

Staff Seasonal Flu Vaccination Programme 2018/19

Seasonal flu vaccination of front line health and social care workers is an important Public Health action to protect vulnerable groups in our local population.

It is proposed that the Barnsley Council 2018/19 seasonal flu staff vaccination programme is offered to all Council employees who are not eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination.

It is suggested that the offer will be to provide a combination of opportunities to access flu vaccination – via the Council's current Occupational Health provider, and staff reimbursement following vaccination at a community pharmacy of their choice. Appendix A provides further detail on the combined approach. Data will be collected from both schemes to monitor the uptake.

It is estimated that this combined approach could increase uptake from 6% in 2017/18 to around 12%, based on vaccinating 250 employees via Occupational Health and 100 employees by community pharmacies. Whilst this may be considered low / unambitious, our aim should be to build upon the baseline and increase uptake amongst our staff year by year. Nationally there is no target expected of Local Authorities and other Councils have informally reported similarly low uptake.

For future programmes Public Health is keen to explore the possibility of seasonal flu vaccination programmes being delivered by Council employed clinically qualified staff. This approach would need to take into consideration a number of issues such as the purchase and storage of vaccines, training and prescribing.

The wider seasonal flu vaccination programme is not considered within this paper. For information:

- NHS England commissions the flu vaccination programme from GP practices, for their registered eligible patients; aged 65 and over, aged 65 'at risk', pregnant women and for 2017/18 care and nursing home workers.
- Community pharmacies are also commissioned to provide the vaccine to those eligible who are aged 18 years and over, primarily to increase uptake in those aged under 65 and in at-risk groups.
- Children aged 2 to school year 5 are also eligible either via their GP or the schools vaccination team.

Evidence

Evidence¹ suggests increasing the convenience of vaccination for staff, while also addressing beliefs that the vaccine will make recipients unwell may increase uptake. Alongside this, improving flu vaccination programmes can reduce staff sickness. It is reported that a 10% increase in flu vaccination rate would be associated with a 10% fall in staff sickness absence rate.

Resource implications (financial / HR)

For the in-house flu vaccination by Occupational Health, Business Units will be recharged £10.00 per employee. Public Health would then fund the additional cost of £4.67 per vaccination to support trialling this evidence based approach to increase uptake.

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http://bmjopenrespres.bmj.com/content/2/1/e000079?cpetoc=&utm_source=TrendMD&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=BMJ_Open_Res_TrendMD-0 <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2018/02/flu-vaccination-nhs-staff>

¹ <http://www.clinmed.rcpjournals.org/content/17/6/484.full>

For Council employees wishing to attend a community pharmacy for their vaccination a receipt for reimbursement of the cost of flu vaccination up to £10.00 can be claimed. This would be funded by their Business Unit. To improve the claiming process Payroll will develop an employee claim form that will then be submitted along with a scanned receipt.

Public Health will work with the Directorates, identifying opportunities to attend staff meetings to explain the benefits and dispel any myths that may have developed about the vaccine.

The Communications team will support an in-house campaign to encourage staff to be vaccinated, particularly those who work with vulnerable groups. Communications messages will also remind staff who are in an at risk group that they are eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination from their GP or community pharmacy.

Appendix A

In-house - Collingwood Occupational Health Barnsley Council		
Advantages	Considerations	Programme Outline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immunisation provided at the workplace. Trained and experienced immunisers. Experience of vaccine ordering and cold chain maintenance. Employers do not have to obtain and store vaccine. Prescribing issues responsibility of occupational health services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost. Capacity. Availability of vaccine. Logistics of suitable venues to make access fair and equitable. Staff engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold five half day clinics – three based at Westgate and two at Smithies which could potentially vaccinate 250 employees in total. Target employees those whose job role requires them to have contact with vulnerable groups via communication messages. Employees would be required to book an appointment via POD or co-ordinated by management & team meetings. Cost per vaccination £14.67. This will be funded by the Business Unit (£10) and Public Health (£4.67)
Community Pharmacy - staff reimbursement		
Advantages	Considerations	Programme Outline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible. Staff can get vaccine from any pharmacy. Employers do not have to obtain and store vaccines. Prescribing issues responsibility of pharmacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff have to be motivated to attend for vaccination outside the workplace. Relies on vaccinator being available at pharmacy when staff member visits. Low uptake in 2017/18 Some barriers identified in accessing pharmacies. Staff may be less likely to attend for vaccination if they have to pay up front and claim money back. Requires improved process and budget for reimbursement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council employees attend a community pharmacy for their vaccination A receipt for reimbursement of the cost of flu vaccination up to £10.00 can be claimed. Payroll will develop an employee claim form that will then be submitted along with a scanned receipt.