

Berkshire Seasonal Influenza Campaign 2018-19; flu activity summary, final vaccine uptake figures and feedback from local partners

Executive Summary

1. **Background** - Seasonal influenza (Flu) is a key factor in NHS winter pressures. The National Flu Plan aims to reduce the impact of flu in the population through a series of complementary measures. Flu vaccination is commissioned by NHS England for groups at increased risk of severe disease or death should they contract flu.

Key aims of the immunisation programme are to;

- Actively offer flu vaccine to 100% of people in eligible groups
- Immunise 65% of eligible children, with a minimum 40% uptake in each school
- Maintain and improve uptake in over 65s and clinical risk groups with at least 75% uptake among people 65 years and over and 75% among health and social care workers

2. **Role of local authorities and CCGs** - the National Flu Plan states that the role of local authorities in the flu programme is to provide advocacy and leadership through the Director of Public Health and to promote uptake of flu vaccination among eligible residents and among staff providing care for people in residential and nursing settings. Local authorities are responsible for providing flu vaccine for frontline health and social care workers that are directly employed. Local authorities may also provide vaccine to staff members as part of business continuity arrangements. The role of CCGs is to provide quality assurance and improvement which extends to primary medical care services delivered by GP practices including flu vaccination and antiviral medicines. In Berkshire, CCGs, Local Authorities, NHS England and providers work collaboratively to provide advocacy, leadership and quality assurance of the programme aiming to protect and improve the health of all residents.

3. **Local uptake** -

- **GP patients aged 65 and over** - uptake was lower in Berkshire LAs than in England as a whole, except for West Berkshire and Wokingham where it was slightly higher and Bracknell Forest where it was the same. In West Berkshire uptake exceeded the 75% national ambition
- **Under 65's in clinical risk groups** - uptake was higher than the England figure in West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest but slightly lower in the other Berkshire LAs
- **pregnant women** - uptake was similar to or above the England figure in all LAs with the exception of Slough. No Berkshire LA achieved the national ambition in terms of flu vaccine uptake for this group
- **children aged 2 years** - uptake was higher than the England figure in all Berkshire LAs apart from Slough where it was lower. No Berkshire LA achieved the national ambition in terms of flu vaccine uptake for this group
- **children aged 3 years** - uptake was higher than the England figure in all Berkshire LAs except for Slough and Reading where it was lower. Uptake among 2- and 3-year olds in risk groups were higher than among children not in risk groups in all LAs
- **school-aged children** – uptake was highest in West Berkshire at 79.9% overall and lowest in Slough at 44.8%. All LAs achieved the 40% lower ambition, with Bracknell Forest, RBWM, Wokingham and West Berkshire exceeding the 65% upper ambition
- **Healthcare workers** - uptake ranged from 53.7% to 66.7% across NHS Trusts in Berkshire, meaning that the national ambition of 75% was not reached. Nationally uptake was 70.3%

Summary - Local Authority public health teams actively promoted flu vaccination to eligible groups using a range of channels and worked with commissioners and providers during the season to identify issues.

Whilst uptake among school aged children was good and showed an increase on previous seasons, uptake in other risk groups remained below the desired level; this is in line with other areas of the country.

There remains considerable variation in uptake between GP practices, both within and between CCGs. There is scope to improve communicating uptake to practices throughout the flu season and to improve the way patients are invited for vaccination. Myths and misconceptions regarding vaccines remain an important barrier to uptake.

A key issue in 2018-19 was the phased delivery over three months of the new adjuvanted vaccine for over 65's, this created temporary vaccine shortages for some providers and required GP practices to change the way they delivered flu clinics compared to previous years. There was good partnership working between NHS England, CCGs and providers to ascertain location of vaccine stocks, to redistribute vaccine and to sign-post eligible patients to alternative sources such as community pharmacy. Extra communications were put in place with support from local authorities to reassure patients that vaccine was available and inform them how to access. Coordination and communication around this issue was resource intensive and may have had opportunity costs elsewhere in the system. Patients who were not able to access vaccine on their first attempt may have been put off from re-trying and therefore remained unvaccinated. Although this issue affected only the new vaccine, patients in other groups may have been led to believe there were supply issues with other flu vaccines which could have contributed to lower uptake.

Other barriers included variation in access to GP flu clinics, lack of health literacy and inclusion of porcine element in the children's vaccine making it inappropriate for some groups.

Despite introduction of an NHS funded flu vaccine offer for frontline social care staff in nursing and residential care, local intelligence suggest uptake in this group remains low. Without more robust data from the National programme it is not possible to evaluate the success of this approach. Without changes to the flu programme, provision of flu vaccine to this group remains an occupational health responsibility and is likely to remain challenging for Local Authorities and CCGs to influence. The narrow definition of this offer has been questioned by stakeholders, staff and employers.

The offer of flu vaccine to other LA staff varies across Berkshire with some LAs not offering vaccine to any staff groups. However, where LAs do offer vaccine feedback suggests that staff and managers are working well to promote to staff and to understand uptake and identify potential barriers.

Locally, CCGs and their commissioned providers responded well to flu outbreaks in care homes and closed settings. Close partnership working proved key to the success of this approach particularly at the planning stage.

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1. Seasonal influenza

Seasonal influenza (Flu) is a key factor in NHS winter pressures. It impacts on 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. Successful local implementation of the flu plan depends on partnership working between stakeholders at National and local levels. Key stakeholders include Department of Health, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), GP practices, Community Pharmacy, Public Health England (PHE), Local Authorities and community groups.

