

09 October 2017

Agenda Item:

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

### **PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE RESIDENTS FROM SEASONAL FLU**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the adoption by the Council of an intent to achieve a 75 per cent uptake of seasonal flu vaccination every year for all frontline care staff who are directly employed by the Council and in staff delivering frontline services on behalf of the Council.
2. To seek approval to take forward a proactive and planned media campaign to promote the 2017 Seasonal Flu Campaign through communication to residents using the national Stay Well this Winter Campaign materials and local good news articles in the local press across the county and radio.

#### **Information and Advice**

3. For older people, pregnant women, and people with long-term medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease or a neurological disease, flu represents a risk of serious complication including pneumonia, exacerbation of pre-existing conditions, possible hospitalisation<sup>1</sup>.
4. Evidence shows that achieving a high level of uptake amongst frontline workers helps to protect vulnerable service users (for example care home and nursing home residents, children who have enduring ill health or a disability, learning disability adults and adults with a long term condition) from avoidable ill-health and mortality<sup>2</sup>. It may also support business continuity by reducing flu-related illness in staff and the consequential costs of agency cover<sup>3 4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Flu Plan 2017 available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/525967/Annual\\_flu\\_plan\\_2016\\_to\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/525967/Annual_flu_plan_2016_to_2017.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Carman WF, Elder AG, Wallace LA, McAulay K, Walker A, Murray GD, et al. (2000) Effects of influenza vaccination of health-care workers on mortality of elderly people in long-term care: a randomised controlled trial. *Lancet* 2000;355:93–7.

<sup>3</sup> Burls A (2009) Jordan R, Barton P, Olowokure B, Wake B, Albon E, Hawker J. Vaccinating healthcare workers against influenza to protect the vulnerable—Is it a good use of healthcare resources? A systematic review of the evidence and an economic evaluation. *Vaccine*, Vol 24, issue 19, 8th May 2006, p. 4212–4221

<sup>4</sup> Saxen H, Virtanen M. (1999) Randomized, placebo-controlled double blind study on the efficacy of influenza immunization on absenteeism of health care workers. *Pediatr Infect Dis J* 1999;18:779–83.

5. The timing, extent and severity of the influenza season is unpredictable and intermittent epidemics can cause significant illness and mortality. In the community in the UK in 2016 to 2017, the dominant circulating virus was influenza type A(H3N2), with the impact predominantly seen in older adults, with a consistent pattern of outbreaks in care homes. NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens has noted that there has been a heavy flu season in Australia and New Zealand (which is an indicator of the possible trend for the UK this winter) and that fighting flu is a top priority for every leader in the NHS<sup>5</sup>.
6. Accordingly, NHS providers have a target of achieving 75 per cent uptake of seasonal flu vaccination amongst frontline staff<sup>6</sup>. Whilst there is no national target for social care, working towards the NHS target is a prudent aspiration as this would ensure that vulnerable people in Nottinghamshire receive the same level of protection from flu in social care settings as is provided by the NHS.
7. Currently, NCC achieves 16.8 per cent uptake. The uptake rate amongst frontline workers in our commissioned services is unknown.
8. This paper proposes that, incrementally over a three year period, the Council should make plans to achieve the target of 75 per cent uptake, to which our NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partners are working, and to secure the same commitment across our own commissioned services.
9. Working to achieve the ambition of a 75 per cent uptake will build on the work achieved to date, in which the Council has already committed to offer all frontline care staff directly employed by the Council an annual seasonal flu vaccination. It has already been recognised that the low uptake of 16.8 per cent in previous years (2015/16 and 2016/17) required improvement with an ambition to increase the uptake of the offer to 40 per cent in the current 2017/18 season, which runs from September 2017 to the end January 2018.
10. Funding of the current offer is met by individual Departments - Adult Social Care and Public Health and Children's Families and Cultural Services. (It is recognised that some employees will be eligible for and may receive the vaccine free from their GP if they have an underlying health condition). The offer of the vaccine reflects guidance set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008, the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2002).
11. There are approximately 2,150 directly employed eligible frontline staff. At a cost of £7 per vaccine (using the existing voucher scheme), with an uptake of 75 per cent this would cost £11,291.
12. Currently we do not know the exact number of eligible staff in services externally commissioned. A planning assumption is that this may be in the region of 7,000 staff. To reimburse the providers would require eligible staff to go to a local Community Pharmacy. The cost of the vaccine from local Community Pharmacies varies and is in the range of £5 (Asda

