

Health and Wellbeing Board

Meeting Date: 4th March 2021

COVID-19 update, and Flu Immunisations update

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1. Summary

1.1 This report provides a COVID-19 update and Flu immunisations update which describes; flu vaccination national targets, the communications campaign to raise awareness of eligibility and increase uptake, flu vaccination uptake data and Local Authority flu vaccination progress. COVID-19 updates include latest data, the local response to rising cases, lateral flow testing and the COVID-19 vaccination.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes the contents of the report.

REPORT

3.0 Flu Vaccinations

3.1 Flu vaccination is one of the most effective interventions we have to reduce pressure on the health and social care system this winter. We are currently seeing the impact of COVID-19 on the NHS and social care, and this coming winter we may be faced with co-circulation of COVID-19 and flu. Whilst the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 infection, it is an effective way to protect those at risk from flu, prevent ill-health and minimise further impact on the NHS and social care. Increasing flu vaccinations uptake is more important than ever this year.

3.2 Table 1 shows vaccination uptake ambitions in 2020/21 for eligible groups. Whilst ambitious, this reflects the need this year to help protect as many qualifying groups as possible. More people are eligible this year including Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List and children in year 7.

Table 1: Vaccine uptake ambitions in 2020 to 2021

Eligible groups	Uptake ambition
Aged 65 years and over	At least 75%
In clinical at risk group	At least 75%
Pregnant women	At least 75%
Children aged 2 and 3 year old	At least 75%
All primary school aged children and school year 7 in secondary school	At least 75%
Frontline health and social care workers	100% offer

3.3 Flu vaccination uptake in Shropshire County

3.3.1 Providers have worked exceptionally hard to deliver the flu programme in challenging times this year, and with high targets. All should be congratulated for their efforts.

3.3.2 The table below shows GP Practice flu immunisation uptake at week 3 in Shropshire. Shropshire CCG has exceeded the 75% target for the 65 year and over group with a rate of 83.5%, and is the regionally highest for pregnant women at 54.3%. There has been an increase across all eligible age groups in 2020, compared to 2019.

Eligible group	Take up 2020 (%)	Take up 2019 (%)	% increase 2020 compared to 2019
65 years and over	83.5%	72.3%	+11.2%
Total Combined - 6 months to under 65 years: At-risk	61.8%	46.9%	+14.9%
All pregnant women	54.3%	48.6%	+5.7%
All age 2	67.8%	49.1%	+18.7%
All age 3	71.6%	49.4%	+22.2%
Age 50-64 years (eligible from December)	39.7%	N/A	N/A

3.4 Communications

3.4.1 A communications campaign to raise awareness of eligibility, and increase uptake of the free flu vaccination has been in place throughout the 'flu season.':

- The System Communications Task and Finish Group continues to meet weekly, with winter wellness and promotion of flu vaccination reporting being a standard agenda item
- Scheduled social media messages promoting the flu vaccine to eligible groups, were issued via the Council and CCG
- Press releases were issued via the STP, which included messages of the importance of the vaccine from GPs, pharmacies and the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Directors of Public Health
- The Shropshire Council website <https://shropshire.gov.uk/stay-safe-and-well-this-winter/advice-to-help-you-stay-well/> contains information and links to the public flu leaflets including different formats and languages, and is updated regularly

4.0 COVID-19 Updates

This section provides a brief update on COVID-19

4.1 During the 7-day period from 12th –18th February 2021 in Shropshire:

- 428 new cases reported
- This was a decrease of 64 (13%) cases compared to the previous week
- The seven-day infection rate for Shropshire was 132.5 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 of the population.
- For the West Midlands it was 160.4 per 100,000
- For England it was 121.3 per 100,000
- 21% cases relate to people under the age of 30
- 13% cases relate to people aged 70+
- During the last week 35% of cases were in the Shrewsbury & Atcham area
- 40% were in north Shropshire
- 25% were in south Shropshire
- Outbreaks still continue within workplaces and care homes, these continue to be managed by the Health Protection Cell

4.2 Ongoing response to COVID:

- The local 'Step-Up Shropshire' campaign has been in force, with social media, press releases and interviews on local radio taking place covering vaccinations, testing, case rates and carers.
- The symptomatic and asymptomatic testing offer has been increased across the County to support rising cases and people who cannot work from home. This will now increase to support local businesses, school and the university.
- The local Health Protection Team with PHE West Midlands is responding to local outbreaks in settings such as schools, care homes and businesses, and provides support and guidance, contact tracing and advice to help prevent further outbreaks
- Regulatory Services continue to support advice, respond to complaints and enforce COVID secure workplaces. Please use the [Covid-19 business feedback form](#) to let us know about the Covid-secure measures in place in local businesses.
- The Community Response Team continues to work with the public and businesses
- The Council website is updated regularly <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/> and includes; information for the public and businesses, resources, and sources of further support and information including mental health and wellbeing
- The COVID-19 helpline and bereavement support line: 0345 678 9028 continue to offer support and advice for Shropshire people

4.3 Testing

- 4.3.1 One in three people who have coronavirus never show any symptoms but that does not mean they are not infectious. Lateral flow (rapid) devices (LFDs) are one of the tools being used to help to detect and fight COVID-19. The tests can rapidly turn around results within an hour without the need for processing the swabs in a lab.
- 4.3.1 Frontline and key workers living Shropshire will be able to take rapid COVID-19 testing, as part of the Council's strategy to identify more positive cases, reduce the spread of infection and protect lives and livelihoods.

