



July 2, 2020

Pennsylvania Expands the Age Range of Persons to Whom Pharmacists May Administer Influenza Vaccinations

On June 16, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued a release warning that “this year, it’s especially important for Americans to get a flu shot.” The director of the CDC, Dr. Robert Redfield, stressed that if a second wave of COVID-19 hits during flu season, it could strain hospital resources. If more people get a flu shot, Dr. Redfield added, it could ease that strain.

In Pennsylvania, licensed pharmacists with authorizations to administer injectables are permitted to administer influenza immunizations by injectable or needle-free delivery methods to persons 9 years of age and older. For those individuals who may be less likely to visit their doctor’s office for a flu shot out of fear of becoming infected with the coronavirus, pharmacies provide an additional option for them to receive the flu vaccine. However, the current regulations of the State Board of Pharmacy do not authorize pharmacists to give flu shots to children under the age of 9.

To help mitigate patient crowding in health care centers in the event there is a second coronavirus wave during the upcoming flu season, and to enable a greater number of people to receive the flu immunization, **the Governor approved the Department of State’s request to suspend the age limitation.** Pharmacists who are already authorized to administer the flu vaccine may now **administer any licensed, age-appropriate influenza vaccine to individuals 3 years of age or older.**

This waiver, which shall extend for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency plus an additional 90 days after the emergency ends, covers only influenza vaccinations. It does not apply to COVID-19 vaccines.

Additional information regarding the flu vaccine can be found on the CDC’s [website](#), including FAQs for the upcoming flu season at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2019-2020.htm>.