

Berkshire Local Authorities Winter Flu Plan 2017-18

Purpose of this Flu Plan

This document summarises key points of the National Flu Plan for England for 2016-17¹ and sets out the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and their partners in implementing the National Flu Plan locally.

The Berkshire winter flu plan contains information which will enable local authority public health teams to work with partners in health, social care and other organisations to implement the plan.

Local Authority Public Health teams should work with internal and external partners to develop a local flu Action Plan which aligns with the needs of their populations. Plans will be monitored and reviewed through the local Flu Action Groups for East and West Berkshire

Contents

Purpose of this Flu Plan	1
Background	2
Elements of the flu programme for 2017-18	3
Commissioning in Berkshire for 2017-18.....	4
Annual cycle of the flu programme	5
Roles and responsibilities.....	6
Stages of implementation.....	7
A flexible and proportionate response	7
Local Flu Action Plan 2017-18	12
Local Contacts	20
Supporting documentation	25

¹ [National Flu Immunisation Programme 2017-18](#)

Background

Flu is a key factor in NHS winter pressures. It impacts on both those who become ill, the NHS services that provide direct care, and on the wider health and social care system that supports people in at-risk groups. Flu occurs every winter in the UK. The National Flu Plan aims to reduce the impact of flu in the population through a series of complementary measures. These measures help to reduce illness in the community and unplanned hospital admissions, and therefore pressure on health services generally and A&E in particular. The plan is therefore a critical element of the system-wide approach for delivering robust and resilient health and care services throughout the year.

The national flu immunisation programme is a key part of the plan and it is being extended to children in a phased roll-out. In July 2012, JCVI recommended that the flu vaccination programme should be extended to healthy children aged two to their seventeenth birthday. JCVI recognised that implementation of this programme would be challenging and due to the scale of the programme it is being phased in.

Vaccinating children each year means that not only are the children protected, but also that transmission across the population is reduced, lessening the overall burden of flu. Implementing this programme is therefore an important contribution to increasing resilience across the system through the winter period. Results from the implementation of the primary school childhood flu programme are encouraging, with reduced numbers of GP attendances for influenza-like illness and reduced emergency department respiratory attendances in all age groups.

It is anticipated that the children's programme, once fully implemented, will avert many cases of severe flu and flu-related deaths in older adults and people in clinical risk groups. But there is a need to ensure that we are communicating the benefits of the vaccine among all recommended groups, making vaccination as easily accessible as possible, including for frontline health and social care workers.

In addition to immunisation, influenza antiviral medicines and a range of other measures aimed at reducing transmission of flu and other respiratory virus infections (in particular good hand and respiratory hygiene) are vital elements in reducing the impact of flu each year.

Elements of the flu programme for 2017-18

- 100% offer for all eligible groups; adults and children
- Extension of the children’s flu programme to include reception and school year 4
- Prioritise those with chronic liver and neurological disease, including people with learning disabilities

Key changes from 2016-17 are

- Morbidly obese patients are now included in clinical at risk groups; previously this was recommended in Green Book, but is now also included in the GP contract.
- GPs are now commissioned to offer flu immunisation to 2 & 3 year olds but NOT 4 year olds
- The School based programme extended to include children in Reception year and school years 1,2,3 & 4.

Table 1: Target group and uptake ambition for 2017-18

Target Group	Uptake ambition for 2017/18
Aged under 65 ‘at risk’	55%
Pregnant women	55%
Eligible children aged 2 years to school year 4 age	40-65%
Aged 65 years and over	75%
Healthcare workers	75%

Immunisation against flu should form part of an organisations’ policy for the prevention of transmission of infection (influenza) to protect patients, service users, staff and visitors. In addition, frontline health and social care workers have a duty of care to protect their patients and service users from infection.

Flu immunisation should be offered by NHS organisations to all employees directly involved in delivering care. Social care providers, nursing and residential homes, and independent providers such as GPs, dental and optometry practices, and community pharmacists, should also offer vaccination to staff.

