Directors, Managers and Supervisors: Do you have questions about the seasonal influenza vaccine requirement? The following are a few Frequently Asked Questions. If you have additional questions or need clarification please contact us at employeehealth@uky.edu

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What is the expectation?
The expectation established by UK HealthCare Leadership is that all UK HealthCare employees who are required to participate in the annual TB screening are to receive the seasonal influenza vaccine. This is to ensure the protection of our employees, patients, visitors and families during influenza season. Influenza is a contagious virus; however, there are many ways we can prevent the spread and transmission. Vaccination is recognized as a key measure of prevention and safety.

In what policy is this a requirement?
This, along with the other required immunizations, is supported by the Enterprise policy A03-005. Additionally, policy A03-010 is specifically designated for the “Control of Influenza”. Click here for direct access to both policies.
**Who is required?**
All employees who are required to participate in the annual TB screening are required to receive the seasonal influenza vaccine annually. That is, all UK HealthCare employees and employees of any of the colleges of health sciences who are being tracked for the annual TB screening. Additionally, the requirement applies to all contracted service providers located in a patient care facility; such as Crothall and Morrison’s employees, as well as any volunteer and/or student worker located in a UKHC patient care facility at least one day between October 1 and March 31 of the current flu season.

**When is the deadline to comply?**
**December 1 of the current season** is the deadline to comply.

**How can I be in compliance?**
There are several ways to meet this requirement and be in compliance.

- Receive a free flu shot from Employee Health
- Document with Employee Health an outside flu shot
- Manager check-out service for co-worker vaccination*

* Some restrictions apply to the manager check-out service. See the FAQ on restrictions for vaccine check-out.

**What if an employee receives the vaccine from somewhere else?** NEW
That is great! Employee Health needs to be aware so we can properly document the compliance with this requirement. Employees are to log on to the Employee Health Patient Portal and complete the brief online form to document the receipt of the flu shot from a source other than Employee Health. Paper forms will no longer be accepted. Please find the “Online Outside Vaccination Declaration” instructions in this packet or on our website. (click here)

Note: an “outside” flu shot includes, but is not limited to, receiving the flu shot from your UK Primary Care provider. **Even if you receive one from a UK PCP, you still need to complete the short documentation form as Employee Health does not have direct access to UK PCP immunization records.**

**What type of flu vaccine is offered?**
Employee Health offers the current seasonal adult intramuscular vaccine. We do not stock vaccines recommended for elderly or pediatric patients. Employee Health can also order an egg-free vaccine for those with egg allergies. We will not stock the live “nasal spray” as current CDC and ACIP recommendations do not include its use for this influenza season.

**Is the live vaccine available?**
No, the live “nasal spray” vaccine is not available this season as it is not recommended by CDC and ACIP guidelines.
What if I am allergic to eggs?
Employee Health can order an egg-free vaccine upon request. Please email employeehealth@uky.edu for this vaccine type.

What if an employee needs special accommodations?
If an employee needs special accommodations for exemption from the requirement, a declination form is available upon request. Please note that completion of this declination form does not grant automatic exemption and an approval process must take place. The declination form is made available to managers and is also available upon request from Employee Health at employeehealth@uky.edu. The deadline to submit a declination request is November 1, 2017.

What is the declination process?
The declination form is available from a manager or from Employee Health at employeehealth@uky.edu. Completion of the declination form does not grant automatic approval for exemption. The form must be turned in to Employee Health (employeehealth@uky.edu) along with supporting documentation relevant to the reason for requesting special accommodations. The form is reviewed by the Medical Director of Employee Health. Additional supporting documentation may be requested at the time of review. Once reviewed, a determination will be made to approve or deny the declination form. The outcome of the declination form will be communicated to the employee as well as the supervisor via an official memo from Employee Health. This will also be documented in the employee’s Medical Record in Employee Health. Managers, if approval for exemption has been given, please take into consideration that Employee Health cannot confirm immunity to declined disease(s) and additional precautions should be taken if and when an employee is exposed to the disease(s). During influenza season, an employee with an approved declination shall wear a mask during all activity in a patient care facility if visitation restrictions are placed by Infection Prevention and Control. Additionally, an employee who is granted approved exemption shall complete a brief educational training designed to provide alternative ways to protect themselves, their patients and families during influenza season. This is only accessible once the approved declination memo has been issued to the employee and supervisor by Employee Health.

