

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – HEALTH**

15 September 2014

Report of the Chair of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Health

Review of Immunisation – Progress report

1. Purpose of the Report

To inform Members of the progress made by the working group of the review of Immunisation.

2. Information

Members will recall that, at the last meeting of the Committee in July, a presentation was made by Rachel Harris (CfPS consultant adviser) and Colin Valler (Sanofi Pasteur MSD) on the Return On Investment (ROI) process and its use for the scrutiny review of immunisation take-up.

The review is specifically targeted at reviewing the take up of the 'Flu vaccine and the HPV vaccine – and assessing how take-up can be improved.

The Improvement and Scrutiny function has been looking to involve members of the Derbyshire Youth Council in a review. Their involvement would enhance their own development as Youth Councillors, offering them an opportunity to influence service delivery. It would equally provide a valuable contribution, especially in review topics which impact on the wellbeing of young people throughout the county.

The scrutiny review of Immunisation, particularly of the HPV vaccine, offered an opportunity for the involvement of the Youth Scrutiny Panel and two Members – Abbie Hall and Izzy McNulty - have joined the review working group.

Since the last Committee meeting, the working group has met with health professionals Dean Wallace (Public Health) and Jane Careless (NHS England Area Team). The working group has also had a workshop session with Rachel Harris to assess the direction of the review in respect of the ROI element.

2.1 Meeting with Health Professionals – 11 August 2014

This meeting of the working group was held to obtain information on how 'Flu and HPV immunisation vaccines were offered/provided to people across

Derbyshire. Dean Wallace and Jane Careless gave an overview of the current systems in place to provide immunisation programmes.

It was noted that NHS England commissioned the provision of the immunisation services and Public Health was responsible for monitoring the programmes' effectiveness.

HPV Vaccines

HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) is a commonly occurring virus that is transmitted through intimate sexual contact. Two strains of the virus HPV 16 & 18 are known to cause 70% of cervical cancer. HPV vaccination provides protection to the individual against HPV strains 16 & 18 and is over 99% effective in preventing cervical cancer associated with these strains. HPV vaccination also provides protection against two other strains of HPV that cause genital warts.

Currently 3 doses are given to girls around the age of 12 – 13 years with the first 2 doses given 1 month apart and the third and final dose given 3 – 5 months later.

It was noted that, from September 2014, the vaccine programme would move from 3 to just 2 doses (1 year apart) per patient.

In Derbyshire, at present, the doses are provided by practice nurses at local GP surgeries although in other areas school nurses carry out the immunisation programmes "in-house" during the school day..

It was considered that there are benefits to a school-based immunisation programme due to the vaccinations being given to a "captive audience" who were already on-site (which prevented the need for girls or their parents/carers having to make appointments with a local nurse or GP) and people would be more likely to take up the vaccine at the same time as a group of peers.

Plans were being made to introduce an Immunisation Team (or Teams) to carry out children's immunisation to school age children. The service would include the administration of HPV vaccines but would also take up the provision of 'Flu vaccines to primary school age children which was being introduced nationally from September 2015. (From September 2014 'Flu vaccines were to be introduced for 2 to 4 years olds via their GP practice). The vaccine will be given as a nasal spray rather than an injection for the majority of children.

Arrangements would need to be in place to ensure that children not in regular school (eg, home-schooled children or those from Traveller families) were not excluded from the opportunity to receive the vaccines.

It was noted that the working group would seek evidence of measures being in place to include children who were not in the school system.

Discussion of the HPV vaccine raised questions about the number of doses that had been completed under the current programme.

It was agreed that the Youth Scrutiny Members would undertake a survey on the take up of the HPV vaccine across secondary schools in Derbyshire, commencing in September when the new school year began to assess (a) numbers of people who had had the full 3 doses and (b) if they hadn't taken the vaccines – or completed the full course - why not?

'Flu vaccines

'Flu vaccines are offered, free of charge, on an annual basis (usually in October) to those at highest risk in the community. Predominantly available to anyone over the age of 65 years, the vaccines are also available to younger people who have underlying health conditions. Vaccinations should also be made available to those whose profession brings them into contact with vulnerable people (eg care workers, home helps, medical staff) through occupational health services.

The introduction of a childhood 'Flu vaccine programme would bring not only the benefit of preventing the illness for the individual, but would reduce the spread of influenza to the wider community through contact with parents or other family members. Additionally, the provision of annual booster vaccines would create a habitual pattern in patients which should continue into their adult life.

A large group of people who were entitled to free vaccines are those whose work brought them into contact with vulnerable people. Derbyshire County Council employed many people in such roles – care home workers and home helps making up a large proportion of this group. It was noted, however, that take-up amongst the Council's own employees was low, at around just 9% of the number eligible.

There could be a number of reasons for this low take up rate, with people's attitude to vaccinations, myths around side effects, difficulty in accessing vaccination in work time or on work premises and lack of awareness of the importance of being vaccinated all being, potentially, strong reasons.

However, when considering the likelihood of the 'Flu virus being spread amongst staff and the people they come into contact with during their work, the benefits are considerable. Our own employees, and those of similar organisations in the private and voluntary sector, should be actively

encouraged to take up vaccinations – and this should include DCC and its partners improving accessibility to vaccine sessions.

At the close of the meeting, Dean Wallace and Jane Careless undertook to provide statistical information on the cost of people contracting both 'Flu and the HPV strains which could be prevented via immunisation.

2.2 CfPS Workshop on ROI review “direction of travel”.

On August 20 the working group met with Rachel Harris, the CfPS consultant adviser appointed to assist with the review. Ms. Harris ran a workshop style meeting to assist Members and officers consider the “direction of travel” for the review and to begin to consider the Return on Investment (ROI) concept of the review process.

The session confirmed the work already undertaken by the review working group and developed the direction of the review over the coming weeks. The review’s on-going work programme will include;

- Concentrating on improving take-up by the Authority’s own eligible staff and those in similar settings in the private and voluntary sectors.
- Considering the attitudes of young people to the HPV vaccine and the impact this may have on take-up
- Analysing data from GP surgeries to ascertain any geographical variations.
- Consult with stakeholders to determine their views and experiences of delivering/receiving immunisation.

3. Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, human relations, legal and human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

4. Officer’s Recommendations

The Committee is requested to note the progress made in the review of Immunisation and the continued programme of investigation.

Councillor Sean Bambrick
Chair of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - Health