NHS England has published a two year CQUIN covering 2017/18 and 2018/19² which includes an indicator to improve the uptake of flu vaccinations for frontline healthcare staff within providers, providing a financial incentive for organisations to achieve 75% vaccine uptake among their frontline staff .

NHS organisations and local authorities need to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for offering flu vaccination to their health and social care workers with direct patient contact.

Commissioning in Berkshire for 2017-18

Table 2: 2017-18 commissioning arrangements

	GP practice	Pharmacy	Maternity	BHFT (Schools immunisation team)
Aged 65 and above	✓	✓		
Clinical risk groups under 65	✓	✓		
Pregnant women	✓	✓	✓	
Carers	✓	✓		
Children aged 2 and 3	✓			
Children in Reception and years 1,2,3 and 4				✓

² www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/cquin/cquin-17-19/

Annual cycle of the flu programme

The cycle for preparing for and responding to flu is set out in Figure 1

Figure 1: Annual Cycle

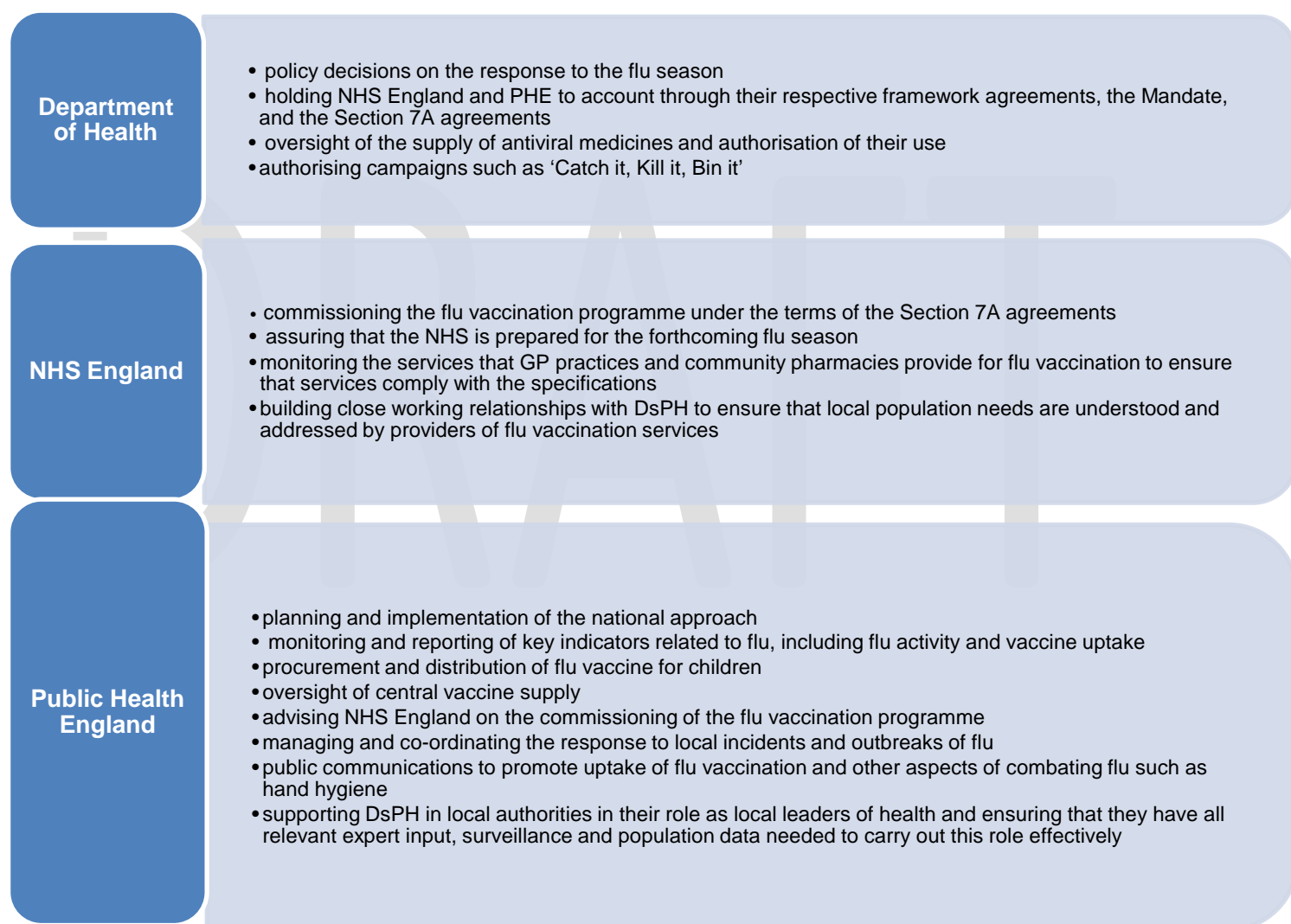
	Vaccine manufacture	Planning	Communications	Childrens programme	Adult programme	Data collection	Data publication	Antivirals	Winter Pressures
Jan									
Feb	WHO announces vaccine strain selection for following winter	Enhanced service specifications published							
Mar	Vaccine manufacture and liason with manufacturers re availability								
Apr		Annual Flu Letter published						CMO may issue advice to stop prescription of antivirals	
May		Assurance that GPs can identify eligible patients	Information Leaflets and GP template letters available						
Jun									
Jul									
Aug			All stakeholders begin communications activities to promote early uptake of the vaccine among eligible groups including health and social care staff	Flu vaccine for children available to order through ImmForm	Suppliers deliver vaccines to GP practices, community pharmacies, and PHE central stock.				
Sep						Communications and guidance about vaccine uptake data collections issued			
Oct			Marketing campaign A respiratory & hand hygiene campaign may be considered	Schools flu programme providers begin vaccination eligible children	GPs, community pharmacists and other providers begin vaccinating eligible patients and staff against flu as soon as vaccine is available		From week 40 (early October) PHE publishes weekly reports on flu incidence, vaccine uptake, morbidity and mortality	CMO may issue advice on the use of antivirals	NHS implements winter pressures arrangements
Nov						Monthly GP and NHS staff flu uptake data collection period			
Dec									
Jan									
Feb									