Will the manager be notified of the outcome of the declination process?
Yes, the manager as well as the employee shall receive an official memo from Employee Health regarding the outcome of the declination form.

What are the consequences of non-compliance?
The prescribed consequence of non-compliance with the vaccination by the deadline is a written warning. A template written warning is available upon request from Employee Health and/or Employee Relations. It is also available in this packet of information. (click here) Adherence to this requirement is defined in the Enterprise policy and therefore non-compliance with policy shall be addressed in a manner of similar
transgressions. Additional corrective action for non-compliance with mask donning by unvaccinated healthcare workers includes suspension from duties at the discretion of the supervisor with support from upper management. The role of corrective action rests with the supervisor and/or manager. Employee Relations provides Human Resources support and Employee Health provides the avenue for which compliance can be obtained; including promotion, administration, tracking and reporting.

**When can I get a flu shot?**
Employees with scheduled birth month appointments may receive the seasonal influenza vaccine during their appointment if the vaccine is available. Beginning in October, Employee Health will sponsor several outreach vaccination clinics for UK HealthCare employees. Click here to view a schedule of vaccination clinics. Managers may also elect to check-out a specific number of vaccines from Employee Health to administer to their department. Click here to view the “check-out guidelines”. After all outreach clinics are complete, employees may walk-in to Employee Health and request the vaccine. Please note that wait times are unpredictable when walking in to Employee Health.

**Can managers check-out vaccines from Employee Health for inter-departmental vaccination?**
Yes, managers can check-out vaccines from Employee Health for inter-departmental vaccination. Please click here to access the SharePoint request form. Please note that strict adherence to proper vaccination storage and administration as well as accurate consent completion is required in order to maintain this process. The guidelines for the storage, administration, and consent completion can be found here. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in discontinuation of this service in future years. Departments may check-out vaccines for 7 days at a time. Consent forms must be completed in a legible fashion with the employee’s full legal name and date of birth.

**Are they free?**
Yes! The seasonal influenza vaccine is free to any UK HealthCare employee with a valid Medical Center badge.

**How will managers know who is compliant and who is not?**
Employee Health will report compliance status at least weekly to managers and supervisors. Additionally, compliance will be fed into the Manager Self-Service portal of SAP. Also, employees who receive the flu vaccine will receive a badge buddy to place on their badge and signify a current vaccination status. Employees who document online an outside flu vaccine will also receive the badge buddy for visual confirmation of vaccination compliance.

**Will employees be masked during influenza season?**
Employees with no or unknown vaccination status will be asked to wear a mask while in a patient care facility during times of increased influenza prevalence in the community. It is during these times when Infection Prevention and Control will place visitation restrictions on inpatient care and masks must be donned.
**Why does Employee Health need to know if I am sick with influenza?**
Employee Health not only must report compliance rates to the National Health and Safety Network, a CDC sponsored database, but must also report rates of healthcare worker influenza illnesses. Employee Health collects and analyzes this data every season. In an effort to streamline data collection and standardize the process, please utilize the form found in this packet (click here) when reporting employee call-ins for influenza and influenza-like-illness to Employee Health. Please note that when this information is reported to CDC NHSN, it is void of all patient identification and is an aggregate of data provided to Employee Health.

**What if an employee is sent home due to influenza or influenza-like-illness? Is it an occurrence? NEW**
If an employee is sent home sick or calls in with influenza or influenza-like-illness, it **does count** as an attendance occurrence. Normal Enterprise attendance policy guidelines and prescribed corrective actions are applicable. Click here to access the Enterprise attendance policy.

**What if I need documentation of my influenza vaccine?**
Whether an employee receives the influenza vaccine from Employee Health or documents with us the outside receipt of the flu shot, that documentation is available on our Employee Health patient portal for personal retrieval. Click here for instructions on how to access your immunization records online. Please note that in order for this to be available online the employee must have access to Link Blue. Employees may also contact our Medical Records department at UHSmedicalrecords@uky.edu for their immunization records. However, it is strongly encouraged to retrieve the immunization records via the patient portal for a more immediate turnaround time.

**Where can I go for additional questions and resources?**
Please direct questions to Employee Health at employeehealth@uky.edu
Also, visit the Employee Health webpage (click here)