2. Role of the local health and social care system

The [National Flu Plan](#)¹ states that;

Local authorities, through their DsPH have responsibility for:

- providing appropriate advocacy with key stakeholders and challenge to local arrangements to ensure access to flu vaccination and to improve its uptake by eligible populations
- providing leadership, together with local resilience partners to respond appropriately to local incidents and outbreaks of flu infection

Local authorities can also assist by:

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

CCGs are responsible for

- quality assurance and improvement which extends to primary medical care services delivered by GP practices including flu vaccination and antiviral medicines

Additionally, a letter to CCGs from the NHS England Head of Primary Care Commissioning on 12th June 2017 stated that 'CCGs will commission appropriate primary care clinicians to respond to flu outbreaks, by assessing exposed persons for the antiviral treatment or prophylaxis and completing a patient specific direction for this purpose'. In Berkshire, both CCGs have commissioned out of hours providers to provide this service.

GP practices and community pharmacists are responsible for;

- educating patients, particularly those in at-risk groups, about the appropriate response to the occurrence of flu-like illness and other illness that might be precipitated by flu
- ordering the correct amount and type of vaccine for their eligible patients, taking into account new groups identified for vaccination and the ambition for uptake
- storing vaccines in accordance with national guidance

¹ [National Flu Plan - Winter 2017-18, PHE](#)

- ensuring vaccination is delivered by suitably trained, competent healthcare professionals who participate in recognised on-going training and development in line with national standards
- maintaining regular and accurate data collection using appropriate returns
- encouraging and facilitating flu vaccination of their own staff
- In addition, GP practices are responsible for:
 - ordering vaccine for children from PHE central supplies through the ImmForm website and ensuring that vaccine wastage is minimised
 - ensuring that all those eligible for the flu vaccine are invited personally to receive their vaccine

Locally, Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust Schools Immunisation Team is commissioned to deliver the flu immunisation programme to children in school years Reception to Year 5 through a schools-based delivery model.

3. Aims of the flu immunisation programme

The aims of the immunisation programme in 2018-19 were to;

- Actively offer flu vaccine to **100%** of people in eligible groups.
- Immunise 60% of children, with a minimum **40%** uptake in each school
- Maintain and improve uptake in over 65s and 6 months to 64 years in clinical risk groups with at least **75%** uptake for those aged 65 years and over and **75%** uptake for health and social care workers
- Improve uptake over and above last season among those in clinical risk groups and prioritise those with the highest risk of mortality from flu but who have the lowest rates of vaccine uptake (i.e. immunosuppression, chronic liver and neurological disease, including people with learning disabilities); achieving **at least 55%** uptake in all clinical risk groups and maintain higher rates where they have previously been achieved.

4. Groups eligible for vaccination

Flu vaccination remains the best way to protect people from flu. People in certain groups are at increased risk of severe symptoms and deaths if they contract flu, these groups were eligible for free flu vaccine in 2017-18.

- Adults aged 65 or above
- Children aged 2 and 3 and in school years R through to 5
- Pregnant women
- Paid and unpaid carers
- Frontline health and social-care workers
- People living in long-stay residential care homes,
- Adults and children (6 months to 64 years) with one or more of the following conditions;
 - a heart problem
 - a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma
 - kidney disease

- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
- liver disease
- stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- diabetes
- a neurological condition, e.g. multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy or learning disability
- Morbidly obese individuals (BMI>40)

4.1 Changes in the 2018-19 immunisation programme compared to the previous season

Children - The offer of live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) was extended to children of appropriate age for school year 5, in addition to those children in school years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. This is in line with the principle for future extension of the programme to extend upwards through the age cohorts.

Older people - Following a PHE analysis which showed that the non-adjuvanted inactivated vaccine showed no significant effectiveness in this age group over recent seasons, an adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine (aTIV) was recommended for use in those aged 65 years and over, and particularly for those aged 75 years and over²

Residential, nursing and domiciliary care staff - NHS England continued to fund flu vaccination for residential, nursing and domiciliary care staff employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider, and who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients at increased risk from exposure to influenza³ (i.e., those patients or clients in a clinical risk group or aged 65 or over). The offer was also extended to include health and care staff in the voluntary managed hospice sector that offer direct patient/client care⁴. This offer was available through community pharmacies and most GP Practices.

5. Flu activity

5.1 National Activity

The PHE report, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-flu-reports> is due to be published in May 2019.

The PHE Weekly Local Influenza Report published on 9th May 2019 showed that in England the rate of GP consultations for flu like activity during 2018-19 was generally lower than in the previous season with the peak of activity occurring slightly later in the season (Figure 1).

² Publications Gateway Number: 07648. Vaccine ordering for 2018-19 influenza season. 18.02.2018

³ <http://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2017/11/how-care-staff-can-get-free-flu-vaccine>

⁴ Publications Gateway Number: 08260. Extension of NHS seasonal influenza vaccination, 10.09.2018

Compared to 2017-18 there were fewer reported outbreaks of flu-like illness, the majority of outbreaks occurred in residential and nursing home settings in 2018-19 which is a similar pattern to the previous year.

Figure 2)

National Laboratory data at week 19 indicates that in 2018-19 the majority of circulating flu viruses were Influenza A, which is different from 2017-18 when a mixture of FluA and FluB viruses were circulating (Figure 3).

Uptake of vaccine in primary care, community pharmacy and among healthcare workers is monitored by Public Health England. During Flu season, NHS England commissioners of the vaccine programmes extracted and collated uptake data from GP practices on a weekly basis and nationally on a monthly basis. Data on numbers of vaccines provided to adults through community pharmacy and to pregnant women by NHS midwives was monitored by NHSE and shared with stakeholders.

Nationally, provisional data from the fifth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients⁵ shows that the proportions of people in England who had received the 2018/19 influenza vaccine in targeted groups by 28 February 2019 were as follows:

- 48.0% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group
- 45.2% in pregnant women
- 72.0% in 65+ year olds.

