

Health and Wellbeing Board

Meeting Date: 12th November 2020

COVID-19 update, and Flu Immunisations update

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1. Summary

1.1 This report provides a COVID-19 update and Flu immunisations update which describes; national targets, the communications campaign to raise awareness of eligibility and increase uptake, actions to reach eligible groups who may experience inequalities in getting a flu vaccination and Local Authority flu vaccination progress.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes the contents of the report and promotes flu vaccination to eligible groups and staff within their service.

REPORT

3.0 Flu Vaccinations

3.1 Flu vaccination is one of the most effective interventions we have to reduce pressure on the health and social care system this winter. We are currently seeing the impact of COVID-19 on the NHS and social care, and this coming winter we may be faced with co-circulation of COVID-19 and flu. Whilst the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 infection, it is an effective way to protect those at risk from flu, prevent ill-health and minimise further impact on the NHS and social care. Increasing flu vaccinations uptake is more important than ever this year.

3.2 Table 1 shows vaccination uptake ambitions in 2020/21 for eligible groups. Whilst ambitious, this reflects the need this year to help protect as many qualifying groups as possible. More people are eligible this year including Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List and children in year 7. The full list can be found in appendix A.

Table 1: Vaccine uptake ambitions in 2020 to 2021

Eligible groups	Uptake ambition
Aged 65 years and over	At least 75%
In clinical at risk group	At least 75%
Pregnant women	At least 75%
Children aged 2 and 3 year old	At least 75%
All primary school aged children and school year 7 in secondary school	At least 75%
Frontline health and social care workers	100% offer

3.3 Flu vaccination uptake

3.3.1 The table below shows GP Practice flu immunisation uptake at week 41. Over 65's have been prioritised first, which reflects the higher take up figure.

Eligible group	Take up (%)
65 years and over	43.8%
Total Combined - 6 months to under 65 years: At-risk	12%
All pregnant women	9.9%
All age 2	27.5%
All age 3	25.5%

3.3.2 The school flu immunisation programme (up to year 7) has commenced, and vaccinations are taking place. Unavoidable challenges have been class bubbles who are isolating, but measures such as catch-up clinics are planned.

3.3.3 Eligible groups can also attend Community Pharmacies to receive their flu immunisation, and data for this is collected. This will be provided at the next Board meeting.

3.3.1 Communications campaign to raise awareness of eligibility, and increase uptake of the free flu vaccination

- A System Communications Task and Finish Group meets weekly, with winter wellness and promotion of flu vaccination reporting being a standard agenda item
- The Shropshire Council and STP Flu lead have weekly telephone conversations to ensure alignment of developments and to progress actions
- Website text, and a Flu campaign toolkit based on Public Health England (PHE) document has been circulated to the System Communications Task and Finish Group. This is to help facilitate consistency of public messaging to eligible groups and encourage uptake
- The Shropshire Council website <https://shropshire.gov.uk/stay-safe-and-well-this-winter/advice-to-help-you-stay-well/> contains information and links to the public flu leaflets including different formats and languages
- We are having to be mindful about promoting the vaccine, whilst not putting pressure on local GP Practices and pharmacies who are prioritising different at-risk groups first. The Council website has the PHE/DHSC flyer [‘Why am I being asked to wait?’](#) to download.

3.3.2 Reaching eligible groups who may experience inequalities in getting a free flu vaccination

Reaching eligible groups who may find it a challenge to access the vaccine because of circumstance or having English as another language, for example, is being progressed. Actions so far include:

- Flu leaflets, including those for parents and carers are available on the Council website in different formats and languages <https://shropshire.gov.uk/stay-safe-and-well-this-winter/advice-to-help-you-stay-well/>. This link has also been publicised via the Headteacher's weekly update
- Liaising with the Housing Team to investigate how rough sleepers are getting their flu vaccine
- The STP Flu Steering Group is collating how Partners are reaching people who may face inequalities getting the flu vaccine.

