

Health Minister's launch of National Flu Vaccination Program an important reminder to all Australians

20th May 2021 – Sydney: Today's launch of the National Flu Vaccination Program by the Health Minister is a timely reminder that influenza remains a threat to the health of Australians.

A recent nationwide survey commissioned by Sanofi Pasteur revealed that one-in-four Australians feel they do not need to get vaccinated against influenza this year due to increased hand hygiene and social distancing measures.¹ This complacency could result in a rebound influenza season unless more Australians receive an influenza vaccine ahead of winter.

Dr Iris Depaz, Medical Director at Sanofi Pasteur ANZ, said "It's vital Australians talk to their healthcare professional about influenza vaccination. Australia's success in controlling the transmission of both COVID-19 and influenza last year was due to the adoption of disease control measures as well as high influenza vaccination rates. This put the country in a good position, but we can't let our guard down as we enter this year's winter."

"As one of the world's largest producers of vaccines, we are playing our part to ensure that supply meets demand this influenza season," she said.

With 12 vaccine manufacturing facilities globally, Sanofi Pasteur produces 2.5 million vaccine doses every day.² This year alone the company will deliver 9 million vaccine doses in Australia for influenza and other vaccine preventable diseases.³

"All of Sanofi Pasteur's influenza doses for this year are now in the country with millions already shipped to GPs and pharmacies ready for Australians to have their annual vaccination," Dr Depaz said.

This year, influenza vaccines available in Australia will contain the following strains of influenza virus: A/Victoria/2570/2019 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus, an A/Hong Kong/2671/2019 (H3N2)-like virus, a B/Washington/02/2019-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus, and a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus.²

The Federal Government provides free influenza vaccinations through the National Immunisation Program to children aged between 6 months and 5 years, those aged 65 and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, pregnant women, and people living with health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and severe asthma that place them at high risk of complications.⁵

For further information regarding influenza and vaccination, speak with a healthcare professional or visit: www.vaccinehub.com.au/disease/influenza

The nationwide survey was conducted between 23rd to 30th March 2021 March 2021 amongst a representative sample of 1,005 adults. The survey did not include people who oppose vaccination.¹

About Sanofi

Sanofi is dedicated to supporting people through their health challenges. We are a global biopharmaceutical company focused on human health. We prevent illness with vaccines, provide innovative treatments to fight pain and ease suffering. We stand by the few who suffer from rare diseases and the millions with long-term chronic conditions.

With more than 100,000 people in 100 countries, Sanofi is transforming scientific innovation into healthcare solutions around the globe.

Sanofi, Empowering Life

Media Relations Contact

Ben Seal, Sanofi Australia, 0422 003 068

Georgina Connery, Ethical Strategies, 0420 377 685

References

1. Sanofi Pasteur. *Influenza & COVID-19 Consumer Tracker*. The Behavioral Architects. 1 April 2021
2. Sanofi Pasteur. *Manufacturing vaccines is a complex journey*. Available at: <https://www.sanofi.com/en/your-health/vaccines/production>
3. Sanofi data on file.
4. NSW Department of Health. *Season Influenza Vaccination 2021*. Available at: www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/flu.aspx

© Sanofi Australia and New Zealand. Talavera Corporate Centre, Building D, 12-24 Talavera Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 May 2021.