The provisional proportions vaccinated by 28 February 2019 were: 43.8% in 2 year olds and 45.9% in 3 year olds⁶.

Provisional data from the fifth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake by frontline healthcare workers show 70.3% were vaccinated by 28 February 2019, compared to 68.7% vaccinated in the previous season by 28 February 2018.

Provisional data from the fourth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake for children of school years reception to year 5 shows 63.9% in school year reception age, 63.4% in school year 1 age, 61.4% in school year 2 age, 60.2% in school year 3 age, 58.0% in school year 4 age and 56.2% in school year 5 age were vaccinated by 31 January 2019.

⁵ in 97.6% of GP practices reporting

⁶ In 96.2% of GP practices reporting for the childhood collection

Figure 1: GP consultations for flu-like-illness (National to week 19)



RCGP ILI consultation rate, England

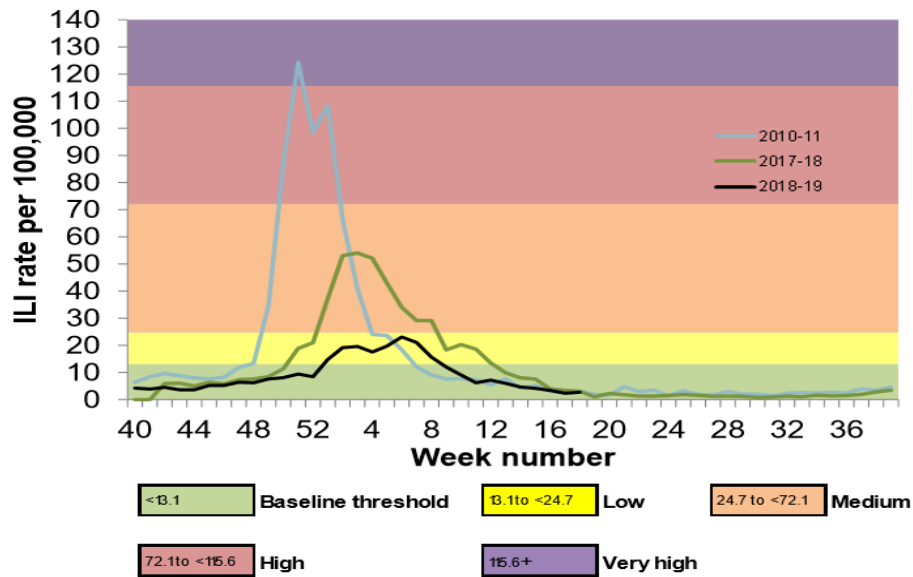


Figure 2: Reported Outbreaks (National to week 19)



Number of acute respiratory outbreaks by institution, UK

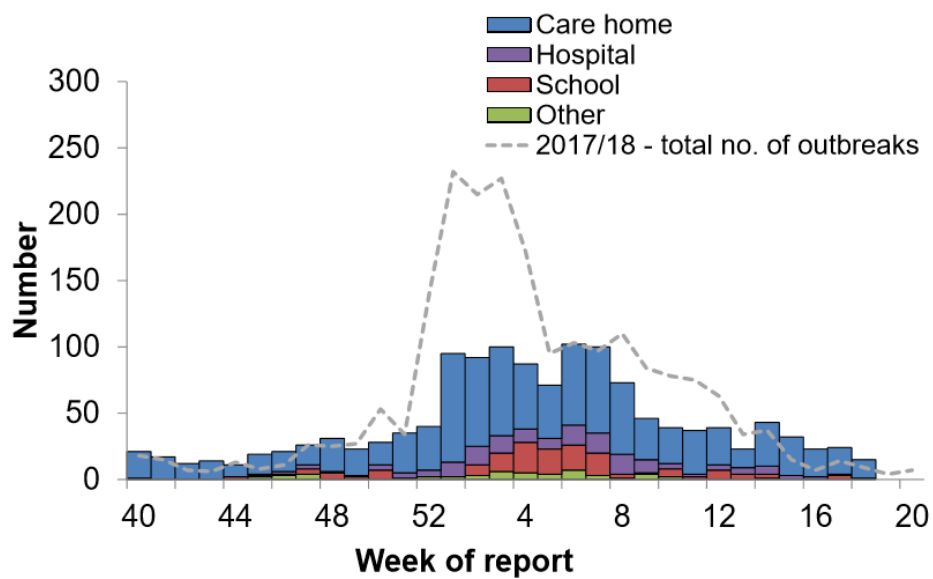


Figure 3: Number and proportion of samples positive for flu (National to week 19)



DataMart: Number and proportion of samples positive for influenza, by type, England

