

Enhanced inactivated influenza (flu) vaccines for those aged 65 years and older

What is HIQA doing?

We have launched a public consultation on our draft health technology assessment on the use of an enhanced flu vaccine in those aged 65 years and older, as part of the HSE's Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme.



Why people aged 65+?

People aged 65+ are disproportionately affected by the flu, both in terms of morbidity and mortality. In Ireland, they can already receive a standard flu vaccine for free. Uptake is good, at well over 70%. However, flu continues to be a major risk for those aged 65+, with over 1,700 hospital admissions due to flu in people aged 65+ in the 2022-2023 flu season.

What did we find?

People's immune systems change as they age and as a result, standard vaccines may be less effective in older adults. We found that switching to an enhanced flu vaccine for those aged 65+ would be a good use of HSE resources.



However, this finding is highly sensitive to vaccine cost, making it a key factor in any decision to fund an enhanced vaccine and in price negotiations with vaccine manufacturers.

What next?

Following the public consultation, the report will be finalised and submitted as advice to the Minister for Health and the HSE, and published on the HIQA website.



How can you participate?

An online survey and details on how to take part in the consultation are available at www.hiqa.ie.

The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Thursday 11 July.