



 <p>GIG CYMRU NHS WALES Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales</p>	<p align="right">Name of Meeting Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee</p> <p align="right">Date of Meeting 16 September 2024</p> <p align="right">Agenda item: 4.3</p>
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Public Health Wales

Winter Planning Update 2024/25

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Approval/Scrutiny route:	HPSS (Health Protection and Screening Services) Executive Director
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<p>Purpose</p> <p>The purpose of this paper is to provide the Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee (QSIC) with a summary briefing relating to Public Health Wales response to planning, preparation and progress of winter preparedness 2024/25.</p>
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The response is provided from across the organisation and wider system leadership perspective and includes assurance on internal business continuity planning.

Recommendation:

APPROVE	CONSIDER	RECOMMEND	ADOPT	ASSURANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The Committee is asked to:

- Take **assurance** from the update on planning, preparation and progress for Public Health Wales for Winter 2024/25
- Take **assurance** from the update on system leadership and business continuity planning Winter 2024/25.



Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	4 - Delivering excellent public health services
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	3 - Promoting healthy behaviours
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.

Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An Equality and Health Impact Assessment is not required
Risk and Assurance	This paper relates to Risk 5 on the Strategic Risk Register
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	This report supports and/or takes into account the Health and Care Standards for NHS Wales Quality Themes Theme 1 - Staying Healthy Theme 2 - Safe Care Theme 7 - Staff and Resources
Financial implications	Addressed within the overall budget allocation and process for the Health Protection and Screening Services Directorate or other relevant Directorates budget allocation and process.
People implications	Addressed within the overall workforce plans for Health Protection and Microbiology including the Health Protection Business Case process or, where relevant within other Directorates workforce plans and Business Case process

1. Purpose / situation

Public Health Wales has actively engaged to provide advice to Welsh Government, NHS Wales and other partners in relation to planning for the winter of 2024/25.

The winter of 2024/25 will again present a number of challenges to Public Health Wales for the ongoing prevention, management and response to infection, communicable disease and environmental hazard response.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee (QSIC) with a summary briefing on the collective endeavour being undertaken across Public Health Wales in response to planning, preparation and progress for winter preparedness 2024/25.

Response is provided from both Health Protection and Screening Services (HPSS) and wider Public Health Wales system leadership perspective and to provide assurance regarding Public Health Wales business continuity planning.

The Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee is asked to:

- Take assurance from the update on planning, preparation and progress for Public Health Wales for Winter 2024/25
- Take assurance from the update on business continuity planning Winter 2024/25.

2. Background

Public Health Wales has a critical system leadership and service delivery role in preparing for winter 2024/25. In readiness for the upcoming winter pressures Health Protection and Screening Services' (HPSS) Health Protection and Infection divisions have continued to provide acute response for the prevention and management of Acute Respiratory Infections and the control of other infectious disease and environmental hazards.

In addition, Public Health Wales has provided a range of support to Welsh Government and operational support partners in developing a planned approach to Winter 2024/25.

2.1. Advice to Welsh Government

- Welsh Government System Resilience Monitoring and Intelligence Group



- Provision of advice to Welsh Government to inform a letter to NHS Wales reinforcing the importance of robust infection, prevention, and control measures.
- Provision of advice to Welsh Government to inform their acute respiratory infections' testing strategy (including COVID) for the winter.
- Provision of Public Health Advice Notes to Welsh Government on new Covid Variant (BA.2.86 (V-23AUG-01) and Health Protection (Notifications) Regulations for consideration as part of policy making.
- Supporting Welsh Government in their assessment and review of the regional Health Protection Plans.
- Development of a reporting template that Welsh Government can use in their quarterly monitoring of regional health protection plans.
- Engagement with, and support to, Welsh Government in the development of the All-Wales Health Protection Framework which will underpin how the health protection system operationally functions between different agencies.