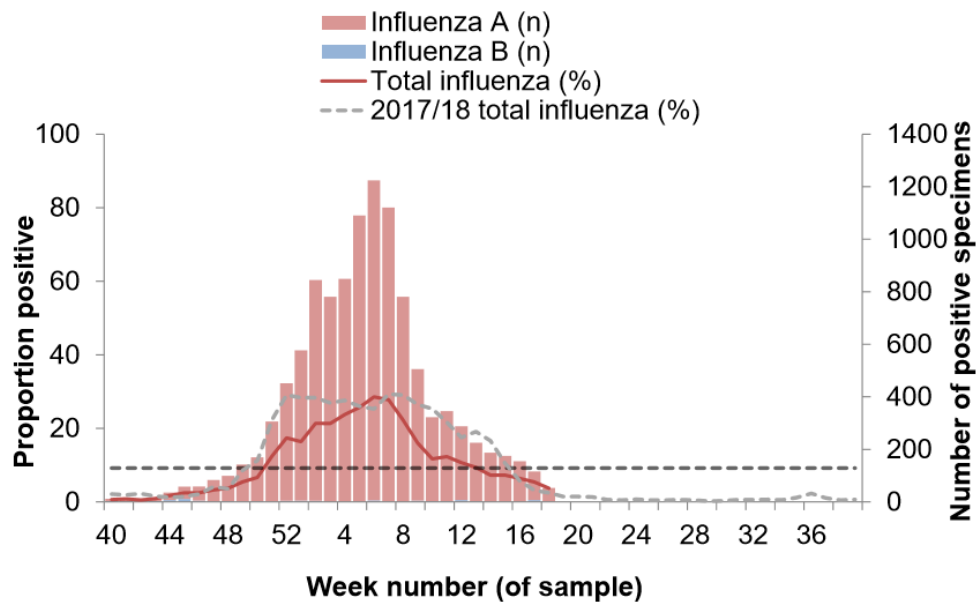


Figure taken from [National Flu Report Surveillance](#) (9th May 2019)

5.2 Local outbreaks

There were 8 outbreaks of influenza-like illness (ILI) reported in Berkshire between 1st September 2017 and 31st March 2018, Influenza A virus was confirmed in seven of the eight outbreaks reported in Berkshire between September 2018 and May 2019

Both CCGs in Berkshire were able to respond well to outbreaks of flu in closed settings through the services commissioned for this purpose and in line with their In and Out of season flu response plans.

6. Communications and resources

In 2018-19, flu vaccine was included as a component of the jointly coordinated PHE and NHS England “Help us Help you” winter campaign. Resources were available from the online PHE Campaign Resources Centre.

Local authorities and CCGs across Berkshire used their social media accounts to enforce national messages on flu vaccine using #Fluvaccine. as well as other winter health messages. A Berkshire press release template was prepared for local modification by local authority public health teams. Leaflets and posters from the national resource centre were distributed to local venues including Children’s centres, childcare settings and local shops by local authority public health teams. Easy-read versions of the leaflet were shared with LA

Learning Disabilities colleagues for use with their clients. East Berkshire CCG placed funded advertising in the “Primary Times” - a publication sent to thousands of parents of young children across Berkshire. They also ran a campaign on a local radio station which contained key messages in both English and Punjabi. Flu vaccine was promoted to carers during National Carer’s Rights Day and to those over 65 or living with long term conditions as part of National Self-Care Week.

Following the announcement of the NHS-funded offer of flu vaccination, local authorities and CCGs communicated directly with local care providers to raise awareness of the offer for residential, nursing and domiciliary care staff and encourage staff to get vaccinated against flu through the development and sharing of a Berkshire ‘Care Home Flu Pack’ via email and by presentation at a Berkshire Care Association training day.

7. Local delivery of flu vaccination programme

Across Berkshire, residents were able to access flu vaccine in a number of ways (Table 1).

Table 1: Access to flu vaccine for eligible groups

Group	Provider
Children aged 2 and 3	Primary Care
Children in School Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	School based programme delivered by Berkshire Healthcare Trust
Special Schools	School based programme delivered by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
Adults aged 65 or above	Primary Care or Community Pharmacy
Adults in clinical risk groups	Primary Care or Community Pharmacy
Children in clinical risk groups	Primary Care (or through special school programme)
Paid and unpaid carers	Primary Care or Community Pharmacy
Pregnant Women	Maternity Unit at Royal Berkshire Hospital, Wexham Park Hospital or Primary Care
Health and social care workers	Via occupational health arrangements and for nursing, residential and domiciliary care workers via GP and Pharmacy following the National announcement

A stakeholder workshop was held in June 2018 this was jointly delivered by Jo Jefferies, Berkshire Shared Public Health Team, Jo Greengrass (East Berks CCGs), and Harpal Aujla, Screening and Immunisation Team, NHS England South - South Central with Berkshire local authority Public Health teams from Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Wokingham and PHE South East, Thames Valley Health Protection Team.

Participants from a range of stakeholder organisation attended, including representatives from East Berkshire and Berkshire West CCGs, GP practices, NHS provider organisations, Public Health England, Residential and Nursing Care providers and public health teams across Berkshire.

The aims of the workshop were to;

- review and reflect on 2017-18 flu season
- understand commissioning intentions for 2018-19

- draw on learning to put in place actions to improve uptake
- review care home preparedness and identify ways to support settings to prevent, prepare for and respond to outbreaks

8. Berkshire Vaccine Uptake

8.1 GP registered patients by Local Authority

Uptake among GP patients aged 65 and over was lower in Berkshire LAs than in England as a whole, except for West Berkshire and Wokingham where it was slightly higher and Bracknell Forest where it was the same. In West Berkshire uptake exceeded the 75% national ambition. All LAs except for Wokingham saw a decrease in uptake compared to 2017-18, this is in line with uptake nationally.

Among under 65's in clinical risk groups, uptake was higher than the England figure in West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest but slightly lower in the other Berkshire LAs. No Berkshire LA achieved the national ambition (55%) in terms of flu vaccine uptake. All LAs in Berkshire saw a decrease in uptake compared to 2017-18, this is in line with uptake nationally

Among pregnant women, uptake was similar to or above the England figure in all LAs with the exception of Slough. No Berkshire LA achieved the national ambition in terms of flu vaccine uptake for this group. No LAs saw an increase in uptake in this group compared to the previous group, except for Slough where uptake was 10% higher than in 2017-18, this increase is in contrast to a decrease in uptake nationally.

Uptake among children aged 2 years was higher than the England figure in all Berkshire LAs apart from Slough where it was lower.

Uptake among children aged 3 years was higher than the England figure in all Berkshire LAs except for Slough and Reading where it was lower. Uptake among 2- and 3-year olds in risk groups were higher than among children not in risk groups in all LAs.