Adapted from [National Flu Immunisation Programme 2017-18](#)

Roles and responsibilities

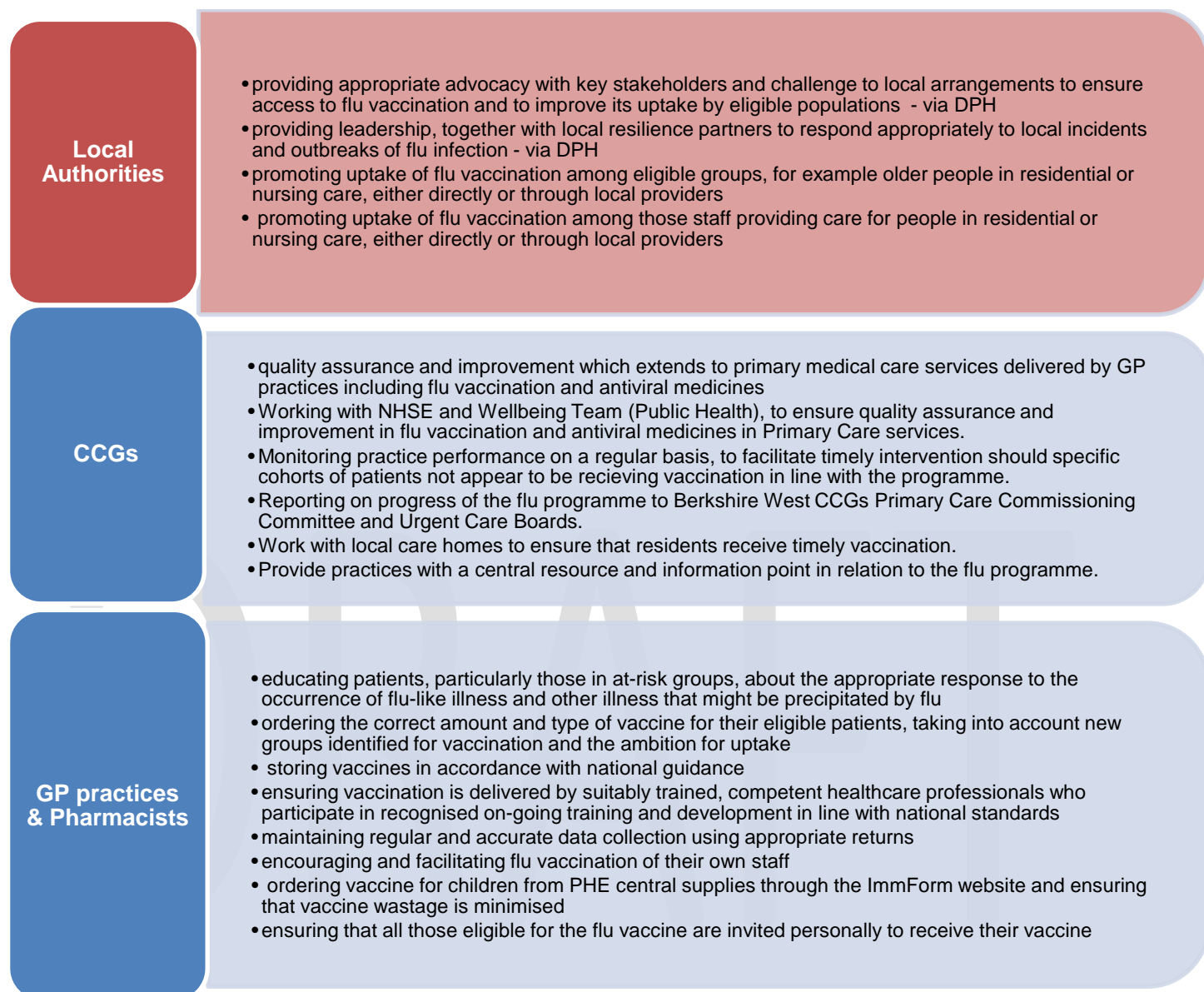
PHE have set out the roles and responsibilities of DH, NHS, PHE and Local Authorities in response to Flu. Figure 2 (next page) highlights the roles that local authorities should play in advocating and promoting uptake of flu vaccine and, providing scrutiny and challenge to local arrangements through the Director of Public Health (DPH).

Figure 2: Roles and responsibilities of local authorities and partner organisations in response to seasonal flu



Continued over page

Figure 2. *continued.....*



Stages of implementation

The impact of the virus on the population each year is variable – it is influenced by changes that may have taken place in the virus, the number of people susceptible to infection and the severity of the illness caused by a particular strain. These factors in turn affect the pressures the NHS experiences and where they are felt most.

