

# PHARMACY HEALTH PROMOTION CAMPAIGN

## SWINE FLU

### Aim

- **To raise awareness of the steps the public need to take to prepare themselves for possible flu infection.**

### The Role for Community Pharmacists

- Pharmacists can highlight steps patients can take to prepare themselves for dealing with flu.
- Pharmacists can advise customers of the typical symptoms of swine flu and when and where to seek help.
- Pharmacists can advise customers of the need to use the National Pandemic Flu Service 0800 1513513 [www.directgov.uk/pandemicflu](http://www.directgov.uk/pandemicflu) or NHS Choices [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) if they have flu like symptoms.
- Pharmacists should advise customers to contact their doctor direct rather than using the National Pandemic Flu Service if they are at risk of further complications i.e. if :
  1. they have a serious underlying illness;
  2. they are pregnant;
  3. they have a sick child under one year old;
  4. their condition suddenly gets much worse; or
  5. if their condition is still getting worse after 7 days (5 for a child).
- Pharmacists should encourage at risk groups to have the vaccination against the H1N1 virus. These at risk groups will include:
  - People aged over six months and under 65 years in current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at-risk groups
  - All pregnant women, subject to licensing conditions on trimesters
  - Household contacts of people with compromised immune systems e.g. people in regular close contact with patients on treatment for cancer
  - People aged 65 and over in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at-risk groups (about 3.5 million people). This does not include otherwise healthy over 65s, since they appear to have some natural immunity to the virus.

### Key Messages Pharmacists can give to the Public:

1. **Flu Friends** – They can be relatives, neighbours or friends, who do not have symptoms of swine flu.
2. **Be Prepared** – Stock up and make sure you have: Normal flu remedies – for example, the correct dose of paracetamol for adults and children. Food and fluids.
  - Extra supplies of tissues and toilet paper.
  - Supplies of any regular medications you take. Make sure you order any repeat prescriptions before you run out. GPs and pharmacies may be very busy so allow plenty of time for this.
  - It makes sense to have a working thermometer at home, as an increase in temperature is one of the main symptoms.
3. **Good infection control** - Catch It, Kill It, Bin It. More information is available on the National Recorded line on 0800 1 513513.

For more information or further advice, please contact Kelvin Rowland-Jones, Principal Pharmacist, Community Pharmacy Services on 01223 725472.