All Berkshire LAs with the exception of Slough reached the lower target of 40% uptake among 2- and 3-year olds. In all LAs, uptake among 3-year olds is lower than among 2-year olds, this is similar to the previous flu season. In line with the national picture, all LAs except Wokingham there was an increase in uptake in both and 2- and 3-year olds compared to 2017-18, Wokingham saw a decrease in uptake among 2-year olds but an increase among 3-year olds. In Slough, whilst uptake was lower than England there was a notable improvement on uptake compared to the previous flu season.

Table 2: Flu vaccine uptake among GP registered patient by LA - Sept 1 2018 to Jan 31 2019 in comparison to 2017/18 time-point

	Risk Group				
	65 and over	Under 65 (at-risk)	All Pregnant Women	2 Years old	3 Years old
Bracknell Forest 2018-19	71.2	50.9	47.6	52.3	56.4
2017-18	73.5	53.9	57	46.3	51.7
Variation	-2.3	-3	-9.4	6	4.7
Reading 2018-19	70.7	45.5	44.6	43.8	43.6
2017-18	72.3	47	45.2	38.8	40.9
Variation	-1.6	-1.5	-0.6	5	2.7
Slough 2018-19	66.9	45.5	46	33.2	36.9
2017-18	69.9	47.5	35.9	26.3	28.1
Variation	-3	-2	10.1	6.9	8.8
West Berkshire 2018-19	76.6	54.3	50.5	60.9	64.2
2017-18	77.6	55.3	52.1	58.1	56.6
Variation	-1	-1	-1.6	2.8	7.6
Windsor and Maidenhead 2018-19	70.4	45.2	46	50.8	52.5
2017-18	71.6	48.6	49.7	44.4	45.1
Variation	-1.2	-3.4	-3.7	6.4	7.4
Wokingham 2018-19	73.3	45.8	51.4	56.8	60.9
2017-18	73.3	48.6	52.4	58.5	57.7
Variation	0	-2.8	-1	-1.7	3.2
England Total 2018-19	71.2	46.7	44.8	43	45
2017-18	72.6	48.9	47.2	42.8	44.2
Variation	-1.4	-2.2	-2.4	0.2	0.8

Data sources: Immform Week 1 flu GP data collection accessed 13.02.2019, National Flu Report summary updated 07.02.2019 and Berkshire Flu Report 2017-18.

8.2 School aged children

In Berkshire, the children’s quadrivalent live attenuated intra-nasal vaccine (LAIV) was delivered in primary schools by a team of school immunisation nurses from Berkshire Health Foundation Trust.

The team arranged and carried out visits at 400 schools across Berkshire, including special schools where all year groups were offered vaccine. All school visits were completed by the end of December with 74 476 doses of vaccine given. “Mop-up clinics” for children who had missed the vaccine school were delivered in all areas. An innovative mop-up session was provided in Slough town centre in collaboration with the Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, using an outreach vehicle. This session was supported by CCG and SBC colleagues and resulted in over 90 vaccinations being given to school-aged children. All LAs achieved a higher uptake than the previous flu season, particularly in Slough. Uptake was highest in West Berkshire at 79.9% overall and lowest in Slough at 44.8%. All LAs achieved the 40% lower ambition, with Bracknell Forest, RBWM, Wokingham and West Berkshire exceeding the 65% upper ambition, see Table 3.

Table 3: Uptake for school year R,1, 2, 3 , 4 and 5 children⁷, by local authority 2018-19

LA	Summary of Flu Vaccine Uptake %						total	Doses given
	School Year							
	R	1	2	3	4	5		
Bracknell Forest	72.0	69.9	72.0	75.7	69.9	67.5	71.7	6850
Slough	47.1	46.7	45.2	44.9	42.9	42.2	44.8	6639
RBWM	71.1	72.4	69.2	69.2	65.4	65.7	68.8	7900
Reading	65.5	64.6	64.2	65.1	64.2	62.6	64.4	7802
West Berkshire	80.9	82.0	80.2	80.6	78.2	77.3	79.9	9627
Wokingham	77.6	78.8	75.6	74.9	74.0	72.1	75.5	10,841
ENGLAND								

Data source: Immform Monthly School-aged Flu data collection (January), updated 12.02.2019, accessed 13.02.2019

⁷ Data is provisional and represents 100% of all Local Authorities (LAs) in England responding to the January 2018 survey. Where a total for England is quoted (e.g. sum of number of patients registered and number vaccinated) this is taken from the 100% of all LAs and is therefore NOT an extrapolated figure for all of England.

8.3 Pharmacy Campaign for adults

As in previous years, in 2018-19 pharmacies signed up to the National Advanced Service could offer flu vaccine to the following groups;

- People aged 65 and over.
- Pregnant women
- Adults in clinical risk group
- Residential, nursing and domiciliary care staff employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients at increased risk from exposure to influenza

National data from the Pharmoutcomes Sonar Informatics, Well and Healthi systems available through the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee indicates that at least 1,270,589 doses were delivered in pharmacies as part of the National Advanced Service. This data shows that the majority of those receiving a flu vaccine in community pharmacy were aged over 65, with between 55% and 80% of the vaccines provided via this service being given to people over 65 years of age. The remainder of vaccine were given to adults in clinical risk groups, people with diabetes accounted for between 4% and 14% and those with chronic respiratory disease accounted for between 6% and 14% of doses. Further breakdown of the risk groups receiving their vaccine in community pharmacy is given in Table 4.

It should be noted that this data shows the eligibility groups of patients who have been recorded as receiving flu vaccination in community pharmacy (to 5th April 2019). Some Pharmacy contractors are not able to use or have decided not to use electronic systems to record administration of vaccines. Therefore, this data does not cover all patients vaccinated in community pharmacy during the 2018-19 flu season and the true number of patients vaccinated by community pharmacists under the National Flu Vaccination Service in 2018/19 will be higher than the numbers presented.

