered healthcare professional – the other three stages: preparation, administration of the vaccine and record keeping can be undertaken by registered or non-registered persons such as HCSWs who are appropriately trained and competent and working under appropriate supervision. There is currently only a Flu National Protocol for the inactivated influenza vaccine

### Intranasal flu vaccine (Fluenz Tetra®)

- HCSWs can administer the intranasal Fluenz Tetra® vaccine in accordance with a Patient Specific Direction (PSD) or where a registered healthcare professional supplies the vaccine under a PGD and then a suitably qualified Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) administers the vaccine immediately.
- For both approaches, HCSWs must be appropriately trained and competent and supported by registered healthcare professionals available immediately on-site. HCSWs can also only work with healthy children who have no specific medical considerations. Where a PGD is for supply of a non-injectable medicine followed by immediate administration by another person, the PGD must specify that the medicine is supplied for immediate administration within a vaccination session. The RCN have written guidance to support HCSWs administering the intranasal flu vaccine under a local SOP once it has been legally supplied to an individual (usually by a school nurse) under a PGD. See appendix 2.

### Training

- All those who administer vaccines must be appropriately trained in line with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA, formally Public Health England, PHE) [National Minimum Standards and Core Curriculum for Immunisation Training of Healthcare support workers](#). It is recommended that only Health Care Support workers (HCSW) who have achieved education and training to Level Three of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) 4 or equivalent in England and Wales with at least 2 years' experience as an HCSW should be considered for training in vaccine administration. HCSWs working at this level are likely to be at Level Three or above of the NHS Career Framework.
- On completion of immunisation training, the HCSW should only undertake immunisation if they feel competent to do so. This competence should be assessed and recorded, and each HCSW must be supported and supervised by a registered and experienced healthcare professional. Competency assessment, ongoing supervision, support and mentorship are crucial in achieving clinical governance standards. You can find an example of the Flu vaccinator competency assessment tool [here](#).
- The UKHSA publish resources for the Annual flu programme each year, which includes recommended training requirements by workforce groups for flu vaccination and The national flu vaccination programme slide sets; this information can be accessed [here](#).

- The e-learning for health training is available via:  
<https://www.elfh.org.uk/programmes/flu-immunisation/>, please note this is usually updated in August, before the flu season. Additional e-learning which includes topics such as vaccine storage, vaccine administration and legal aspects is available [here](#).

**References:**

SPS, Patient Specific Directions <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/patient-specific-directions-psd/>

CQC, Nigel's surgery 57: Health Care Assistants in General Practice,  
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/nigels-surgery-57-health-care-assistants-general-practice>

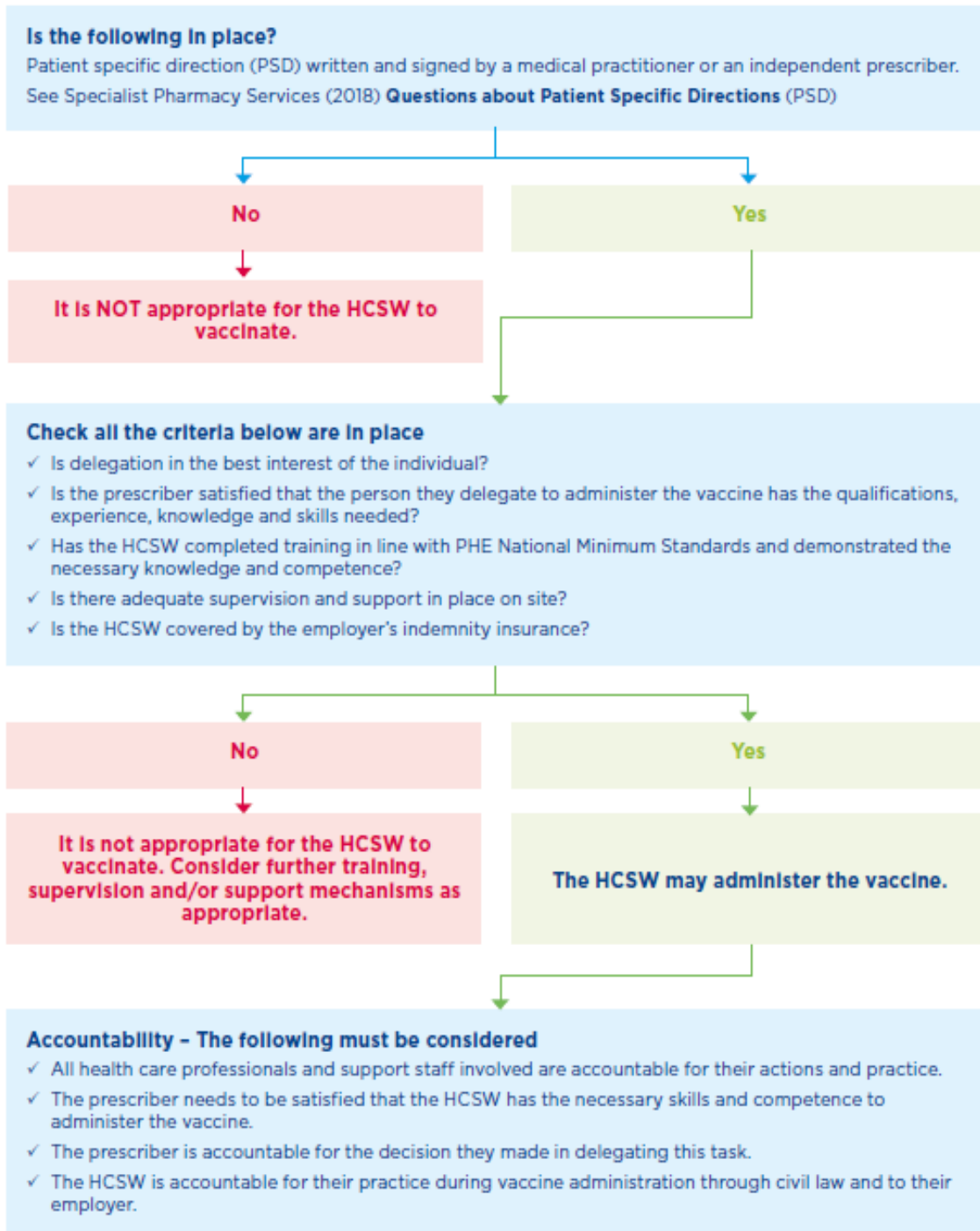
RCN, Health Care Support Workers Administering Inactivated Influenza, Shingles and Pneumococcal Vaccines for Adults and Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) for Children -RCN guidance, v3 2019  
<https://www.rcn.org.uk/-/media/royal-college-of-nursing/documents/publications/2019/april/007-441.pdf>