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<sup>5</sup> Flu Fighter. Getting the flu jab is the best way to protect everyone. Available at: <http://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2017/09/getting-flu-jab-is-best-way-to-protect-everyone>

<sup>6</sup> Flu Fighter. 2017/19 CQUIN Guidance. Available at: <http://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2017/07/flu-fighter-cquin-information>

Pharmacies) to £12.99 (Boots Pharmacies). Taking a midpoint cost of £9 per vaccine achieving an uptake of 75 per cent this would cost £47,250.

Table 1 shows the approximate costs

<b>Costs of seasonal flu vaccination uptake by different staff groups dependant on % uptake</b>				
At a cost of £7 per Seasonal Flu Voucher				
<b>% uptake</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Directly employed eligible frontline staff	£3,010	£6,020	£9,030	£11,288
At a mid point cost from Community Pharmacy of £9				
<b>% uptake</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Eligible staff who deliver services on behalf of the Council circa 7,000	£12,600	£25,200	£37,800	£47,250
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>75%</b>
	<b>£15,610</b>	<b>£31,220</b>	<b>£46,830</b>	<b>£58,538</b>

## Media coverage to support 2017/18 Seasonal Flu Campaign period

13. Nottinghamshire STP partners actively contribute to the Seasonal Flu Campaign through the use of media campaigns across the county. Last year the Council made a proactive contribution through an active media campaign in 2016/17 using the Stay Well This Winter Campaign and PHE material in 2016 (refer to Appendix 1 - summary of media campaign from the Council in 2016/17).
14. This paper proposes that the Council continues to actively contribute to this using any of our own relevant good news stories, the national Stay Well this Winter Campaign<sup>7</sup>, the Flu Fighter Communications Tool Kit<sup>8</sup> and PHE Seasonal Flu promotional materials<sup>9</sup>.

## Other Options Considered

15. Offering the seasonal flu vaccination only to directly employed permanent and temporary staff was considered. This option would not target the offer to all frontline staff (both directly employed and staff delivering services on behalf of the Council) who are in regular contact with vulnerable service users. There would need to be careful monitoring of uptake by frontline staff as it is essential that the Council policy protects vulnerable service users, reflects and supports our partner ambition and the NHS Flu Fighters Campaign.

<sup>7</sup> Stay Well this Winter Campaign available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/staywell/#3ggcdcGuDUEBPORd.97>

<sup>8</sup> Flu Fighter Communications Tool Kit available at: <http://www.nhsemployers.org/case-studies-and-resources/2017/08/flu-fighter-communications-guide>

<sup>9</sup> PHE Annual Flu Programme available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-flu-programme>

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

16. To ensure that the residents of Nottinghamshire receiving services and care from Council funded services are protected against influenza to the same extent in the same way as patients treated in the NHS. This would mean that the Council's seasonal flu vaccination offer reflects the NHS Flu Fighters Campaign and the offer of our partners within the STP.
17. Contributing to a proactive and planned media campaign to support the uptake of seasonal flu will provide protection to the most vulnerable residents within the county and support the uptake of the seasonal flu vaccination by vulnerable groups. Utilising the Stay Well this Winter campaign materials also supports vulnerable residents who are susceptible to the impact of cold weather by promoting winter warmth and wellness over the winter months.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Committee approve the policy to make arrangements to secure 75 per cent uptake (over the next three years) of seasonal flu vaccination for all frontline care staff who are directly employed by the Council or are working in services commissioned by the Council.
2. That the Committee approve the routine annual development of plans for proactive and planned media work to promote the Seasonal Flu Campaign internally and externally through public facing communication and media campaigns in the local press across the county and radio.

**Barbara Brady**  
**Interim Director of Public Health**

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### **Constitutional Comments (EP 28.09.2017)**

19. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (DG 28.09.2017)**

20. The financial implications are contained within paragraphs 11 and 12 of this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 'None' or start list here

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- 'All' or start list here