Data from Pharmoutcomes indicates that Pharmacies in Berkshire provided at least 15,475 doses of vaccine (Table 5), an increase of 2169 (16%) compared to the number of doses recorded in the previous flu season. Most Berkshire pharmacies used the Pharmoutcomes system to record the number of vaccines given.

Pharmacies worked hard to deliver the service despite the issues of vaccine availability and the results are encouraging. Pharmacies are confident that they would have been able to increase uptake in staff in residential homes if their service had allowed them to deliver this in the workplace.

Table 4: Flu vaccinations given in Community Pharmacy in England, by risk group

Vaccination eligibility group	PharmOutcomes	Sonar	Well	Healthi
Aged over 65	63.9%	54.4%	63%	79.4%
Asplenia/splenic dysfunction	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%
Carer	4.6%	4.6%	4.9%	1.6%
Chronic heart disease	2.6%	3.8%	3.3%	4%
Chronic kidney disease	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%
Chronic liver disease	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0
Chronic neurological disease	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	0.6%
Chronic respiratory disease	12.6%	13.1%	13.9%	5.6%
Diabetes	7.4%	14.1%	8%	3.7%
Hospice worker	0.2%	0.1%	0%	0.6%
Household contact of immunocompromised individual	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0.6%
Immunosuppression	2.6%	3.2%	2.2%	1.9%
Morbid obesity	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0%
Person in long-stay residential or home	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
Pregnant woman	1.4%	2.6%	1%	0%
Social care workers	1.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%

Data source: [Flu vaccination data from PharmOutcomes, Sonar Informatics, Well and Healthi for 2018-19](#)

Table 5: Berkshire Pharmacies and Flu vaccine doses 2018-19 compared with 2017-19

CCG	Vaccines claimed to March 2018	Vaccines claimed to March 2019
BRACKNELL AND ASCOT CCG	1,742	2325
NEWBURY AND DISTRICT CCG	1,441	1984
NORTH & WEST READING CCG	1,415	1646
SLOUGH CCG	1,089	1207
SOUTH READING CCG	2,028	1875
WINDSOR, ASCOT AND MAIDENHEAD CCG	2,383	2479
WOKINGHAM CCG	3,208	3959
Berkshire CCGs	13,306	15,475
Thames Valley	37,318	

Data source: PharmOutcomes data, Thames Valley LPC

8.4 Healthcare workers (NHS Flu Fighters)

Frontline HCWs involved in direct patient care in acute trusts, ambulance trusts, mental health trusts, foundation trusts, primary care, and independent sector health care providers are encouraged to receive seasonal influenza vaccination annually to protect themselves and their patients from influenza.

PHE coordinated and managed a seasonal influenza vaccine uptake survey of all 246 NHS organisations (acute, ambulance, mental health, primary care, local NHS England teams and foundation trusts) in England and produced monthly provisional data on vaccinations allowing the National Health Service (NHS) and Department of Health (DH) to track the progress of the programme.

Nationally, uptake among healthcare workers with direct patient care (based on 98.8% of NHS Trusts) was 70.3%, an increase from the 2017-18 figure of 68.7%.

Uptake for frontline healthcare workers in Berkshire overall and by staff group is outlined in Table 6. Uptake in Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust and Frimley Health Foundation Trust appears to have fallen compared to the previous flu season. Although Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust saw a decrease in percentage uptake, the number of HCW receiving a vaccine was higher this season than in 2017-18.

It should be noted that requirements for the CQUIN data collection state that staff leavers must be removed from the denominator data removing, addition of new starters and addition of students, bank, agency and third-party organisation staff that have patient contact into the denominator data. This requires the denominator data to be updated each month prior to submission to reflect the dynamic nature of the workforce being vaccinated. As a result, percentage uptake each month could go down as well as up as the campaign progressed.

Table 6: Vaccine uptake among frontline healthcare workers

Organisation	2017-18			2018-19			
	All HCWs in direct patient care	Seasonal flu doses given since 1 Sept 2017	Vaccine uptake (%)	All HCWs in direct patient care	Seasonal flu doses given since 1 Sept 2018	Vaccine uptake (%)	No. HCW declines
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust	4,860	3,042	62.6	5,059	3,123	61.7	493
Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust	3,395	2,423	71.4	3,309	2,206	66.7	114
Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust	6,947	5,006	72.1	7,579	4,345	57.3	97
South Central Ambulance Trust*	2,559	1,621	63.3	-	-	-	-
England	1,025,547	704,242	68.7	1,051,851	739,187	70.3	

Source: [Seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in healthcare workers \(HCWs\) in England, provisional monthly data from 1st September 2018 to 28th February 2019](#)

* Organisation is recorded as a “Non-Responder” at the time the provisional data was published

8.5 LA Health and Social Care staff and others

NHS England funded flu vaccination for workers employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients at increased risk from exposure to influenza. This is a specific cohort of workers who may be at risk of transmitting flu to vulnerable residents in a closed setting.

There is currently no data available regarding the uptake of this offer as no definitive denominator population data is available. Data on the numbers of doses provided to workers under this scheme in GP practices and pharmacies may become available at a later date.

Most of the residential care provision in Berkshire is through privately run care homes and nursing homes. Employers are still responsible for providing flu vaccine to their employees under occupational health arrangements, this means that care homes, nursing homes and local authorities are responsible for providing flu vaccine for frontline health and social care workers that they employ. Local authorities may also provide vaccine to staff members as part of business continuity arrangements.