2.2. Partnership Support

- A review of the winter respiratory infections Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that outline the way Public Health Wales will work with partners in response, followed by a training event (webinar) for partners, including care homes managers.
- Specialist work to support regional health protection systems with their preparedness activities.
- Delivery of on-going care home training package covering all aspects of Infection Prevention Control (IPC) and Communicable Disease Control (CDC) which will assist with local prevention and response in 2024/25 season.
- Training of, and active use of, the National Response Team hosted by Cardiff local authority to provide a resilient contact tracing support for periods of high activity in health protection.

3. Assessment of Winter 2024/25 Threats

An assessment of the 2024/25 winter season indicates that Influenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) along with the addition of COVID-19 are likely to be the main threats around seasonal infections.

Whilst the relative timing of each threat cannot be accurately predicted, Welsh Government has undertaken impact projections based on different scenarios.

The timing and severity of influenza is uncertain, and the experience of the southern hemisphere is not necessarily predictive of these factors.

The impact of the RSV vaccination campaign this year is as yet unknown with the expectation being that the campaign will result in reduce infections throughout the season.

2024 has seen unusually high level of activity relating to Pertussis which is in part attributed to two factors. Firstly, a result of infection rates over a natural 4-to-5-year cycle. Secondly, the delayed effect of the pandemic where infection control measures reduced infections in a “usual” year. While pertussis activity reduced over the 2024 summer period, UKHSA modelling suggests that we see continuing high activity through autumn and winter 2024/25.

Other infections such as invasive meningococcal and pneumococcal disease are also likely to increase during the winter period, which in turn may cause an increase in hospital admissions and clusters of cases.

Additionally, highly transmissible infections like norovirus may also add to pressures, particularly in closed settings and hospitals. The combination of hospital transmission of norovirus, influenza and COVID-19 can add significant pressure to the acute sector, due to slowing of patient movement and limitation of bed usage.

4. Public Health Wales Response – Health Protection and Screening Services Directorate (HPSS)

Public Health Wales has a statutory duty to deliver Health Protection services across Wales. Health Protection and Screening Services Directorate (HPSS) deliver the service via the Health Protection Division on 24 hours, 7 days basis throughout the year with a central acute response function supported by regional health protection teams.

Health Protection Division have established and continue to develop methods to facilitate Public Health Wales internal Health Protection Forum (HPF) for consideration of emerging evidence, ongoing incidents & outbreaks that allows for a rapid risk assessment, and timely response at an organisational level.

Public Health Wales has undertaken a range of activities across the organisation in order to respond to the know pressures relating to the winter service response for 2024/25.

Planning and response activity across the wider Public Health Wales system and notably HPSS Health Protection and Infection Division' is framed within the context of Welsh Government published plans for Public Health Respiratory Framework 2023 to 2024 and Guidance for people with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19.

Alongside published plans, Public Health Wales will support a winter respiratory vaccination programme as outlined in 2023 to 2024 (WHC/20232024/03329).

4.1. Communicable Disease Outbreak Control Plan for Wales

At the request of Welsh Government, Public Health Wales led a comprehensive review and update of the Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales which was published in December 2023.

The new plan was exercised with the wider health system in March 2024 and lessons from this have been used to inform in-year improvements in working practices to support outbreak management.

As directed by Chief Medical Officer, Public Health Wales will continue to keep the Outbreak Plan under review and update accordingly.

4.2. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

The Healthcare Associated Infection, Antimicrobial Resistance and Prescribing Programme (HARP) will continue with their support of Health Boards and Trusts and have provided advice to Welsh Government to inform system wide letters to NHS Wales organisations in relation to the importance of Infection Prevention and Control this winter.

4.3. Environmental Public Health

Environmental Public Health continues to guide on the issuing of appropriate public health messaging during extreme weather events as well as working with CDSC to conduct surveillance of cold weather health effects.

In the longer term it is hoped that data will support the identification of public health actions and interventions that will reduce cold weather burden on health and health services.