Public Health England, Workforce planning and models of delivery toolkit-Extension of the national flu immunisation programme to children  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/449863/2903356\\_Flu\\_Toolkit\\_v1\\_0\\_with\\_AppxFinal.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/449863/2903356_Flu_Toolkit_v1_0_with_AppxFinal.pdf)

## Appendix 1: HCSW and administration of specific vaccines in accordance with a patient specific direction (PSD) (*Public Health England, Workforce planning and models of delivery toolkit-Extension of the national flu immunisation programme to children*)

Algorithm to clarify the administration of influenza, pneumococcal or shingles vaccines to adults or the LAIV to children by a HCSW in accordance with a PSD.

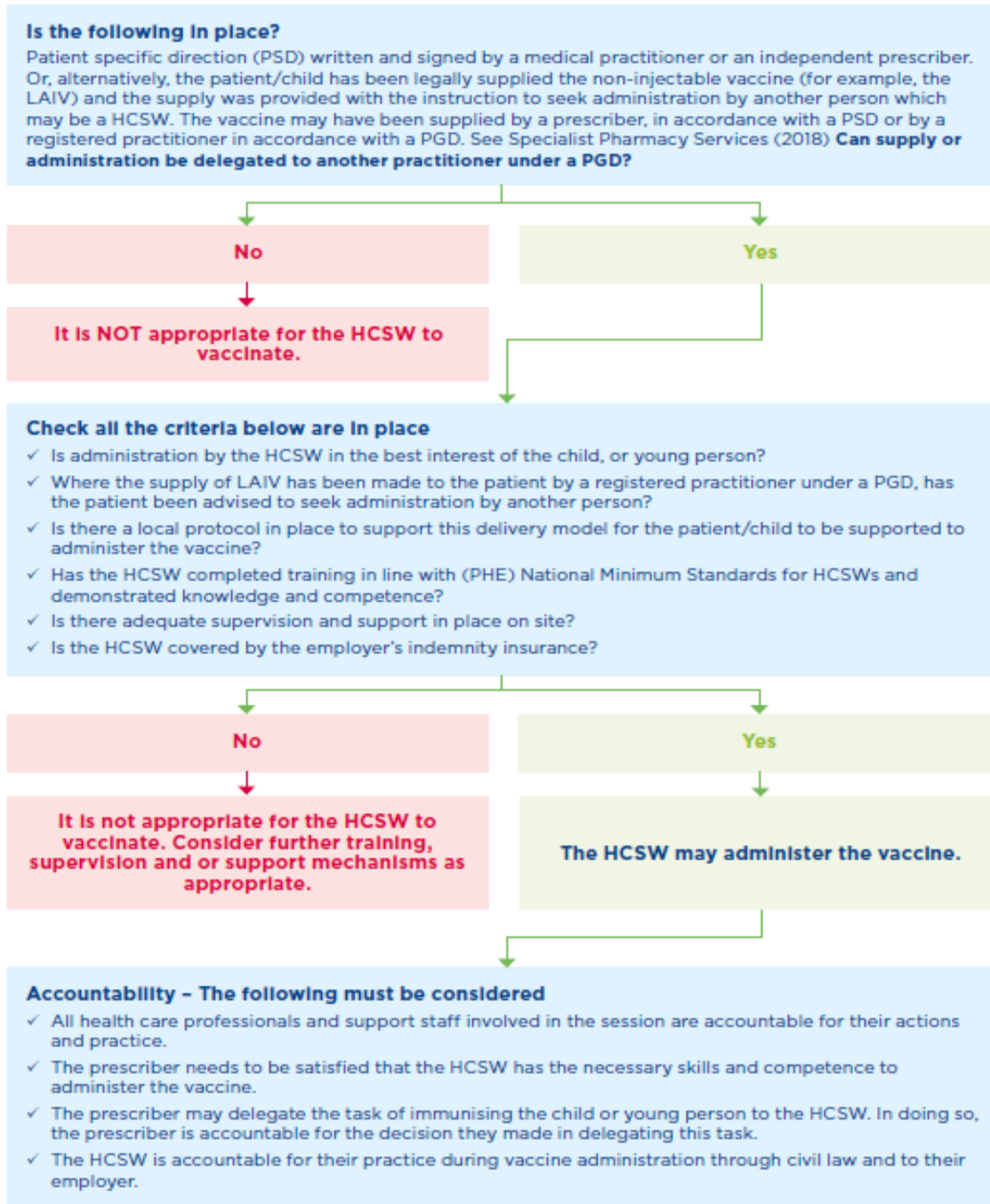
### Prescribing and arrangements for supply and administration



## Appendix 2: HCSW and administration of non-injectable vaccines (For example, the LAIV) (*Public Health England, Workforce planning and models of delivery toolkit-Extension of the national flu immunisation programme to children*)

An algorithm to clarify the process for the administration of non-injectable vaccines by a HCSW, such as the LAIV supplied to children for subsequent administration by another person.

### Prescribing and arrangements for supply and administration



### Appendix 3: Template Patient Specific Direction for GP practices:

#### Patient Specific Direction (PSD) Flu Vaccination for Influenza Vaccines Normally Administered by the IM route

Name of GP Practice \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Name of vaccination:	
Form/Strength/volume of vaccination:	
Dose	
Frequency	
Route of administration and site of injection	

I have provided a list of patients & authorise the administration of the 'flu vaccine to the said named list of patients to be administered by the Registered Nurse or Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) who is suitably qualified to do so and is employed by this practice. I will identify any cautions to the nurse/HCSW pre-vaccination in writing such as patients with a clotting disorder. I confirm each patient has been individually assessed for appropriateness to receive the 'Flu vaccine. I confirm that this list is attached to the form.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Qualifications (e.g. GMC/NMC number): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of signing: \_\_\_\_\_

