

# **DERBYSHIRE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**6th March 2017**

## **Report of the Derbyshire County Council**

### **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 2016-17.

#### **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 through reduced sickness absence.

Within Derbyshire County Council eligible employee's 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.

##### **Programme delivery**

Between September 2016 and January 2017 flu vaccination was offered to eligible front line employers at 20 Derbyshire County Council clinics (10 adult care settings and 10 special schools). In 2016/17 vaccination was also offered for the first time via a direct access pharmacy vaccination scheme. This offered direct access to vaccination at around 120 pharmacy's across the County. The programme was further supported by a flu communications plan which included production of myth busting leaflets and posters, certificates and web resources. Wider engagement across directorate SMT's was achieved during 2016/17, with regular reports on uptake presented to SMT meetings, communications supported and reinforced by Directorate leads, and Director acknowledgement for those teams achieving above 50% uptake.

## Performance

Overall uptake of 31% has been achieved for 2016/17, 38% for Children's Services and 29% in Adult Services. This equates to an 9% increase from 2015/16.

**Table 1; Derbyshire uptake by directorate and provider**

	Total number of eligible employees	Total number vaccinated	% uptake (2015/16 uptake)	Percentage of staff vaccinated by location		
				Occupational health clinics	Pharmacy	GP
<b>Total DCC</b>	<b>4107</b>	<b>1290</b>	<b>31.4%</b>			
<b>Adult Care</b>	<b>3098</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>29%</b> (19%)	19%	40%	41%
Residential and Day services	1648	389	24%	25%	35%	40%
Home Care	960	308	32%	13%	39%	48%
Prevention and Personalisation	490	198	40%	16%	54%	30%
<b>Childrens Services</b>	<b>1009</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>38%</b> (36%)	86%	6%	8%
Children's homes	282	17	6%	12%	18%	70%
Special Schools	727	363	50%	89%	5%	6%
<b>Foster Carers</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4%</b>	0%	100%	Unknown

The highest uptakes as in 2015/16 were seen within Children's Services Directorate, specifically within Special Schools, where uptakes reached above 60% in some schools. This represented a 9% uptake amongst special school employees. Within Children's homes employees' uptake was particularly low however at just 6%, this creates potential risk in terms of business continuity and outbreak risk.

Foster Carers were included for the first time in 2016/17 and communications to this group included a written letter and information in newsletters. Uptake via the pharmacy service was low at just 4% however it is likely a number of individuals may have accessed vaccination via their own GP practice.

The pharmacy commissioned flu service has provided a cost effective mechanism for offering flu vaccination across a wide geography. This has resulted in significant delivery cost savings and also increased uptake, particularly within the Adult Care directorate. Whilst there has been a slight reduction in the number of Adult Care employees accessing vaccination through workplace clinics (reduction of 60 individuals), there have been significant increases in Adult Care employees accessing vaccination through the Pharmacy route (270 individuals), specifically for those employees working within home care and prevention and personalisation. The Pharmacy service has also enabled the collection of

real time data through the Pharmoutcomes system and reduced the level of administrative support required.

### **Return on investment**

The programme was delivered at a combined cost of £11,832 (£4,644 Children's Services and £7,188 Adult Care). This was a saving of 41%, a reduction of £8,310 when compared with 2015/16. Commissioning of a local direct access pharmacy service, which pays per dose administered rather than the previous advanced payment voucher system, accounted for the majority of the savings. Effective planning of work place clinics to reduce mileage also enabled an increase number of clinic sites to be delivered at the same cost as that in 2015/16.

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. The public health team are currently working with adult care to support reductions in staff.

### **2017-18 planning**

The Public Health team are meeting with Adult Care and Children's Services SMT to commence planning for 2017/18. A seasonal flu plan including timelines is also being drafted and a review of the communication plan undertaken. Planning will utilise available evidence<sup>i</sup> including ensuring campaigns are;

- **Easy;** ensure messages are simple and vaccination accessible
- **Attractive;** create demand, ensure campaigns are personalised and attractive, consider rewards
- **Social;** promote social norms, use social networks and consider pledges
- **Timely;** promote the benefits, prompt people at receptive times ie Christmas, make it easy for people to plan vaccination around their work.

Whilst improvements in data collection have been made, further improvements are required in order to enable timely monitoring of performance at team level, throughout the flu season. This will require the support of managers at both senior and middle manager level. Flu vaccination can play an important cost effective mechanism to support reductions in staff absenteeism, consideration should be made to the inclusion of vaccination status as part of return to work interviews and in performance managing team sickness levels.

The following recommendations have been made to Senior Management teams;

- Support additional investment to facilitate improvements in uptake
- Include consideration of flu vaccination within return to work interviews for front line employees where appropriate.
- Support the development of incentive or reward schemes as part of the communications plan.
- Ensure all middle managers are briefed regarding the importance of flu vaccination and consequences of influenza.

### **3. Recommendations**

That the Committee note the report, and provide strategic support for the continued promotion of flu vaccination.

**Jane Careless**  
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**Derbyshire County Council**

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<sup>i</sup> Planning your Flu Campaign; NHS Employers.

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Publications/Flu%20Fighter/Planning%20your%20campaign%20a%20flu%20fighter%20guide.pdf>