

2 May 2019

Illawarra and Shoalhaven residents reminded to get their flu shot

The Illawarra and Shoalhaven community is being reminded to get their flu vaccine with the launch of the 2019 flu campaign.

“With more than 9,600 confirmed influenza cases in NSW already this year, people should call ahead to their GP or pharmacist to get their flu jabs,” Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District (ISLHD) Public Health Director, Curtis Gregory said.

“One million flu vaccines have now been delivered across the State.”

Pregnant women, young children and the elderly will be a major focus of this year’s flu campaign.

Free flu vaccines are available for pregnant women, Aboriginal people, those aged over 65, and anyone with medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

Hospitalisation rates for influenza are highest in young children with recent national figures showing about 100 per 100,000 in those aged six to 23 months.

Mr Gregory outlined the importance of the vaccine to the community.

“While we might all take flu for granted as a common winter disease, it can be deadly,” he said.

“In 2017, we had a significant flu season where more than 650 people died across the state.

“We cannot afford to be complacent.”

The NSW Government has invested about \$130 million in the 2018-19 Immunisation Program budget, including Commonwealth and state vaccines.

Free flu vaccines for children aged from six months to under five years of age are being provided under the NSW Government’s \$2.6 million program.

In addition to booking a flu shot, people are reminded that to help reduce the spread of flu, sneeze into your elbow, wash your hands regularly and stay home if sick.

** Editor’s Note: B-roll footage available for download here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iaopu8hcioj23fw/AADINbLZbdr7Jgs9l7XtCxnOa?dl=0>