The Environmental Public Health Team is also involved in work to reduce the burden of seasonal harms such as carbon monoxide (CO), by increasing awareness of the need for boiler checks and alarm use, as well as encouraging greater knowledge and awareness of the symptoms of CO poisoning.

4.4. Training and Guidance

Established during the pandemic to address increased system pressure, HPSS Health Protection Division' Training and Guidance Team provide discrete and dedicated training across the Health Protection system. In preparedness for winter season, they will continue in its role to support deliver:

- Internal training on competency frameworks, career frameworks, induction, orientation, mentorship, leadership, funding and training records.
- External stakeholder training for Lead Officer Training.
- Welsh Government projects on special procedures and Care Home pilot sustainability project.
- Governance framework to ensure a consistent approach to updating, developing, curating, and publishing guidance and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Behavioural insight work undertaken across the health protection system.

4.5. Service Development

Through recurring and non-recurring Welsh Government funding to support Public Health Wales response, HPSS Health Protection Division has utilised funding to support the enablement and expansion of the division's operating model which has created both additional capacity and capability to protect the public in Wales. The benefits of which are:

- Enabling the Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme (VPDP) to deliver at pace the transformative expectations of the National Immunisation Framework and in support of a sustainable health and care system.
- Development of new programmes in addition to the existing 13 universal programmes to help address key issues around vaccine equity and vaccine literacy.
- Enabling the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (CDSC) to significantly expand the sentinel surveillance across General Practitioners and Pharmacy in Wales. The level of expansion has seen an increase from an initial 10 sentinel sites to a total of 50 GP and Pharmacy and some A&E departments.
- Implementation of a programme of providing continued support to sentinel sites that has also improved efficiency through automation. Additionally the programme includes annual engagement events, training on swabbing



techniques, improved information resources, monthly feedback on submissions and test results.

- Focussed work to increase capacity for surveillance of severe acute respiratory infection.
- Expansion of serosurveillance, that provides increased understanding on risks of future transmission, revised integrated reporting and pandemic preparedness in line with World Health Organization (WHO) Mosaic work.
- Increase in resource capacity and resilience across Health Protection Teams and All Wales Acute Response enabling a more robust and sustainable response to public health threats within Wales.
- Investment in HPSS Health Protection Business and Operations functionality to support improvements across business continuity, financial management, strategic management, planning, performance and assurance reporting.

4.6. Health Protection Division

Supporting delivery of the winter 2024/25 response, the Health Protection Division undertakes specific work with partners in relation to the operating arrangements for response to communicable disease during these winter months. This is provided via the following core functions:

Acute Response - Protecting the population from infection and environmental hazards through provision of expert health protection advice. Providing system wide support to health boards and trusts, local authorities, emergency services, other partners and professionals. Delivering routine planned and unplanned day to day response to cases, incidents, and outbreaks of communicable disease.

Routine Surveillance - Development and maintenance of surveillance systems including active, passive, and sentinel surveillance, and include regularly assessing the quality of surveillance data.

Field Epidemiology and Outbreak Management - Investigations in response to urgent health protection issues to guide, as quickly as possible, the processes of selecting and implementing interventions to reduce or prevent illness and death.

Proactive Partnership working and Collaboration - Ongoing support across the health protection system, building on the learning from the COVID-19 pandemic and the COVID-19 Public Inquiry (Module 1) report.

4.6.1. Integrated Surveillance

Surveillance of acute respiratory infections including influenza, RSV and COVID-19 continues in line with the integrated respiratory surveillance plan.

Sentinel GP Network - The sentinel GP network has been expanded to include 54 practices providing between 80 and 250 samples per week. 18 Pharmacies have also been recruited - of which 12 are actively providing samples -, with a plan to ramp-up to 50 sentinel pharmacies from autumn 2024. Working with infection service colleagues, testing for bacterial pathogens from sentinel samples is being trialled (including pertussis).

SARI Surveillance - SARI surveillance continues with 4 enhanced sentinel sites. Reporting from these systems has been revised, transforming the weekly COVID-19 report into a full respiratory summary, with links to dashboards such as those for hospital admissions.