3.3.3 Local Authority flu vaccination progress

Occupational Health and Public Health have been working together to co-ordinate the staff flu vaccination programme. Frontline Health and Social Care staff have been offered four drop-in clinics to receive their vaccine, with those unable to attend, being asked to attend their local pharmacy showing their staff ID. Remaining eligible staff (customer-facing, business continuity and BAME staff groups) will receive a voucher from their manager, which is then redeemed at participating pharmacies.

Demand for the vaccine has been high, and disappointingly we were unable to secure more vouchers from the original supplier. To help counteract this, managers are being asked to return any unused vouchers, so they can be re-allocated to other staff and eligible staff can pay for a vaccination at a local pharmacy and claim the cost back.

As demand for the vaccine nationally is very high, we have asked staff to be patient whilst waiting, as pharmacies are currently very busy vaccinating higher priority groups under the national NHS programme.

Data is being collected which will show numbers of staff vaccinated.

4.0 COVID-19 Updates

This section provides a brief update on COVID-19

4.1 During the 7-day period from 22 October to 29 October 2020 in Shropshire:

- There were 520 confirmed cases reported
- The 7-day infection rate was therefore at 160.9 per 100,000.
- This records a significant upwards trend from last week's position.
- This compares to 251.8 for the West Midlands and 207.2 for England.
- It is an increase from 102.7 for the week to 22 October
- Cases are across all parts of the County
- 45% are not linked to a cluster and 28% of those linked to a cluster are linked to household clusters. Care homes account for less than 4% of these cases.
- This rise in cases has been following the national picture.
- Cases are rising in the over 60s

4.2 To respond to rising cases:

- The local 'Step-Up Shropshire' campaign has been in force, with social media, press releases and interviews on local radio taking place
- Mobile Testing Units (MTU) are deployed to areas that have seen an increase in case numbers
- The local Health Protection Team with PHE West Midlands is responding to local outbreaks in settings such as schools, care homes and businesses, and provides support and guidance, contact tracing and advice to help prevent further outbreaks
- The Local Outbreak Control Plan has just been updated and can be found here https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/local_outbreak_plan
- The Community Response Team continues to work with the public and businesses
- The Council website is updated regularly <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/> and includes; information for the public and businesses, resources, and sources of further support and information including mental health and wellbeing
- The COVID-19 helpline and bereavement support line: 0345 678 9028 continue to offer support and advice for Shropshire people

5.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community, Environmental consequences and other Consultation)

There are no Human Rights, Environmental Consequences, Community or Equality issues identified with the provision of these updates.

6.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications that need to be considered with this update

7.0 Additional Information

None

8.0 Conclusions

There is a will between all local providers to work closely together and increase uptake of the flu vaccination for eligible groups this year. This is evidenced through the STP Flu Steering Group, The Systems Communications Task & Finish group and internal systems.

Covid-19 continues to be a changing and challenging situation for everyone, and work will continue in response to this.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr. Dean Carroll Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Climate Change, Health and Housing
Local Member
Appendices Appendix 1 – Eligible groups for free flu vaccination

Appendix 1 – Eligible groups for free flu vaccination

Usual groups	Additional groups for 2020/21
Pregnant women	
Children aged 2-3 (on 31 August 2019) and all primary school aged children	Children of school Year 7 age in secondary schools (those aged 11 on 31 August 2020)
Those aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups	Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List . Specifically, individuals who expect to share living accommodation with a shielded person on most days over the winter and therefore for whom continuing close contact is unavoidable
Those aged 65 years and over	Aim to further extend the vaccine programme in November and December to include the 50-64-year-old age group subject to vaccine supply
The main carer of an older or disabled person	Those who are in receipt of a carer's allowance , or who are the main carer of an older or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill
Those living in a residential or nursing home	People living in long-stay residential care homes or other long-stay care facilities where rapid spread is likely to follow introduction of infection and cause high morbidity and mortality. This does not include, for instance, prisons, young offender institutions, university halls of residence, or boarding schools (except where children are of primary school age or secondary school Year 7).
	Health and social care workers employed through Direct Payment (personal budgets) and/or Personal Health Budgets , such as Personal Assistants, to deliver domiciliary care to patients and service users
.	Health and social care staff, employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider , who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients who are at increased risk from exposure to influenza