- 4.3.2 Although the country is still in lockdown, there will be people who can't work from home. Those individuals, who do not have symptoms, are encouraged to have Lateral Flow Rapid tests up to 2 times per week (or once every 4 days).
- 4.3.3 The test, which has already been rolled out to select groups including university students, social care staff and care home visitors, is for people who do not have symptoms.
- 4.3.4 We have significantly extended our capacity across the County:

Asymptomatic Testing is available at the following sites, and must be [booked in advance](#).

- **Lantern:** Meadow Farm Drive, Harlescott, Shrewsbury, SY1 4NG
Monday - Sunday from 8am - 8pm
- **HALO Craven Arms Community Centre**
Newington Way, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 9PS
Sunday 9.00 – 3.00pm, Monday 11.30 – 7.30pm, Tuesday and Friday 8.00 – 4.00pm
- **Wem Stanier Hall,** Thomas Adams Sixth Form, Noble Street, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5DT
Saturday 9.00 – 3.00pm, Monday 11.30 – 8.00pm, Wednesday and Thursday 8.00–4.00pm

Walk in testing with no prior appointment required is also available at:

- **Bridgnorth Community Centre,** Severn Street, Low Town, Bridgnorth, WV14 6BB
- **Shifnal Cricket Club,** Priorslee Road, Shifnal, TF11 8HD
- **The Victoria Centre,** Victoria Road, Oswestry SY11 2HT
- **Opening hours at the walk-in rapid testing sites are from 8am-5pm daily.**

A number of pharmacies across Shropshire will also provide testing allowing greater access to testing in some of our more rural areas of the county.

Shropshire pharmacies will be coming online from the 22nd February and can be booked online using <https://www.1centralhealth.co.uk/shropshirelft>

Sites are available at Cleobury Mortimer, Craven Arms, Ellesmere, Highley, Pontesbury and Oswestry.

4.4 COVID-19 vaccinations

- 4.4.1 The NHS COVID-19 vaccination process has started, with the first vaccination in the county having taken place on the 8 December 2020 with over 160,000 people now vaccinated across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin between the 8th December 2020 and 24th February 2021.
- 4.4.2 The aim was in Shropshire to have invited for their first vaccination: every care home resident and everyone over 80 by the end of January, everyone over 70, anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable and health and social care workers by mid-February, this was achieved. The rest of the priority groups are now being invited in order of cohorts. Unpaid Carers are being invited to book their appointments alongside over 60s. Those in cohort 6 who are at risk and have underlying health conditions (as defined in table 2 of the green book) are also being invited.
- 4.4.3 The second phase of vaccination programme will focus on the rest of the population, mainly the under-50s, who are much less likely to become seriously ill with COVID-19 by the middle of July.
- 4.4.4 Local Vaccination Centres are now open at Telford International Centre, Shrewsbury Indoor Bowls Club and Ludlow Racecourse, in addition to local GP sites and the Hospital Hubs at the Royal Shrewsbury, Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital and the Princess Royal.

4.4.5 The public are being asked ‘please don’t contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you.’ The priority for vaccination can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: Priority groups for vaccination, recommended by JCVI

Priority group	Risk group
1	Residents in a care home for older adults Staff working in care homes for older adults
2	All those 80 years of age and over Frontline Health and social care workers
3	All those 75 years of age and over
4	All those 70 years of age and over Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (not including pregnant women and those aged under 16 years)
5	All those 65 years of age and over
6	Adults aged 16 to 65 years in an at-risk group (Appendix 4)
7	All those 60 years of age and over
8	All those 55 years of age and over
9	All those 50 years of age and over

5.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

(NB This will include the following: Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community, Environmental consequences and other Consultation)

There are no Human Rights, Environmental Consequences, Community or Equality issues identified with the provision of these updates.

6.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications that need to be considered with this update

7.0 Additional Information

None

8.0 Conclusions

The will between all local providers to work closely together and increase uptake of the flu vaccination for eligible groups this year, is evidenced through the increase in uptake figures, and all involved should be commended for their efforts.

Covid-19 continues to be a changing and challenging situation for everyone, and work will continue in response to this including; the ‘Step up Shropshire’ campaign, testing availability, the response of the Health Protection Team and support for those who need it through the COVID helpline.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Cllr. Dean Carroll Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Climate Change, Health and Housing
Local Member
Appendices None