Wales has contributed towards 2023/24 vaccine effectiveness estimates and will continue this for the coming season.

Genomic Surveillance - Genomic surveillance also continues, with inclusion of influenza in horizon scanning. An outbreak detection tool has been developed and fully operated to alert SARS-CoV-2 variants which may be of concern by modelling effective reproduction number.

Sentinel Surveillance - Scoping of sentinel surveillance in adult care home settings is being undertaken, with the aim of piloting with a small number of homes in 24/25. Data linkage methods have been developed to enable reporting on care home residents.

Integrated Respiratory Surveillance - Reporting on respiratory infections and outcomes in care home residents is being developed as part of integrated respiratory surveillance.



Scenario Modelling - Developing scenario modelling for respiratory hospitalisation and death amongst care home residents. Syndromic surveillance may be triggered during cold or severe weather episodes, upon request.

4.7. Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme

Through the Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme (VPDP), Public Health Wales continues to support the wider health system in delivering targeted vaccination programmes.

4.7.1. COVID-19 Vaccination

For Autumn/Winter of 2024 the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) has advised that COVID-19 vaccination be focussed on those at greatest risk of serious disease and who are therefore most likely to benefit from vaccination.

As age, problems with the immune system and co-morbidities remain the most important risk factors for severe outcomes, COVID-19 vaccination will be offered to:

- Residents in a care home for older adults
- All adults aged 65 years and over
- Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group

Further to evidence that current vaccines offer limited protection against transmission, the committee does not advise COVID-19 vaccination within the autumn 2024 national vaccination programme to the following groups:

- Frontline health and social care workers
- Staff working in care homes for older adults
- Unpaid carers and household contacts of people with immunosuppression.

However, following the late notice of the change in advice, Welsh Government has stated that the following groups can be vaccinated as part of a permissive approach.

- Frontline health and social care workers.
- Persons who are carers and staff working in care homes for older adults.

4.7.2. Flu Vaccination

Flu vaccination will be offered free on the NHS in Wales to:

- Children aged two and three years on 31 August 2024
- Children in primary school from reception class to year 6 (inclusive)



- Children in secondary school from year 7 to year 11 (inclusive)
- People aged six months to 64 years in clinical risk groups
- People aged 65 years and older (age on 31 March 2024)
- All adult residents in Welsh prisons residents
- Pregnant women
- Carers
- People with a learning disability
- Staff in nursing homes and care homes with regular client contact
- Staff providing domiciliary care
- Staff providing frontline NHS/Primary care services
- Healthcare workers (including healthcare students) with direct patient contact.

4.7.3. Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

RSV is best known for as a disease in children and young people and 90% of children will be infected with RSV by age 2. The risk of severe illness being highest in those under 6m old.

During a normal RSV season infection in children aged under 2 years old is estimated to be responsible for approximately 7,000-9,500 GP appointments, and 2,300-2,600 hospital admissions in Wales. However, although less well understood, RSV also has a very significant impact as a disease in adults.

It is estimated that RSV infection in over 75s is responsible for 7,000-9,000 GP appointments, 700-1,000 hospital admissions and 400-600 deaths in Wales each year.

The total burden of mortality, morbidity and healthcare usage is considered at least equivalent to that of influenza.

As set out in the WHC/2024/032 from 1st September 2024 there will be two new programmes for RSV vaccination in Wales.

- Vaccination will be offered in pregnancy to provide passive protection to babies through their first RSV season.
- Vaccination will be offered to all those turning 75 to reduce the number of deaths, severe illnesses and healthcare resulting from RSV infection.

In addition, there will be a catch-up programme in Spring 2025, for those older adults aged between 75 and 79.

Although both older adult and pregnancy programmes launch in advance of the anticipated RSV season, they are expected to have different impacts in the first season.

The programme in pregnancy has an immediate focussed catch up, and so a significant proportion of the youngest babies (born after 1st September) should have protection during the RSV season 24/5 which has the potential to reduce

demand for GP appointments and paediatric hospital care especially late in the season.

