

Practice 3: Offering the flu vaccine to children in three primary schools (Ireland)

In Ireland, children from 2 to 17 are eligible to receive the flu vaccine from the Irish National Immunisation Office of Health Service Executive (HSE) free of charge. Despite this, vaccine uptake in previous seasonal influenza programmes has been low. To address this and increase vaccination rates, a pilot campaign was launched in primary schools to administer the doses in a school setting rather than at the general practitioner's practice or at the pharmacy. This was based on personalised vaccination advice after information was provided to the parents and their consent had been obtained. This practice showed excellent results by significantly increasing uptake, and its efficient design is easily transferrable to other settings.

Offering the flu vaccine to children in three primary schools	Ireland
	<p>Governance level: national</p>
	<p>Funding source: national funding</p>
	<p>Vaccine(s) covered: influenza (for children)</p>
	<p>Barriers that can be removed by the practice: shortages of health care professionals; limited opening hours at vaccination points; lack of information accessible to the public</p>
	<p>Target group: children and young people, 2-17 years of age</p>
	<p>Approach of the practice: all children and young people aged 2-17 are eligible for the free HSE nasal flu vaccine in Ireland. It is usually given by GPs or pharmacists; however, vaccination uptake has been very low. To increase uptake, a pilot was launched in three primary schools to administer the vaccine in a school setting.</p> <p>For this pilot, comprehensive information packs (leaflet, consent form, template letters) were circulated among parents by operational community health teams. The teams reviewed the returned documents and the health condition of the children, and then recommended personalised vaccination routes via GP, pharmacy, or the school.</p>

**Vaccination journey(s) covered:**

Journey 5: an elderly or vulnerable person getting vaccinated for seasonal influenza – *Note: the practice does not directly cover this journey since it focuses on influenza vaccination for children rather than elderly and vulnerable people. However, due to the great interest of health authorities in this practice and flu vaccinations for children, it is included in the final selection.*

**Justification for selection:**

- ◆ Well-designed and effective – the results of the pilot show that vaccination uptake in schools increased significantly compared with uptake outside the school setting.
- ◆ Includes a description of resources needed to guide future pilots.
- ◆ Relatively easy to transfer to other settings because the approach is straightforward and could be replicated by many other Member States.