

# Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

## Newsletter Notice

### Get ready for flu season – protect your whānau and community

Colder weather also brings along a nasty passenger – the flu.

As you may have seen in the media, it's been a terrible flu season in the Northern Hemisphere, which is a possible predictor for what we may see here.

Families in the Hurunui and Kaikōura districts can once again ensure their children have the best protection available against the flu this winter – and it won't cost a cent! Young people from six months to 17 years of age living in the Kaikōura and Hurunui areas (within the Canterbury District Health Board) can receive free flu shots.

Influenza infection rates are generally highest in children and healthy children are the major cause of the spread of the virus in the community. Around 80 percent of people infected show no or minimal symptoms so you can spread the flu bug without knowing you have it – and the elderly, pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions are particularly vulnerable.

Canterbury District Health Board is urging you to protect your whānau and the wider community by getting your flu shot as soon as possible. This year's vaccines have been specially formulated for New Zealand and are expected to offer protection against the strain that was circulating in the Northern Hemisphere.

While flu shots are free for under 18s, they're available for anyone for a fee from a doctor, nurse or some pharmacists. You or your whānau may qualify for a free shot as well – check out [www.flufree.co.nz](http://www.flufree.co.nz) for more info and flu facts.