During the 2018-19 flu season, some Berkshire LAs provided flu vaccine to their directly employed social care workers and to some other groups of staff for business continuity reasons. An outline of how schemes were funded and delivered together with uptake or doses given is show in Local Communications and Engagement Activities

Table 7: Local communications and engagement activities

Organisation	Actions
<p>LA Public Health Teams</p> <p>(for more detailed information for each LA see Appendix 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting flu vaccine through joint LA and CCG communications initiatives and increased use of targeted social media to promote vaccination to specific groups – see Section Error! Reference source not found. for more detail. • use of corporate and public health social media channels to communicate with residents • targeted social media campaign to parents with young children through Children’s Centres and local nurseries • internal comms to LA staff, including LA newsletters, intranet articles and internal screen-savers • attending local events and workshops, such as National Carers Rights Day • distributing national campaign materials to other local organisations, such as children’s centres, child minders and organisations supporting older people and people with learning disabilities • promoting through LA newsletters and websites • providing leaflets to older people at lunch clubs and when collecting a free bus-pass • placing promotional materials in community settings used by older people and young families • working with care staff to advocate to those with stable neurological conditions living in the community • series of communication to care home providers including a letter for HWB to go to residential care homes, encouraging uptake of NHS-funded vaccine for care workers caring for vulnerable residents • resources for people with Learning Disabilities circulated to key organisations • using links into parish councils to communicate in other community settings and village events • participation in East Berkshire Flu Action Group, West Berkshire Flu Group and NHS England Thames Valley Flu Teleconference • working closely with BHFT School Immunisation Team to support delivery of programme, including DPH letter to non-engaging schools in Berkshire and advertising to school and mop up clinics through LA websites and directly with schools for onward promotion to parents - see Section Error! Reference source not found. for more detail.
<p>East Berkshire CCG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • numerous press releases were issued locally featuring different target groups and shared with media, partners, stakeholders, on our websites and via social media • media interviews on BBC Radio Berkshire and on Asian Star radio station in Slough • short flu videos starring local GPs were shared via social media, partners • coordinated a two-week radio campaign on Asian Star which contained key messages targeting parents of children aged 2-9 in both English and Hindi • funded a paid advert in the Primary Times magazine which is delivered to parents of young children across Berkshire.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • worked with Language Line, the national children’s flu poster was translated into Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and Polish and shared with all local partners • As a pilot, worked with two practices in Bracknell to run a mini social media campaign which included photos of people vaccinated holding an A4 paper with #Fluvaccine • the team has worked closely with the school-aged immunisation programme lead to advertise the mop-up flu clinics and attended the clinic held in the RBFRS Fire vehicle • Spoke with local people at the event in Slough to understand their reasons for having or not having a flu vaccine • flu updates for GP Practices across East Berkshire have been included in the weekly bulletins • the team has helped arrange and co-ordinate publicity for staff flu clinics which have been well attended this year • taking part in the NHSE flu comms call updating on local progress and sharing ideas • Included a piece on the importance being vaccinated in the East Berkshire CCG quarterly stakeholder newsletter • training sessions for practices on improving flu uptake and support were offered particularly in WAM through BCF money, however this offer was not well taken up
<p>Berkshire West CCG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS partners across Berkshire West including West Berkshire CCGs, Royal Berkshire FT and Berkshire Healthcare FT developed a joint winter planning communications strategy that uses NHS England messaging throughout the period of September 2018 – the end of March 2019. • Joint winter planning communications strategy was shared with and approved by the local A&E Delivery Board • The messages were used widely in the press and social media as well as in GP practices via TV screens. GPs and healthcare professionals were also regularly updated • Information was shared with practices through the weekly GP bulletin
<p>Community Pharmacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LPC funded a Google advertising campaign for the first few weeks of the season to raise awareness of the vaccines and the availability from pharmacies

9. Collated feedback from local partners

An evaluation template was provided to flu leads in LAs, Trusts and CCGs in March 2019, a summary of key points is provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Summary of feedback from flu leads across Berkshire

<p>Public Facing Comms and engagement</p>	<p>What did you do differently to last year?</p>	<p>NHS England commissioned the CHIS to write to parents of all 2 and 3-year old children in Berkshire to remind them to arrange for their child to receive nasal vaccine at the GP practice. This initiative was also supported by targeted comms messages to parents from all partners.</p> <p>LA and CCG support to BHFT to coordinate and deliver a weekend mop-up session. In Slough, collaboration with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service was a successful intervention enabling over 90 vaccines to be given to school-aged children.</p> <p>SBC sent tailored letters out to all primary schools informing them of their uptake in the previous season and explaining the importance of increasing uptake.</p> <p>LA flu leads meeting with key partners ahead of flu season to thank them for support in previous year, sharing rationale for and impact of the flu vaccination campaign on residents and staff.</p> <p>More use of social media, using messaging aligned to National Help us Help You campaign rather than verbal or email communication with stakeholders.</p> <p>Provision of Community Flu Packs (ordered via PHE Campaign Centre) to leisure services, libraries and key council buildings in Reading.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest Council promoted Flu ‘targeted messages’ as part of the Winter Wellbeing Campaign working closely with East Berkshire CCG and Frimley ICS colleagues.</p>
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	<p>What went well?</p>	<p>Promotion of the innovative mop up event and subsequent media coverage helped to raise the profile of flu vaccination in Slough</p> <p>Engagement between PH and Early Years / Children’s Centre colleagues went very well in Slough</p> <p>Joint work from Wokingham PH team and Provider to engage with a school that initially refused to enable nurses to bring work smart-phones on the premises resulted in a change of policy and greater recognition of the work of the team</p> <p>Incorporating flu messaging into the WinterWatch scheme in Reading generated increased contacts and engagement on social media compared to previous season in Reading</p> <p>DPH letter directly to Head-teacher of a formerly non-engaging school in West Berkshire resulted in the provider gaining access to the school to deliver the vaccine</p> <p>Limited time at the BFC Head Teachers’ Forum, competing with a lot of different agenda items (this is also reflected in feedback from other LAs)</p>
	<p>Any challenges?</p>	<p>Certain resources used in previous years could not be used as they had been withdrawn for example Polish language posters for Flu</p>
	<p>Ideas for improving for next year?</p>	<p>Using insight from a health beliefs research project may help to identify cultural and other barriers to vaccination in Slough</p> <p>Creation of resources for Early Years settings in West Berkshire that include messages for the whole family not just 2- and 3-year olds. This would draw on herd immunity from high vaccine uptake in children as a protecting factor for older generation</p> <p>More LAs using the individualised letters to schools may impact on uptake, particularly for the older year groups where uptake is lower</p> <p>Ensuring that seasonal flu and winter health are Agenda items on key council</p>

