



General practice key to success of needle-free flu vaccine program

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The Australian Medical Association in South Australia (AMA SA) has welcomed news that a free, no-needle influenza vaccine will be made available for young South Australian children through general practitioners (GPs).

The South Australian Government has announced the FluMist nasal vaccine will be offered to children aged two to five before next year's flu season.

AMA SA President Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam says making the flu vaccine more accessible will protect kids and the community.

'Every child immunised against the flu is one less child at risk of hospitalisation, but we know needles can be troubling for some children and stressful for their parents,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

'Empowering our GPs to vaccinate children through a nasal spray will give families another gentler way to protect their families and relieve pressure on our overstretched hospital system.'

Government data shows only 27% of South Australian children between 6 months and 5 years old have been immunised against the flu this year.

A/Prof Subramaniam says GPs will be central to the success of the program because they can help educate parents and challenge misconceptions that contribute to low vaccine uptake.

'GPs are the backbone of the health system. They know their patients, understand their needs and have the capacity to deliver care in a way that builds trust.'

'For all those reasons GPs and their teams are best placed to provide trusted vaccine advice tailored to individual circumstances.'

'Entrusting GPs to lead the FluMist rollout will promote high vaccine uptake that will help thousands of children and strengthen community immunity at a critical time for public health.'

'AMA SA commends the South Australian Government for recognising the expertise and reach of general practice.'

'We call for continued investment to ensure that GPs can do what they do best – keep South Australians well and keep our health system strong.'

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