

Supplemental Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Questions and Answers for Immunization Providers – January 25, 2014

1. [Why do we have 2 new influenza vaccine products available for use?](#)
2. [What is the intended use of XANAFLU® vaccine in BC?](#)
3. [Does XANAFLU® have to reach room temperature prior to administration?](#)
4. [What does XANAFLU® packaging look like?](#)
5. [What is the difference between FLUVIRAL® AND FLULAVAL™?](#)
6. [What changes have been made to the publicly funded FLUMIST® program?](#)

1. Why do we have 2 new influenza vaccine products available for use?

In order to meet the demand for influenza vaccine this year, BCCDC has secured additional influenza vaccine products: XANAFLU® and FLULAVAL™.

2. What is the intended use of XANAFLU® vaccine in BC?

For the remainder of the 2013/14 influenza season, XANAFLU® will be used to supplement the supply of the Canadian authorized influenza vaccine INFLUVAC®. XANAFLU® vaccine is identical to the formulation of the Canadian authorized INFLUVAC® product, which has met all of Health Canada's regulatory requirements. Both products are manufactured in the same facility following the same Health Canada approved manufacturing processes.¹

XANAFLU®, manufactured for the European market, is a product coming from Germany. Accordingly, the packaging and product monograph are in German. The European approvals for XANAFLU® support use of this product down to 6 months of age. B.C. will be using this product in line with the European approvals and data. This differs from INFLUVAC® approvals which are 18 years and up.

The XANAFLU® syringe has a demarcation at the 0.25 mL mark, for optional pediatric dosing used in some European markets. **B.C. will continue to use a 0.5 mL dose for all indications, including pediatric.**

A new page has been added to the BC Immunization manual. For more information on recommendations for this product, please refer to page 34d-e of Section VII of the [BC Immunization Manual](#).

3. Does XANAFLU® have to reach room temperature prior to administration?

The product monograph for XANAFLU® states that the product should be allowed to reach room temperature before use. However this recommendation is not based on clinical evidence indicative of improved protection or safety, but rather was made to promote client comfort. Therefore, it is not necessary to wait for the product to reach room temperature prior to administration.

4. What does XANAFLU® packaging look like?

The product package, syringe label, and patient insert for this product are in German. However Abbott Laboratories Ltd has provided Health Canada with an approved package insert to support the product shipments during this time.¹ A Dear Health Care Provider letter detailing the use of this product from Abbott Laboratories Ltd will also be included. Below is a picture of the product package:



5. What is the difference between FLUVIRAL® and FLULAVAL™?

FLULAVAL™ is the international trade name for FLUVIRAL®. This product is identical to the Canadian authorized FLUVIRAL® vaccine and has met all of Health Canada's regulatory requirements. At this time, all shipments of internationally labeled FLULAVAL™ vaccine from GlaxoSmithKline will include the FLUVIRAL® package insert approved by Health Canada.²

Information on FLULAVAL™ has been added to the existing FLUVIRAL® page dated January 2014. Please refer to page 32a, Section VII of the [BC Immunization Manual](#).

6. What changes have been made to the publicly funded FLUMIST® program?

The age indications for publicly funded FLUMIST® have been expanded from 2-17 years of age to 2-59 years of age. The initial age indications were selected due to enhanced immunogenicity for LAIV versus TIV in this population. However, the vaccine still meets accepted immunogenicity requirements in those 18-59 years of age.

Due to increased use of this vaccine in an adult population, providers are reminded to screen for eligibility, particularly for pregnancy and immunosuppression (refer to [2013 LAIV Q&A for Health Care Providers](#)).

REFERENCES

¹Brillon, S. (2014). Xanaflu (Inactivated Influenza Vaccine) Lot: E20T. Dear Health Care Professional Letter. Abbott Laboratories Ltd.

²Kumar, R. (2014). Flulaval (Inactivated trivalent Influenza Vaccine). Dear Health Care Professional Letter. GlaxoSmithKline.