

Frequently Asked Questions on How to Help Carers During the Flu Campaign

Q How can I help carers during the flu vaccination campaign?

If you know someone is an **unpaid** carer, it would be really helpful if you could have a quick word with them about why it's important for them to have a flu vaccination. Also let them know that they're entitled to have one free of charge if they are receiving a Carer's Allowance, or are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill. This will be given on an individual basis at the GP's discretion depending on the carer's need.

Q How can talking to carers about having a flu vaccination make a difference?

Although carers are entitled to a free seasonal flu vaccination from their local GP surgery (and may already have one due to being in an 'at risk' group), many carers are not aware of this or *even realise that they are a carer*. A few words from you could:-

- Help them recognise that they are a carer and need to look after their own health and wellbeing.
- Give the carer the confidence to ask their GP practice for a free flu vaccination.
- Encourage the carer to find out about other benefits and services that could make life easier for them.

Q Who is a carer?

A carer is anyone who cares, **unpaid**, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Q Why is it so important for carers to have a flu vaccination?

Many people who rely on **unpaid** carers would be unable to cope alone if their carer caught the flu and was too ill to look after them. At the same time, carers who aren't vaccinated risk passing the virus on to the people they care for, which could cause them to become seriously ill.

Q Do I need to have a good knowledge of the services available for carers?

No, all you have to do is give them Carers Trust's contact details. Tel: **0844 800 4361**. Email: **info@carers.org**. Carers Trust will then put the carer in touch with someone from their local carers service who can explain what's available to them, such as:

- A carer's assessment to discuss what would make life easier for them.
- Support to take a break and look after their own health.
- Online and local information and advice.
- Support for the person being cared for (including equipment).
- Advocacy to ensure their voice is heard.
- Specialist support for young carers and young adult carers.
- Support groups, social events and emotional support.
- Planning for emergencies for the future.
- Training on how to care for someone.
- Education, training and employment opportunities.
- Help to recruit, train and support a personal assistant.
- The chance to get involved in shaping services for carers.