

Internal Flu Vaccination campaign. End of year report (2020/2021)

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INDEX

Contents	Page
Background	3
Key Achievements	4
Introduction	5
Internal flu campaign	6
Aims and Objectives	7
Communication and engagement	8
Model for delivery	10
Performance 2020-21	12
Conclusions	13
Recommendations	14

Introduction

- ❖ The influenza vaccine is the most effective intervention to reduce pressures on the health and care system.
- ❖ During 2020, the Welsh Government set a target of 75% for all health and social care workers, who were in direct contact with patients, clients, or service users to receive annual influenza vaccination. This was a considerable increase from 2019/20 target of 60%, also in light of the ongoing global pandemic, administering the flu vaccine was challenging.
- ❖ Within Public Health Wales, the Chief Executive Officer set an universal target of 75% for all staff.

❖ The scheme of delegation for the Internal flu campaign is demonstrated in the diagram below:



Key achievements:

- ❖ Despite the operational challenges of Covid 19, uptake for the flu vaccine within Public Health Wales was 60.1% of all staff, 62.7% for frontline staff which was positive considering our staff were working remotely.
- ❖ The screening division had the best uptake since the introduction of the flu vaccine at 65%, which is an increase of 7% compared to 2019/2020.
- ❖ Good engagement and representation of all divisional and teams within the weekly Flu delivery group meeting which meant key decisions were discussed and acted upon in a timely manner. This group offered a key function to ensure we took a wider systems approach to ensuring safe and effective delivery of vaccination clinics.
- ❖ Development of an on line appointment system ensured staff could access the sessions easily and safely.

The Internal flu campaign

Responding to challenges of Covid-19

- ❖ During the winter of 2020-21 we were faced with the challenges of meeting a Welsh Government ambition of 75% uptake alongside an emerging global public health pandemic that challenged our operational ability to safely model and deliver an influenza vaccination programme to our staff.
- ❖ With the majority of Public Health Wales staff working from home and social distancing precautions in place, the scope for opportunistic vaccinations were lost.
- ❖ In developing novel approaches and responding to the challenges of Covid -19 we developed an electronic booking system for staff to access vaccinations at three main sites within the principality (CQ2,Matrix and Preswylfa).
- ❖ Planning and actual delivery of the 2020/21 internal flu campaign was, for the first time a nurse led affair (with Consultant in Communicable Disease Supporting the organisational and partnership response to Covid-19)

Objectives of the 2020/21 campaign:

- ❖ Develop and deliver an internal flu vaccination campaign
- ❖ Steering group established (chaired by the Executive Director of Nursing for Quality, Nursing and Allied Health professionals) with membership from Screening services, microbiology, VPDP, POD, Health and wellbeing, communications team
- ❖ Identify safe approach to delivering internal flu vaccination campaign
- ❖ Identify staff front line staff eligible for receipt of the vaccine
- ❖ Consider how development for a COVID-19 vaccine will be managed

Engaging with our staff to understand and respond to concerns regarding safety of flu vaccination during a global pandemic

- ❖ Questionnaire developed and published on the Public Health Wales's intranet page. The aim was to obtain staff's view regarding the flu vaccine uptake intentions and their preferences of settings to receive the administered vaccine.
- ❖ 638 (35%) staff responded.
- ❖ 74.1% of respondents were interested in accessing the flu vaccination in a Public Health Wales building close to where they lived. This indicated sessions needed to be run within Public Health Wales locations and within COVID 19 restrictions.
- ❖ In planning for the 2020/21 campaign , we generalised the findings of the questionnaire against all employees within PHW

Numbers/ Percentage	Findings of the Staff Questionnaire
96%	Staff wishing to have the vaccine.
74.4%	Staff would like vaccine at a Public Health location (this figure also includes delivery via Occupational Health).
14%	Laboratory staff could access the Health Board Occupational Health Services (with exception of 178 in Cardiff and Vale)
9%	Local Public Health Teams would access their Health Boards Occupational Health Services, where this was not possible staff would access the flu vaccination sessions run by Public Health Wales.
48%	48% of staff indicated that they may be interested in obtaining a voucher to receive vaccine at a local Pharmacy (20 vouchers issued for 2019/20 campaign) Assumed unlikely that this will be preferred choice made by staff, particularly as pharmacies in local communities had a surge in requests as a result of the pandemic response.

Communicating with our staff

- ❖ Staff entering Public Health Wales buildings needed reassurance that steps were taken to ensure the process is safe. A triage system was introduced with a series of questions. This was included in the email staff received from booking their appointment
- ❖ Engage staff, support them to understand the importance of protecting themselves against the flu virus ,motivate them to take action
- ❖ Personal and professional responsibility to protect ourselves and others from contracting flu
- ❖ Annual vaccination is required for best protection

Key and supporting messages

- ❖ Having your flu jab protects you, your family, friends, colleagues and everyone you come into contact with through work
- ❖ The vaccine is safe and effective and must taken annually



Model for Internal Flu Vaccination campaign

Mixed model approach

- ❖ Due to the success of 2019-2020 campaign, we replicate the mixed model approach that was used for that campaign
- ❖ In-house peripatetic, flexible immunisation team consisting of bank nurses and peer vaccinators where available
- ❖ Despite the challenge of nurses being deployed to support the organisational Covid-19 response, we recruited 14 peer vaccinators and three bank immunisers to support the internal flu campaign
- ❖ Vaccines were delivered at three main sites (Preswylfa, Mold, Matrix House Swansea, CQ2 Cardiff.) peer vaccinators held clinics and vaccinated their colleagues within the work place

Good practice:

- ❖ Due to COVID precautions, staff could no longer opportunistically 'pop in' for a flu vaccine
- ❖ A digital system for the scheduling of appointments was introduced in which staff could safely book an appointment for their vaccinations

Model for the Internal Flu Vaccination campaign

Use of existing Service Level Agreement with Occupational Health Departments

Health Board Position

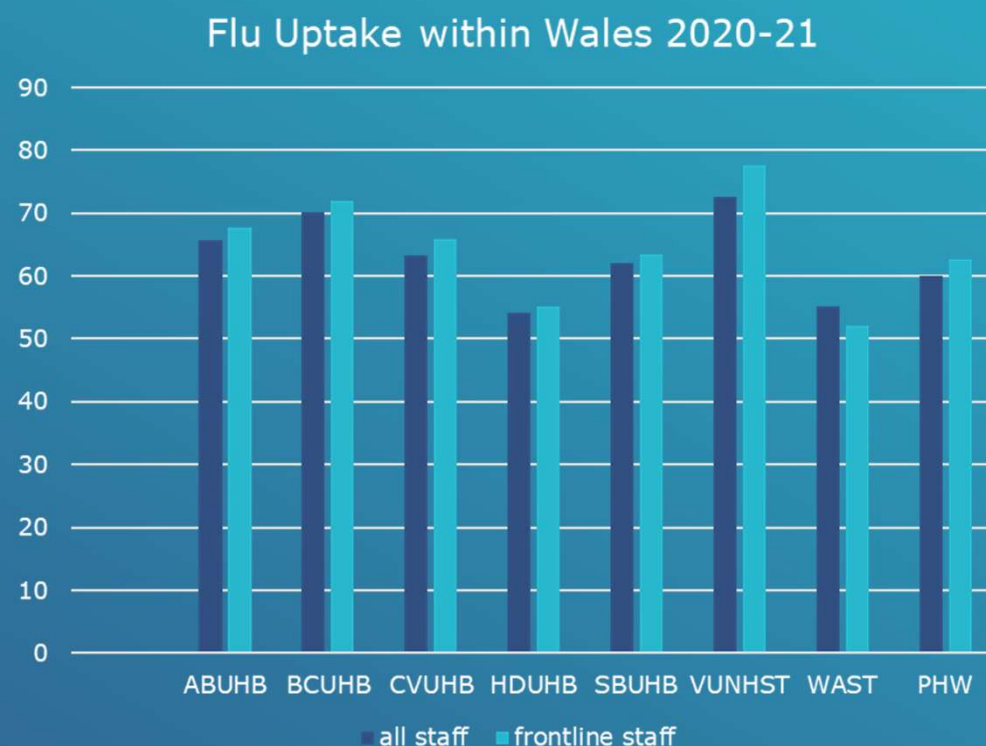
- ❖ Occupational health departments within Health Boards who held service level agreements with Public Health Wales offered vaccination to our staff (predominantly microbiology staff and health protection teams)
- ❖ Cardiff and Vale University Health board was unable to assist with this years flu delivery. A peer vaccinator was located within Microbiology which vaccinated the team located within this health board.

Cardiff and Vale University Health board	Unable to offer flu vaccination to microbiology staff. Peer vaccinator available with the team
Swansea Bay University Health Board	Continued to offer vaccination Public Health Wales staff
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	Continued to offer vaccination Public Health Wales staff
Hywel Dda University Health Board	Continued to offer vaccination Public Health Wales staff

Our Performance.

Measuring success of the 2020/21 internal staff campaign

- ❖ As at the end of March 2021, we had vaccinated 62.7% of our frontline staff with an overall figure of 60.1% for all staff within Public Health Wales (2019/20 compliance was 67.8%)
- ❖ The screening division had the best uptake since the introduction of the flu vaccine at 65%, which is an increase of 7% from 2019/2020
- ❖ The Welsh Government ambition of 75% was met by one Trust within Wales
- ❖ More flu vaccines were given this year within NHS Wales than any other year.



Conclusions

- ❖ The programme was challenging to deliver due to the on-going pandemic and the Covid-19 precautions i.e. working from home, limited amount of staff numbers allowed into buildings.
- ❖ Other Health Boards and Trusts within Wales were in a different position to Public Health Wales where opportunistic vaccination continued due to their clinical environments
- ❖ The programme was well received by staff who have fed back positive experiences in receiving the vaccine including the on line booking system.
- ❖ The COVID-19 Vaccine was introduced in December 2020 (during this this time flu vaccine uptake declined). This was reflected in Health Boards and Trusts across Wales
- ❖ The model of the flu programme was applied to the delivery of the in house COVID 19 vaccination programme which commenced in January 2021, improvements to the booking system have been made along with an improved weekly staff communications on the vaccine programme.

Recommendations

- ❖ In house delivery of the internal flu vaccination campaign continues to be offered to all Public Health Wales staff in line with the Welsh Government ambitions.
- ❖ Early planning and recruitment of vaccinators for the 2021-2022 flu programme will need to commence in June (2021).
- ❖ Anonymous on line staff questionnaire to be issued early June to obtain staff views
- ❖ Continue with on line booking system and train peer vaccinators on the use of on line booking system
- ❖ Use of a dedicated email address for staff to send questions to the vaccination team
- ❖ Engage with staff side representatives to ensure staff concerns regarding safety and equity of access to vaccine are included within future planning of the internal flu campaign
- ❖ To continue efforts to maximise vaccine accessibility for staff, especially those who work from home and are in geographically remote locations
- ❖ Flu delivery group meeting to continue being a key driver to ensure coordinated organisational response