Vaccination of adults aged over 75 is not expected to achieve sufficient population coverage of those eligible in order to have a significant impact on morbidity in this first season.

Although RSV is a seasonal virus with a peak in autumn/winter each year, vaccination offers protection for more than 1 year and is cost effective to be offered all year round. Therefore, the vaccine will be offered on or after 75th birthday, or at each pregnancy, and additional doses will not be offered each year.

4.8. Infection Division

In addition to advice to Welsh Government on the configuration of clinical and diagnostic infection services, the Infection Division delivers clinical infection management and advice locally to Health Boards, local Infection Control advice and leadership, plus diagnostic services across Wales.

Infection Services are specifically developing diagnostic services to support Health Boards and Welsh Government over the winter period.

The current strategy for respiratory viral testing is focused on testing symptomatic individuals to support NHS clinical care - diagnosing those who are infected so that clinical judgments can be made to ensure the best care.

In addition, a number of sentinel surveillance schemes across primary and secondary care are supported.

Testing for these purposes is delivered through a combination of low throughput rapid single-plex and multiplex platforms available on 16 sites around Wales plus medium throughput platforms in local laboratories.

The current in-use tests are 4-plex, 8-plex, or multiplex to give appropriate identification of other pathogens in addition to SARS-CoV-2*.

A new high throughput 4-8-plex platform that will reduce financial, and staff pressures is currently being evaluated with a view to roll-out to our 3 regional laboratories.

The service has expanded the repertoire of rapid molecular testing in the 'Hot Labs' and general laboratories from respiratory viral testing to include tests for *C. difficile*, norovirus, MRSA (Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus), CPO (Carbapenem-Producing Organism). These tests have now been rolled out to all acute hospitals in Wales to enable rapid identification and thereby control of these infection control issues, and support Hospitals in managing their patient flows over the winter period.

There is an on-going roll-out of de-centralised blood culture processing, combined with rapid identification of positive cultures. This will improve sepsis diagnostics and management and support improved hospital patient flow.

A pilot of rapid molecular testing of joint fluids is being evaluated with a plan to roll this service out to all Hot labs to further support diagnostics and improve hospital patient flow.

5. Winter Communications and Campaigns

Public Health Wales Communications team working in collaboration with colleagues from the across the Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme (VPDP), Health Protection and Screening Services Directorate, a suite of audience-centred campaigns has been commissioned on winter behaviours and cold weather to support the winter 2024/25 response.

All campaign activity will be weighted towards people from the three lower socio-economic groups (C2DE) and those from ethnic minority communities where we know that vaccine uptake is lower.

5.1. Covid 19 and Flu Campaigns

Public health Wales will run integrated campaign from September 2024 and will incorporate a range of paid and earned media channels that will focus firstly on targeting parents of 2–3-year-olds and school aged children, to support the timings of the programme.

From October, focus will broaden to both flu and COVID-19 to all eligible groups and activity will run until the end of December 2024.

Evaluation of the 2023-4 campaign demonstrated that social media and Welsh media coverage contributed to both campaign recall and engagement and commissioned Facebook and Instagram adverting brought more people to the Public Health Wales website to find out more info about vaccination.

The flu and COVID-19 campaign for 2024-5 will reuse the light-up winter coat creative from 2023-4 which was found to be eye-catching and memorable, along with the tag line "Get an extra layer of protection".

Materials can be viewed here: [Public Health Wales Asset Library \(brandkitapp.com\)](https://brandkitapp.com)

Health and social care workers will not form part of the national, public-facing campaign activity, but a more targeted approach will be adopted where health boards will target staff through their own internal communications channels, using

the national campaign materials with localised messaging to promote uptake of the flu vaccine.

5.2. Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

To support the roll out of two new vaccination programmes for RSV, Public Health Wales run communications activity that raises knowledge and understanding of RSV and its serious effects on the very young and 75–79-year-olds age groups to ensure that the eligible population have the information they need to make an informed decision about vaccination.