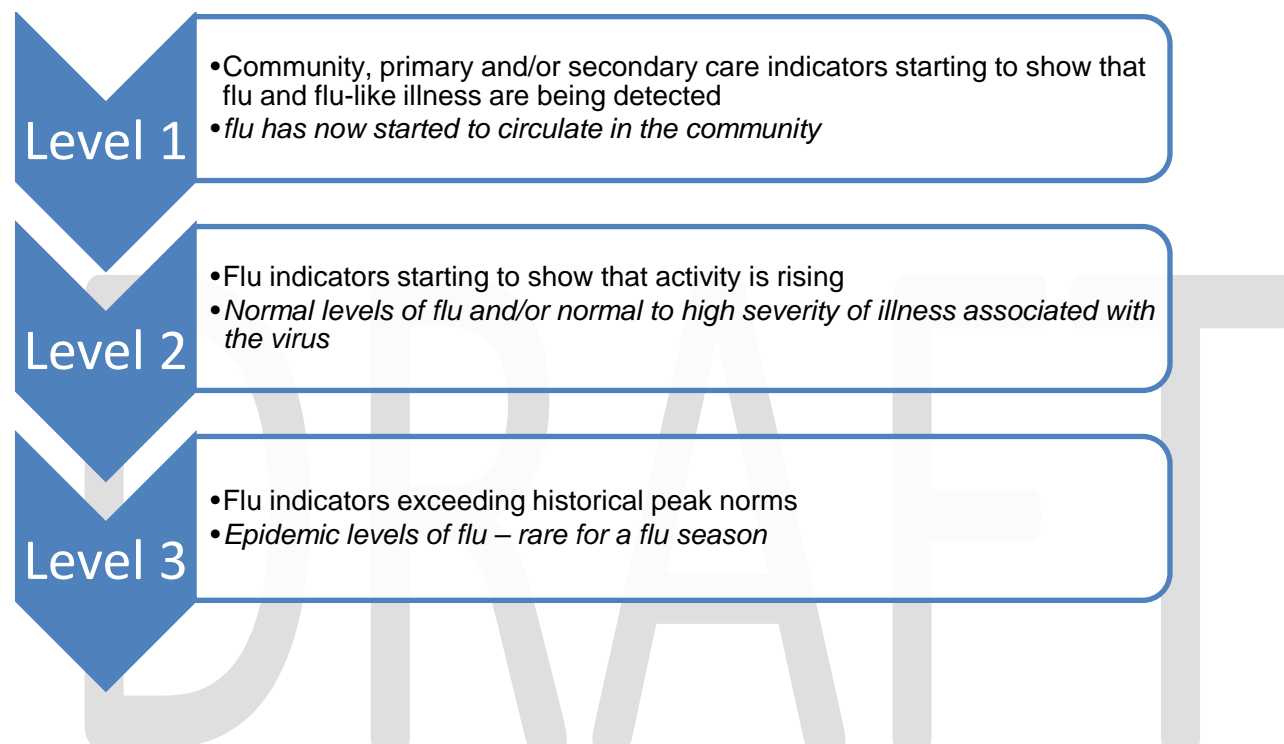
The Flu Plan operates according to a series of stages, which enable individual elements of the response to be escalated as appropriate; these are shown in Table 6.

A flexible and proportionate response

The impact of the virus on the population each year is variable – it is influenced by changes that may have taken place in the virus, the number of people susceptible to infection and the severity of the

illness caused by a particular strain. These factors in turn affect the pressures the NHS experiences and where they are felt most. Planning for the flu season therefore needs to prepare for a range of possibilities including the need to respond quickly to modify the plans, therefore, the *Flu plan* operates according to a series of levels, which enable individual elements of the DH, NHS England, and PHE’s response to be escalated as appropriate:

Figure 3: Levels of flu response



More detail of the required actions at each level is provided in Table 3 (next page).

Table 3: Flu Stages with relevant actions

Stage and Level of flu-like illness	Actions (local actions in italics, key actions for LA PH teams in bold)
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Stage and Level of flu-like illness	Actions (local actions in italics, key actions for LA PH teams in bold)
<p>Stage 1</p> <p>Community, primary and/or secondary care indicators starting to show that flu and flu-like illness are being detected</p> <p>Beginning of the flu season – flu has now started to circulate in the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review data on flu activity and severity from the southern hemisphere • GPs invite their eligible patients to be vaccinated, using call and reminder systems • GPs make arrangements to vaccinate patients who cannot attend the surgery because of frailty, severe chronic illness or disability • GPs encourage and facilitate their own frontline staff to be vaccinated • other NHS, local authority and care home employers arrange for their frontline staff to be vaccinated • data on flu incidence and vaccine uptake rates in England issued at a national and, if available, regional/local levels • data on influenza-like illnesses, virological surveillance, vaccine uptake and NHS operational data published • PHE publishes weekly reports on flu incidence, vaccine uptake, morbidity and mortality • NHS England writes to the NHS if vaccine uptake is low • PHE in contact with vaccine manufacturers on production and delivery schedules • DH in contact with antiviral medicine manufacturers on their preparedness plans • the respiratory and hand hygiene campaign may be launched • Commence Bi-weekly teleconference led by NHS England, Berkshire Consultant in Health Protection for Berkshire shared team to attend on behalf of all Berkshire LA public health teams • Commence multi-agency East and West of Berkshire Flu Action Groups (frequency TBC). LA flu leads to attend