Date vaccination to be given/ vaccination clinic to be held: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Patients to have the 'Flu Vaccine administered this session: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date of this PSD: \_\_\_\_\_

- It is the prescriber's responsibility to determine if the vaccination is appropriate to be administered to the patient identified on the list supplied by the Health Care Support Worker/Registered Nurse. If the flu vaccine has already been given in this current flu season, please strike through the name with a single line so that it is clear that the vaccination is not to be given. For patients who require an alternative mode of administration e.g. clotting disorders please list separately with clear administration instructions.

- The prescriber has checked as part of their assessment for any known allergies and excluded appropriately these known patients from the PSD.
- A Registered Nurse or Health Care Support Worker working under patient specific directions (PSD) must do so in line with the GP Practice's Medicine Policy.
- The Registered Nurse/ Health Care Support Worker must have undertaken training and will ensure he/she is competent in all aspects of flu vaccine supplied, including appropriate knowledge of the pharmacology of the drug; inclusion/exclusion criteria, contraindications; warnings, cold chain guidance etc.
- The Registered Nurse/ Health Care Support Worker will have had training on the recognition and treatment of anaphylaxis and basic life support. He or she will attend training updates as needed and must have completed the relevant e-learning packages.



To be completed following vaccination:

Patient's name	Patients address including telephone number	Date of Birth	NHS number	Consent Y/N	Allergy Y/N	Drug given	Batch	Expiry date	Injection	Route given IM or SC?	Date given	Printed name of person administering vaccination	Signature