As a new vaccine with very targeted eligible groups, the campaign has been developed with careful consideration to the wider vaccination programmes to ensure they do not "compete".

Insights from focus groups and audience research have informed our approach. The campaign is split into three main parts: broad public awareness to introduce the new vaccine and its benefits; system-facing (midwives, healthcare staff and GPs) and pregnancy vaccination information and targeted communications for 75–79-year-olds.

Main campaign activity is now live, running from August to September, with an additional burst from February to March 2025. Activity will include media relations, social media content, materials and resources for midwives and primary care, advertorials in print media, paid influencer activity and stakeholder comms. Expert voices from healthcare professionals will be used across materials to create trust and credibility of the new vaccination.

5.3. Winter Behaviours

During the 2023-24 winter season Public Health Wales ran a preventative behaviours campaign for the first time which targeted broad population groups in Wales with advice on key behaviours to stop the spread of viruses over winter. The focus was on handwashing with specific a focused approach on "think dirty, wash hands for 30" seconds in line with NHS guidance.

Public Health Wales also ran the broader "Beat Winter Viruses" messaging across its own channels which signposted to the vaccination programmes but also tied in messaging related to staying away from others if unwell.

The campaign spanned multi-channels including social media, out of home advertising as well as on the ground engagement around sporting events. The campaign gained 10.5m impressions across all paid advertising platforms, Public Health Wales social media reached 1.7m people and the handwashing events saw 80 people take part with 600 hand sanitisers distributed to members of the public.

The campaign activity for 2024-5 year we will reuse the materials and channels that worked most effectively in reaching audiences which insights work identified to be younger people and men.

5.4. Colder Weather

Older people are more vulnerable in the winter when the temperature drops, our focus for this year will be to build on the activity from 23-24 with information on staying well. Focussing on reaching older people as well as those who care for them.

Public Health Wales will continue to work closely with Age Cymru to amplify their "Spread the warmth" campaign where appropriate and will share bespoke materials on Public Health Wales digital channels, through media relations.

With dates to yet be confirmed, activity will run from December to January, in which Public Health Wales will revise and reshare the toolkit of materials for stakeholders containing information and materials on staying well.

6. Satisfactory Heating Regime

Public Health Wales Policy and International Health Directorate (WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Well-being) has undertaken work relating to the Welsh Government Satisfactory Heating Regime.

A report on Satisfactory Heating Regime was sponsored by Welsh Government to assess the appropriateness of the satisfactory heating regime, as set out in its Tackling Fuel Poverty Plan 2021 to 2035. The final report is due for publication in October 2024.

The Satisfactory Heating Regime report has been undertaken following publication of the 2022 Public Health Wales systematic review on cold homes and associations with health and well-being and the 2022 report on keeping warm at home during winter in Wales.

Evidence within the report has been collated from multiple sources, including:

- Literature
- National statistics
- Household Survey in Wales findings
- Subject Matter Expert consultation.

Report recommendations which are currently being considered by Welsh Government, outline that the Satisfactory Heating Regime is:

- Regularly monitored and evaluated.
- Informed by equality considerations.
- Signposts to trusted, accessible and inclusive information/advice on affordable warmth and safety at home.

7. Wales Public Health Rapid Overview Dashboard

Led by the Data, Knowledge and Research directorate, the [Wales Public Health Rapid Overview Dashboard](#) provides up to date and timely data on a wide range of topics providing information on population health and inequalities across Wales.

Data within the dashboard is updated every two weeks or every month and is available openly on the web. Information presented in the dashboard covers:

- Communicable disease.
- System (NHS) ability to respond to pressures.
- Excess mortality - this will be replaced with avoidable deaths in summer 2024
- Healthy behaviours and wellbeing.
- Wider determinants.

Data within the dashboard is updated every two weeks or every month and is available openly on the web.