Stage and Level of flu-like illness	Actions (local actions in italics, key actions for LA PH teams in bold)
<p>Stage 2</p> <p>Flu indicators starting to show that activity is rising</p> <p>Normal levels of flu and/or normal to high severity of illness associated with the virus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPs and other non-medical prescribers will be alerted through a CMO/CPhO letter, to start prescribing antiviral medicines in line with the NICE guidance and Schedule 2 to the National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) (Prescription of drugs etc) Regulations 2004), commonly known as the Grey List or Selected List Scheme (SLS) and following expert advice that the flu virus is circulating • if evidence emerges that a particular age group or people with certain clinical conditions are being disproportionately affected by the flu virus, a joint letter on behalf of DH, NHS England, and PHE may issue specific advice to both the public and health professionals to increase efforts to vaccinate that particular group, if practicable and seeking expert advice from JCVI if necessary • local NHS responds to local circumstances according to local plans and needs • review daily NHS operational data, eg critical care • CMO or representatives of PHE or NHS England may provide a media briefing to provide clear, factual information on flu. This may include information for the public about what to do if they become unwell and advice on accessing services • if countrywide vaccine shortages are considered likely, PHE will alert GPs to the availability of the central strategic reserve and set out how they should access it. It is likely this will be through the on-line ImmForm system. Depending on the level of shortages, restrictions may be placed on the number of doses a GP can order • vaccine manufacturers contacted by PHE regarding the availability of additional supplies if needed • in the event of shortages of antiviral medicines, and an evident public health need, PHE would take steps to support arrangements for supplies by using its pandemic flu stocks as buffers in the supply chain. In this system, government stocks of antiviral medicines would be supplied to the manufacturers who would distribute to community and hospital pharmacies using their normal supply chain mechanisms • DH will work closely with antiviral medicines manufacturers, wholesalers and pharmacies to minimise disruptions of supply to patients • DH will work closely with antibiotic manufacturers, wholesalers and pharmacies to minimise disruptions of supply to patients

Stage and Level of flu-like illness	Actions (local actions in italics, key actions for LA PH teams in bold)
<p>Stage 3</p> <p>Flu indicators exceeding historical peak norms Epidemic levels of flu – rare for a flu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a national flu epidemic is declared • GPs alerted that a late surge in demand for the vaccine may occur and that there may be greater use of antiviral medicines • vaccine manufacturers contacted by PHE regarding availability of additional supplies • antiviral medicines manufacturers contacted regarding availability of additional supplies • JCVI will review the available data and amend guidance on vaccination if necessary and if sufficient supplies of vaccine are available and can be delivered and administered in time • PHE may extend the vaccine uptake collections for additional weeks/months if vaccine uptake rates are still rising • weekly press briefings will be considered. These will be led by CMO or representatives of PHE or NHS England • maintain or boost the respiratory and hand hygiene campaign • proactive work with media to allay any public concerns • reiterate advice on signs and symptoms, and treatment at home • communicate regularly with clinical and professional networks and stakeholder groups for patients at risk of severe illness • regular liaison with pharmacy organisations to keep abreast of any supply problems associated with antiviral medicines • continue to review daily NHS operational data, for example, critical care • alert the NHS when the flu season has peaked, to aid local planning • <i>implement Berkshire Pandemic Flu plans</i>

Local Flu Action Plan 2017-18

A local action plan built around the key responsibilities of local authorities to;

- **promote uptake of flu vaccination among eligible groups, for example older people in residential or nursing care, either directly or through local providers**
- **promote uptake of flu vaccination among those staff providing care for people in residential or nursing care, either directly or through local providers**

is provided in the Local Authority Flu Action Plan - see Table 4

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Table 4: Reading Borough Council Action Plan 2017/18

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
Pre-school services	<p>Request to share advice/encourage service users to get child vaccinated (+ posters/newsletters)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flu vaccination programme – arrangements for 3 & new arrangements for 4 year olds ▪ Benefits/risks ▪ availability ▪ Key messages for parents (see below) ▪ Link to resources 	<p>FIS (MM) will send email to contacts for pre-school services/activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ registered nurseries ▪ child-minders ▪ playgroups ▪ mother and toddler 	<p>CCG to confirm comms message and access information; LA to prep comms briefing to go out through network</p>	<p>30.09.2017</p>	<p>CCG Comm with support from LA</p>
Parents of 3 & 4 Year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefits of immunisation/risks of flu ▪ Administered by nasal spray ▪ Available from GP only (3 year olds) – 4 years old through school ▪ Links to resources 				

