

HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 MAY 2015
FLU IMMUNISATION
REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information on commissioning arrangements for flu immunisation, the progress of the children's flu immunisation programme, targeting of flu immunisations to children and adults and the relationship between flu in adults and flu in children.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to use the information provided to inform scrutiny of flu immunisation in Nottingham.

3. Background information

- 3.1 NHS England and Public Health England (PHE) have specific roles in the commissioning and system leadership of the national flu immunisation programme. NHS England has responsibility for commissioning the programme and GPs, midwives, other healthcare professionals and immunisation system leaders, managers and co-ordinators all play a role in delivery. NHS England has to ensure that robust plans are in place locally to identify all eligible patients, that sufficient vaccine has been ordered by practices to meet their needs, and that high vaccination uptake levels are reached in all the eligible groups. Local authorities, through the Director of Public Health (DPH), provide scrutiny and challenge of the arrangements of NHS England, PHE and providers.¹ More detail on the responsibilities of each of the partner can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 An annual Flu Plan sets out a co-ordinated and evidence-based approach to planning for and responding to the demands of flu across England, taking account of lessons learnt during previous flu seasons.
- 3.3 Flu is a key factor in NHS winter pressures. It impacts on both those who fall ill and the NHS services that provide direct care, and on the wider health and social care system that supports people in at-risk groups. The annual immunisation programme is a critical element of the system-wide approach for delivering robust and resilient health and care services throughout the year, helping to reduce unplanned hospital admissions and pressure on A&E.
- 3.4 The plan promotes increased uptake of vaccination, especially among those in clinical risk groups and health and social care workers with direct patient contact, to improve the prevention and management of flu. Clinical risk groups include older people, pregnant women and those with underlying disease, particularly chronic respiratory or cardiac disease, children with severe neurological disease or learning disability, and those who are immunosuppressed.

¹ Flu Plan Winter 2014/15, Department of Health, NHS England, Public Health England

- 3.5 In 2014/15 the following people were identified as eligible for flu vaccination:
- those aged 65 years and over;
 - those aged six months to under 65 in clinical risk groups;
 - pregnant women;
 - all two, three and four year olds;
 - school-aged children in pilot areas;
 - those in long-stay residential care homes;
 - carers;
 - health and social care workers who are in direct contact with patients or service users.
- 3.6 Flu vaccination to children has been extended in 2014/15 to reduce the impact of flu by directly averting cases in children. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) concluded that, by reducing flu transmission in the community, it will avert many cases of severe flu and flu-related deaths in older adults and people with clinical risk factors.²
- 3.7 The programme for children in 2013/14 covered the following:
- a routine offer of vaccination to all those aged two and three year old (but not four years or older) on 1 September 2013;
 - all primary school aged children in seven geographical pilot areas.
- 3.8 The programme for 2014/15 expanded 2013/14 delivery as follows:
- a routine offer of vaccination to all those aged two, three and four years old (but not five years or older) on 1 September 2014 (ie date of birth on or after 2 September 2009 and on or before 1 September 2012);
 - seven geographical pilots of primary school aged children started in 2013/14 continued;
 - a minimum of 12 geographical pilots in secondary school aged children in Years 7 and 8 in 2014/15 .

Children in clinical risk groups who are not in locations covered by pilot areas continue to be vaccinated in general practice.

- 3.9 Representatives of NHS England, Public Health England and Nottingham City Council's Public Health team will attend today's meeting to provide information and answer councillors' questions in relation to the vaccination programme in Nottingham.

4. List of attached information

- 4.1 Appendix 1 - Flu Immunisation - Partner Responsibilities

Appendix 2 – North Midlands (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire) Screening and Immunisation Team , NHS England - Seasonal Influenza (Flu) Programme 2015/16 Report

² JCVI statement on the annual influenza vaccination programme – extension of the programme to children, 25 July 2012

5. **Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information**

None

6. **Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

Flu Plan Winter 2014/15, Department of Health, NHS England, Public Health England

JCVI statement on the annual influenza vaccination programme – extension of the programme to children, 25 July 2012

7. **Wards affected**

All

8. **Contact information**

Clare Routledge, Senior Governance Officer (Health Scrutiny)

Tel: 0115 873514

Email: clare.routledge@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Flu Immunisation - Partner Responsibilities

The **Department of Health** (DH) is responsible for:

- policy decisions on the response to the flu season
- holding NHS England and PHE to account
- oversight of the supply of antiviral medicines

NHS England is responsible for:

- commissioning the flu vaccination programme
- assuring that the NHS is prepared for the forthcoming flu season
- building close working relationships with Directors of Public Health to ensure that local population needs are understood and addressed by providers of flu vaccination services.

Public Health England is responsible for:

- planning and implementation of the national approach
- monitoring and reporting of key indicators related to flu, including flu activity and vaccine uptake
- procurement and distribution of flu vaccine for children
- oversight of vaccine supply and the strategic reserve
- advising NHS England on the commissioning of the flu vaccination programme
- supporting Directors of Public Health in local authorities in their role as local leaders of health and ensuring that they have all relevant expert input, surveillance and population data needed to carry out this role effectively

Local authorities, through their Director of Public Health, have responsibility for:

- providing appropriate challenge to local arrangements and advocacy with key stakeholders to ensure access to flu vaccination and to improve its uptake by eligible populations
- providing independent scrutiny and challenge to the arrangements of NHS England, PHE and local authority employers of frontline social care staff and other providers of health and social care
- providing leadership, together with local resilience partners to respond appropriately to local incidents and outbreaks of flu infection

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for:

- a duty of quality assurance and improvement which extends to primary medical care services delivered by GP practices including flu vaccination and antiviral medicines

GP practices and other providers are responsible for:

- ordering the correct amount and type of vaccine for their eligible patients, taking into account new groups identified for vaccination and the ambition for uptake
- ordering vaccine for children from PHE
- ensuring that all those eligible for the flu vaccine are invited personally to receive their vaccine
- encouraging and facilitating flu vaccination of their own staff
- ensuring that antiviral medicines are prescribed for appropriate patients

All employers of individuals working as providers of NHS services are responsible for:

- management and oversight of the flu vaccination campaign for their frontline staff
- support to providers to ensure access to flu vaccination and to maximise uptake amongst those eligible to receive it