



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Westminster Health & Wellbeing Board

RBKC Health & Wellbeing Board

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| Date: | 26 th November 2020 |
| Classification: | General Release |
| Title: | Local Implementation of the 2020 Flu Vaccination Programme |
| Report of: | WCC / RBKC Public Health with CL and WL CCGs |
| Wards Involved: | All wards in WCC and RBKC |
| Financial Summary: | None relevant |
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the ambition of the National NHS Flu vaccination programme to deliver flu vaccinations to 75% of eligible population cohorts and 100% of front-line health and social care workers in the challenging environment of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report highlights the local implementation plans that have been put in place to deliver the programme and the local reporting systems to monitor vaccine uptake. Plans will be adapted according to local variations observed, and, where necessary, in response to the unfolding wider healthcare situation.

2. Key Matters for the Board

2.1 The WCC and RBKC Health and Wellbeing board are requested to note and provide comment on:

- The paper outlining the local implementation planning that has been put in place to deliver the National NHS Flu vaccination programme

And to

- Consider and agree to review the 2020-21 local delivery of the NHS Flu vaccination programme in April / May 2021 when the vaccination programme is completed and a published uptake date is available.

3. Background

3.1 National Flu Campaign 2020

- There is a heightened focus on flu this year to protect vulnerable people and prevent health services being overwhelmed dealing with two potential concurrent outbreaks of COVID-19 and seasonal flu. Older adults and people with long term health conditions are at higher risk from both flu and COVID-19. An initial UK study of patients admitted to hospital earlier in 2020 showed that risk of death in COVID-19 patients more than doubled when they also had flu. (<https://www.bmj.com/content/370/bmj.m3720>)
- Eligible cohorts for free NHS flu vaccine are as follows: All children aged 2-11yrs, pregnant women, people with long term health conditions aged 6months – 64yrs, all adults aged over 65, carers, members of a shielding household, care home residents and staff, front line health and social care workers.
- The flu vaccination programme runs through September – December. Peak flu season is generally late January-February but varies from year to year.
- The national NHS England ambition is for flu vaccine uptake of 75% in eligible cohorts and 100% of front-line health and social care workers
- Uptake of flu vaccinations in Central and West London CCGs / WCC and RBKC 2019-20 season was considerably lower than this and illustrates the scale of ambition involved in the roll out of the 2020-21 programme:

Flu vaccination uptake 2019-20

| | England | London | WL CCG | CL CCG |
|------------------|---------|--------|-------------|--------------------|
| 65+ | 72.4% | 66.2% | 58.7% | 61.7% |
| Under 65 at risk | 44.9% | 41.8% | 35.8% | 36.4% |
| Pregnant | 43.7% | 39.2% | 36.8% | 34.6% |
| Age 2 | 43.4% | 32.2% | 27.1% | 27.4% |
| Age 3 | 44.2% | 32.6% | 26.2% | 28.2% |
| | | | RBKC | Westminster |
| Primary Schools | 60.4% | 50.3% | 43.2% | 36.6% |

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/seasonal-flu-vaccine-uptake-in-gp-patients-monthly-data-2019-to-2020>

3.2 National Flu Campaign 2020 – Local Implementation

- Vaccination of school aged children is commissioned by NHS England (NHS E) and delivered by the Central and North West London NHS Foundation trust (CNWL) School immunisations team. The team visits all schools (state and independent) to vaccinate children from reception through to year 7. CNWL are due to visit RBKC schools in mid-November and WCC schools in early December 2020. We have not been notified of any schools refusing to participate to date.
- Children receive the flu vaccine via a painless nasal spray, fluenz. This contains porcine, a very refined derivative of pork gelatine, to enable vaccine stability. This presents a barrier to some Muslim, vegetarian and other families participating in the flu programme. Children with some high risk health conditions are offered the injected vaccine at the GP practice.
- All other population focused NHS Flu vaccines are offered at the registered GP practice or pharmacy. Employer occupational health schemes are responsible for providing flu vaccinations to health and social care workers, although front line workers involved in the face to face care of vulnerable clients can also claim a vaccine at GP or pharmacy by producing an ID badge.
- CCGs have plans in place to achieve the 75% uptake target and performance is being monitored against planned trajectories. West London CCG flu plan is outlined in appendix 1. CCGs across North West London have worked with practices to seek assurance around effective Infection Prevention and Control processes, appropriate supplies, use of PPE and adherence to social distancing guidelines in line with national recommendations for healthcare settings.
- Central and West London CCGs are exploring the feasibility and appetite for the provision of flu clinics in additional alternative community locations.

3.3 Vulnerable population groups

- Flu vaccine uptake in care home residents and staff is monitored by the CCGs and Local Authority via a Care Home tracker. Pharmacies are now licensed to provide vaccinations in care homes to both staff and residents. Local Authority Adult social care staff engage with care homes via the regular monitoring systems in place for COVID-19 support.
- Central London Community Health Care (CLCH) deliver flu vaccinations to housebound residents via the District Nursing teams who are able to administer to clients additional to their usual caseloads.
- Central London CCG, working with LA and other partners, have established targeted interventions for homeless populations including pharmacy in-reach into the Mental Health Accommodation pathway, with over 100 individuals identified and dates set for flu sessions in November. In-reach to other hostel accommodation is continuing with flu vaccinations and clinical work is shared amongst specialist primary care and the homeless health team. A 'Health Event' on 20th October at London Scottish House offered a range of health services to rough sleepers and homeless people.