8. Assessment of Business Threats - Winter 2024/25

8.1. Public Health Wales Staff Flu Vaccination Campaign

Welsh Government Guidance recommends that flu vaccinations should be only offered to NHS Wales front-line staff or those with direct patient contact staff, in line with the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) guidance.

Public Health Wales definition for front line worker is as follows:

- Healthcare workers - clinical and non-clinical staff who have contact with service users' patients.

This definition, as applied to Public Health Wales staff, includes – but is not limited to – the following:

- Staff involved in direct service user/ Patient or Client Care.
- Other staff in non-Clinical contact roles with Patients or Clients.
- Laboratory or Pathology Staff.
- Those working for a sub-contracted provider of facilities services such cleaning & estate maintenance.

- Temporary, locum or 'bank' staff, students, trainees and volunteers who are working with service users/patients

This year the annual Staff flu vaccination campaign will follow the above guidance and be delivered through a mixed model approach maximising Public Health Wales WAST Occupational Health contract along with Health Boards Occupational Health contracts that are in place for microbiology staff.

In addition, eligible staff will be able to request a Flu voucher to use at a local community pharmacist if this is more convenient for them.

Flu clinics will be scheduled at Public Health Wales key sites during October and early November. In addition our staff will have full access to the various WAST clinics and mobile units deployed across Wales for this period and the duration of the Flu season.

A staff communications and promotion programme will commence during September and staff vaccination uptake will be monitored via the cross organisational Flu Group which meet monthly and uptake figures will be reported to the Business Executive Team (BET).

Staff who are eligible for a flu vaccination via their primary care provider will be encouraged to self-report if they have received a flu vaccination using an online form and this data will be included in the overall reporting figures.

In addition to the staff flu vaccination programme, further preventative action planned is to promote good Winter IPC practice within PH Wales via the joint annual autumn communication on this issue from the National Director of Health Protection and Screening Services/Medical Director and the Executive Director of Quality and Nursing.

A final annual Flu report will be submitted to the Business Executive Team (BET) and Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee during Spring 2025.

8.2. Business Continuity

Ahead of this winter, the Emergency Preparedness Resilience & Response (EPRR) Team conducted a review of BCMS documentation including the Business Continuity Strategy, and this was ratified via the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Group.

To support this, Directorates/Divisions are regularly reminded to maintain up to date business impact analyses and plans based on the Public Health Wales guidance. They are also encouraged to exercise these arrangements within their teams to ensure they remain fit for purpose, particularly to support some of the seasonal issues which can impact service delivery such as adverse weather.

For the autumn of 2024, the organisational continuity focus is on digital resilience, with preparation ongoing for an exercise to explore the response to significant digital disruption at Public Health Wales as this is highlighted as a key risk on the [National Risk Register](#) and business and public sector organisations across the UK have been subjected numerous attacks in recent months.

The most recent occurrences of civil disorder and community tension across the UK in august and response required by the emergency services and the public sector has led to further refreshed requests to ensure plans and arrangements are up to date.

In light of this, the EPRR team will continue to work with partners to from the Local Resilience Fora, Wales Resilience Partnership Team and Wales Resilience Forum and the Four Nations Public Health EPRR Group to maintain situational awareness, and extraordinary meeting of the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Group will be convened to support any concerns identified.

9. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



The PHW work on winter planning is seeking to address emerging pressures for this winter, but also to contribute to longer term NHS planning in relation to responding to surges in demand.



The PHW work on winter planning has a key focus on preventing the impacts from the spread of communicable diseases across Wales



The PHW service response to winter is integrated both within the Health Protection and Screening Services Directorate and also across PHW and wider system partners, notably NHS Wales and Local Authorities



PHW is working closely in collaboration with WG and other system partners in planning the winter response



PHW engagement with system partners and the wider public (e.g., through the Time to Talk surveys) will ensure involvement to inform response.



10. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- Take **assurance** from the update on planning, preparation and progress for Health Protection and Microbiology Services for Winter 2024/25
- Take **assurance** from the update on business continuity planning Winter 2024/25.