

DERBYSHIRE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14th March 2016

Report of the Derbyshire Public Health

Social Care Workers Seasonal Flu Programme Evaluation

1. Purpose of the report

The report aims to provide an update, assurance and recommendations to the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee of the social care workers seasonal flu programme for 2015-16.

2. Information and analysis

Background

Seasonal flu vaccination is a statutory requirement for employees identified as at potential risk of seasonal flu, and provides employee health and business continuity benefits as well as protecting vulnerable service users. A cost effectiveness analysis undertaken on behalf of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee concluded that whilst there are limitations in determining precise benefits, increasing flu vaccination uptake was expected to create a return on investment.

In recent years considerable effort has been made to increase uptake amongst health care workers which has resulted in significant increases in uptake. Within Derbyshire County Council eligible employees uptake has been low; between 5-12% over the last 5 years. A scrutiny report in January 2015 recommended that a working group be established with the aim of increasing the uptake in the 2015/16 winter season.

2. Information and analysis

Programme delivery

Between September 2015 to January 2016 flu vaccination was offered to eligible front line employers at 16 Derbyshire County Council clinics and 19 Derbyshire Community Health Services clinics, geographically spread and through a pharmacy voucher scheme. The programme was supported by a flu communications plan which included production of myth busting leaflets and posters and the development of a County wide flu vaccination policy.

Performance

Overall uptake of 22% was achieved, 36% for Children's Services and 19% in Adult Services. Uptakes within some teams reached as high as 100%. Limitations in data collection have impacted on the accuracy of uptake reporting and it is likely actual uptake is higher. The highest uptakes were seen in those teams where vaccination was offered on site including care centres and special schools.

Table 1; Derbyshire uptake by directorate and provider

Directorate	Total % immunised	% of immunised population by provider			
		GP	DCHS clinic	Workplace clinic	Flu vouchers
Adult Care	19%				
Static care staff	79.7%	9%	2%	87%	2%
Field care staff	15%	43%	22%	21%	14%
Children's Services	36%				
Community care staff	21%	8%	0%	7%	85%
Special school staff	41%	8%	0%	91%	<1%

Return on investment

The programme was delivered at a combined cost of £20,142. Occupational health clinics delivered at Derbyshire County Council sites were well accessed by staff, with 78% of children's services staff and 31% of adult care staff immunised, choosing this approach. Derbyshire Community Health Services clinics also provided good coverage amongst adult care community staff, (22% of immunised staff). Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Community Health Services clinics were delivered at a cost of around £10-15 per vaccinated employee. Uptake data from pharmacy flu services relied on employee self-reporting. Available data suggests just 13% of children's services staff and 2% of adult care staff used this approach, despite accounting for 40% of the overall delivery costs.

It is difficult to accurately calculate the positive impact of the increase in uptake, but in the event of high levels of flu this is likely to significantly reduce staff absenteeism and ensure the protection of those vulnerable groups who access our services. A decrease in staff absenteeism was noted in January, in contrast to the rise in influenza like illness seen in the community during January 2016, however it is difficult to accurately draw conclusions. The public health team will continue to monitor staff absenteeism and uptake trends.

2016-17 planning

The Public Health team have begun discussions with providers and directorates to ensure effective planning for 2016. A seasonal flu plan including timelines has also been drafted.

Significant reductions in the cost of the programme could be achieved for 2016-2017 through more effective clinic planning with occupational health providers, greater manager promotion and improved commissioning of the pharmacy vaccination service.

Improvements in data reporting will be essential to monitoring the effectiveness of the programme and performance managing those teams with lower uptake. This will require the support of all senior management teams across the authority. The use of electronic reporting and other mechanisms to improve ease of reporting, as well as the inclusion of flu performance within senior management team meetings are being considered.

3. Recommendations

1. Ensure continued financial support from directorates.
2. Ensure continued leadership and administrative support from directorates to ensure completeness of data collection, and support performance management.
3. Review commissioning options for flu voucher schemes to reduce costs and improve access.
4. Improve planning of clinic locations and timings.

Jane Careless
Senior Public Health Manager (Health Protection)
Health and Communities
Derbyshire County Council