Over 60 people attended and the onsite mobile flu vaccination clinic achieved a vaccination rate of over 50% of attendees. West London CCG have been working closely with Central London and plan to roll out a similar programme in their area.

3.4 Health and social care workers

- In line with previous years, NWL CCGs have offered all staff a flu vaccine via the offer of electronic Boots vouchers. Particular attention was paid to promote the offer to patient facing staff. CCGs work with practices and the GP federation to actively monitor the uptake and recording of healthcare staff flu vaccinations and are strongly encouraging practices to ensure that all staff are vaccinated. This is recorded on the GP clinical system. Practices have the ability to alert commissioners to any concerns which may impact on service delivery through an online situation report.
- WCC and RBKC launched their staff flu vaccine offer of electronic Boots vouchers on September 24th. This offer is for all staff but particular attention was paid to promote to front line workers including adult social care and children's services. Occupational Health are monitoring uptake rates. Due to high demand, further face to face flu clinics for staff took place on November 3rd 2020 in Kensington Town Hall and Westminster City Hall. These were heavily promoted to front line staff. The flu vaccine continues to be promoted to staff via internal communications channels and team meetings, particularly to front line adult social care staff, and uptake is being monitored via internal monitoring mechanisms. Communications have gone out to commissioned domiciliary care staff and vaccination uptake is being monitored via a tracker. Adult social care staff and commissioned services are also encouraged to promote the flu vaccine to their vulnerable clients in the community.

3.5 Maximising uptake of the flu vaccine

- Local Authority Public Health comms and NWL CCG comms promote the flu vaccine both internally and externally via council and CCG channels, social media, partnership bulletins throughout the flu season and according to the flu comms plan.
- Public Health and CCG Community Engagement are working with BAME networks, community champions and community engagement leads to ensure that the flu vaccine is promoted effectively to all communities and that there is an opportunity for communities to raise questions and have them answered. NWL CCG has worked closely with Local Authority comms to ensure that communications and engagement plans, as well as messaging are consistent. North Kensington Recovery team have developed promotional materials that are specific to the Grenfell -impacted cohort. Throughout the season comms, community engagement and other activities will flex according to the patterns of uptake and capacity observed.
- A range of data sources, including a locally developed dashboard, are being used to actively monitor the uptake of flu vaccinations, quickly identify gaps and implement corrective actions to ensure that vaccinations stay on trajectory to ensure maximal uptake.

- The potential risk that an increase in COVID cases could cause has been taken into account and PCNs have been reviewing and refreshing Business Continuity plans with particular consideration of flu delivery.
- Central and West London CCGs are jointly working on an approach to reach a wider cohort of patients especially from within the BAME community. Local advocacy and patient representative groups are engaged to ensure that approach adopted fully reflects the needs of the populations. Initial plans to run flu sessions in community settings, including faith settings, have slowed due to vaccine stock levels running low across the system and the potential impact of lockdown restrictions.

3.6 Progress to date

- Delivery of vaccinations started in September in most GP practices and pharmacies. Early indications are that uptake is exceeding that of previous years at a similar time point in most cohorts. The position in the under 65s 'at risk' group is less favourable with performance below expectations and a high refusal rate. Call and recall systems are in place with individual follow ups being undertaken and personal conversations to discuss concerns.
- Demand at pharmacies has been high and many have now closed appointments online.
- There have been concerns that GP practices and pharmacies have been running low on vaccine stock. GPs are now able to order more stock from the nationally held supplies although there may be a time lag in receiving these deliveries. Stock delivery is always staggered throughout the vaccination period and many GP practices and pharmacies will be receiving scheduled deliveries in the coming weeks.
- Some GP practices are also reporting high rates of refusals - fear of COVID infection in primary care settings and online rumours about covert COVID vaccination programmes are being cited as reasons. National and local comms are looking to counteract online rumours and assuage fears and CL and WL CCG partners are exploring vaccine delivery in alternative settings.
- The national NHS Flu programme originally intended to extend the free vaccine offer to the following cohorts in November:
 - All adults aged between 50 and 64yrs
 - Injected vaccine for children who have not received the nasal spray due to the porcine element

The extension is dependent upon the availability of sufficient vaccine stock and a decision will be made by NHS England.

At the time of writing NHS England have indicated that an injected alternative to the nasal spray will be available to 2/3 year olds at the GP practice but that the promotion of this extension must be dependent upon stock availability.

- All partners will be monitoring the impact of the latest government COVID-19 restrictions that take into effect on November 5th on the flu vaccine programme and adapting the delivery of the programme accordingly.

4. Options / Considerations

4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:

- Note the local plans in place to deliver the National NHS Flu vaccination plan.
- Reflect on local approaches to ensure equitable uptake of flu vaccine and consider further mechanisms by which barriers could be addressed.
- Consider and agree to review the 2020-21 local delivery of the NHS Flu vaccination programme in April / May 2021 when the vaccination programme is completed and a published uptake date is available.

5. Legal Implications

None relevant

6. Financial Implications

None relevant

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:

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APPENDICES:



WLCCG Flu
Immunisation Program