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
Infant/Primary School Heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service available from IMS ▪ How to contact/arrange ▪ Flu Messages for parents (see below) to encourage uptake ▪ Link to resources 	Email letter to head teachers; Send letter to home-educated parents;	BHFT to confirm school programme and LA to support to identify comms networks to help raise awareness to parents/schools.	30.09.2017	BHFT and LA
Parents of Year 1, 2, 3 and 4 year school students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefits of immunisation ▪ Administered by nasal spray ▪ Available via school ▪ Dates of birth for those turning 4 (starting school) ▪ Link to resources 	Publish information on RSG.			

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
DMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flu vaccination programme inc RBC Staff Offer ▪ Benefits and risks (to vulnerable groups and org) ▪ Lists of eligible teams/staff (working with vulnerable people/critical for business continuity) ▪ Arrangements/costs ▪ Approval process ▪ Request for managers to cascade 	DMT	LA to prepare a briefing note for staff flu vaccinations – to go via DMT’s and Emergency Planning team.	30.09.2017	LA
Eligible RBC staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefits/risks for vulnerable groups & RBC ▪ eligibility ▪ Free jobs ▪ Where/when/how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Email Cascade via manager ▪ Team meetings ▪ Supervision’s 	LA to prepare a briefing note for staff flu vaccinations.	30.09.2017	LA

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
All RBC staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risks and benefits ▪ Who is eligible (those working with at risk groups and BC critical + anyone caring for eligible person) ▪ Free from GP if eligible ▪ When available ▪ Spread the word/remind family & friends 	<p>Possible resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IRIS feature ▪ “All staff” email (not able to utilise) ▪ Yammer ▪ Inside Reading ▪ Posters on noticeboards (all Council facilities) 	LA to prepare promotional information for staff flu vaccinations.	30.09.2017	LA
Care Home Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flu vaccinations for staff ▪ Benefits/risks to residents and day-to-day ops ▪ IMS services available – how to arrange ▪ Link to resources ▪ Encourage residents take-up 	Email – commissioning to provide lists;	LA to prepare and cascade information to commissioned services providers for both residents and staff.	30.09.2017	LA

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
Sheltered/Extra Care Housing managers/Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness of programme ▪ Encourage residents to take up ▪ Links to resources 	Email – housing to provide lists	LA to prepare and cascade information to commissioned services providers for both residents of sheltered housing units, staff and housing associations.	30.10.2017	LA
Care agency managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flu jabs ▪ Who should be immunised (care staff) ▪ Benefits/risks to service users/operations ▪ Support available ▪ Links to resources ▪ Request for care staff to spread the word 	Email – commissioning to provide lists. To include the ‘Stay Well This Winter’ messages for community based staff to support with other prevention work.	LA to prepare and cascade information to commissioned community services providers for both managers and remote working staff.	30.10.2017	LA

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
<p>Reading Residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generic flu fighter message ▪ Request to help spread the word via newsletters/website ▪ Link to posters/resources 	<p>Via AAI services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicare ▪ Age UKs (Reading & Berkshire) ▪ Mencap ▪ Libraries 	<p>CCG to confirm local programme information and details on access so local messages can be tailored for targeted groups.</p>	<p>Phase 1 09.10.2017</p> <p>Phase 2 06.11.2017</p>	<p>LA/CCGs</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joint Press Release RBC & CCG ▪ social Media – Facebook/Twitter ▪ CCG – video YouTube? ▪ Photo-call at Surgery 	<p>LA to also access national marketing information and cascade to key stakeholders and use comms links to raise awareness.</p>		<p>CCGs/LA linked in with NHS England South Central</p>

Target Audiences	Key messages	Distribution	Actions	When	Who
Ante-natal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flu Jabs ▪ Benefits/Risks for pregnant women ▪ Request to spread the word ▪ Link to resources 	<p>Maternity unit (probably covered by health/hospital)</p> <p>Ante natal groups (NCT,</p> <p>Community midwives -</p>	<p>NHS England /Midwifery Leads to confirm local programme information and details on access so local messages can be tailored for targeted groups.</p> <p>LA to cascade information via networks i.e. FIS, Smoking Cessation Service</p>	30.10.2017	<p>NHS England South Central commissioned provider/ Midwifery Leads with support from CCGs & LAs</p>

LA – Local Authority

CCG – Clinical Commissioning Group BHFT – Berkshire Health Foundation Trust

Local Contacts

Table 5: Local Contacts

Group	Role	Name	Contact details
General	Wellbeing/Public Health Team LA Lead	Suzie Watt (Influenza)	Suzie.Watt@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 4806
		Melissa Montague (Cold Weather)	Melissa.Montague@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 4805
	Consultant in Communicable Disease (Berkshire)	Jo Jefferies	Jo.jefferies@bracknell-forest.gov.uk 07920535840
	PHE Immunisations Regional Contact	Harpal Aujla	Harpal.aujia@nhs.net
	Senior Communications & Engagement Manager, NHS England South	Graham Groves	graham.groves@nhs.net

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	PHE Regional Comms Lead for Influenza	Mike Burrell	Mike.Burrell@phe.gov.uk
	Local Authority Comms Lead	Rachel Dennis	Rachel.Dennis@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 3957
	CCG Seasonal Flu Lead	Victoria Farley	Victoria.farley1@nhs.net
Children	Children's Centre Managers	Corinne Dishington	Corinne.Dishington@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 6012
	School Nurse Lead (BHFT)	Beverly Wheeler	Beverley.wheeler@berkshire.nhs.uk 0118 9382145
	Children's Social Care	Ann-Marie Dodds (Director) Hayley Broadhurst – PA to Director of Children,	AnnMarie.Dodds@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 2421 Hayley.Broadhurst@reading.gov.uk

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		Education & Early Help Services	0118 937 4665
	Education lead (primary years R to 4)	Gill Dunlop	Gill.Dunlop@reading.gov.uk
	Home Educated	Sally Ollerenshaw	Sally.Ollerenshaw@reading.gov.uk
Families	Family Information Services Reading Borough Council	Pauline Lennox – Customer Contact Operations Manager Maryam Makki – Family Information Service Manager	Pauline.Lennox@reading.gov.uk Maryam.Makki@reading.gov.uk
Pregnant women	Midwife RBH / BHFT (Berkshire)	tbc	
	Local Community Midwife	tbc	

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	Local NCT Lead	tbc	
People aged 65 and over	Wellbeing Team (Community)	Nina Crispin	Wellbeing.Services@reading.gov.uk
Carers Groups	Reading Borough Council		
Residential/Nursing Homes - Reading	Wellbeing Team (Commissioning) Reading Borough Council	Senior Commissioning Support Officer	Contracts.Team@reading.gov.uk 0118 937 2273
	<i>Voluntary Services</i>	Reading Voluntary Action	info@rva.org.uk 0118 937 2273
Clinical risk groups	Respiratory	tbc	
	CKD	tbc	

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	Chronic liver disease	tbc	
	Neurology	tbc	
	HIV (immunosuppressed)	tbc	
	Oncology (immunosuppressed through therapy)	tbc	
Staff Communication	Reading Borough Council	Debi Daniels – Communications & Promotion Manager Claudine Schooling – Marketing Manager	Debi.Daniels@reading.gov.uk Claudine.Schooling@reading.gov.uk
	CCG	Victoria Farley	Victoria.farley1@nhs.net

Supporting documentation

- [National Flu Immunisation Programme 2017-18](#)
- [Annual Flu Letter 2017-18](#)
- Influenza chapter in 'Immunisation against infectious disease' ([the Green Book, chapter 19](#)) which is updated regularly, sometimes during a flu season
- Enhanced service specifications for seasonal flu and the childhood flu vaccination programmes

Additional guidance and resources can be found on the [Annual Flu Programme](#) web pages

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