		<p>groups such as Carers Strategy Group, Adult Safeguarding Board, Learning Disability Partnership etc</p> <p>Development and use of more video clips to promote flu, particularly children-specific</p>
<p>LA staff flu offer / NHS Staff flu offer</p>	<p>What did you do differently to last year?</p>	<p>Set up a Borough-wide flu steering group in Slough</p> <p>RBHFT focussed promotional posters on key messages including incidence of flu infections in the Trust in the preceding season, fact that flu infection may be asymptomatic whilst infectious.</p> <p>BFC PH team were able to obtain denominator figures for staff offered for the first time</p> <p>West Berkshire council engaged with staff across the council to become flu champions to help spread key messages and combat myths</p> <p>RBHFT developed a focused theme of promotional posters on key messages including prevalence of flu virus in RBFT during 2018 and how around 50% of confirmed cases may be subclinical.</p> <p>RBHFT linked with Unicef and pledged to donate 10 tetanus jabs for every 1 flu jab given to staff 'Get a jab, give a jab' campaign linked the staff campaign with Unicef, pledging to donate 10 tetanus vaccines for every flu vaccine given through the "Get a jab, give a jab" campaign.</p> <p>BHFT promoted the vaccine to all staff groups across all sites, utilising staff meetings and the staff intranet as well as other channels. Peer vaccinators enable vaccine to be delivered in and out of core daytime hours.</p>
	<p>What was your uptake / no of doses delivered and how does this compare to previous year(s)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough - 62 staff were vaccinated, an increase of 30% on the previous flu season • Wokingham – 298 staff were vaccinated, an increase of 17.5% on the previous flu season • Reading – RBC did not offer flu vaccine to any staff groups but promoted

		<p>NHS vaccination to all eligible groups and provided information on where other staff could obtain flu vaccines e.g. via purchasing at local pharmacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Berkshire - 371 staff were vaccinated, a 10% decrease from the previous season, but a 15% increase compared to 2016-17 • Bracknell Forest – 177 staff were vaccinated which is very similar to the previous year (172) • RBWM – RBWM did not offer flu vaccine to any staff groups <p>For Trust uptake please see Table 6: Vaccine uptake among frontline healthcare workers</p>
<p>What went well?</p>		<p>Improved engagement with departmental heads around flu in Slough</p> <p>Staff at Wokingham BC proactively contacting flu leads ahead of flu season to ask when they could book their vaccine appointment</p> <p>RBHFT ‘Get a jab give a jab’ campaign was well received by staff.</p> <p>Four staff clinics were delivered in West Berkshire and were well attended by a mix of staff groups.</p>
<p>Any challenges?</p>		<p>Myths continue to circulate among staff as with the general public, as evidenced by the Slough Staff Survey</p> <p>Reducing budgets may impact on staff flu offers where this is funded through the PH budget</p> <p>Ceasing to provide staff flu vaccine did not adversely impact on service delivery this year, however this may not be the case if there were higher levels of flu circulating.</p> <p>It is challenging for staff to promote vaccine to others if they are not able to access vaccine themselves</p> <p>Running the staff clinics in West Berkshire Council via a local pharmacist was challenging to coordinate, with commitment being dependent on staffing and stock.</p>

		<p>A 30% increase in cost of the West Berkshire programme meant that clinic time was reduced to 3 hours per clinic compared with a whole day for the same cost in the previous season, this impacted on the ability to offer more vaccine doses and meant that some staff who requested vaccination had to be refused.</p>
	Ideas for improving for next year?	<p>Results from a survey of staff will be used to identify barriers to staff accepting vaccination in Slough BC</p> <p>Using data on sickness absences due to flu-like-illness to build a financial case to demonstrate potential value of a wider staff vaccination offer in Slough BC</p> <p>RBHFT will focus their staff campaign using insight from the reason given by staff for declining their vaccine</p> <p>Developing a prioritisation framework to guide staff vaccination policy to target those working in frontline roles with vulnerable groups in West Berkshire</p>
Vaccine supply / distribution	What went well?	<p>CCGs provided support in liaising with practices with shortage in first instance to help with orders of aTIV where shortage was detected</p> <p>Later in the season, CCGs worked with NHS England on redistribution of any aTIV and QIV surplus to surgeries in need</p> <p>CCGs also liaised with PHE and SCWCSU to send out targeted messages to practices which were achieving below the national average to encourage them to keep vaccinating</p>
	Any challenges?	<p>The phased delivery of aTIV vaccine resulted in temporary shortages of supply at GP and Community Pharmacy</p> <p>Some planned clinics had to be cancelled and postponed and patients had to be redirected to local pharmacies</p> <p>Feedback from practices indicated that some patients did not come back to practice to be vaccinated. Clinics for other cohorts were also affected and there was a shortage of QIV later in the season</p>

		RBHFT was unable to obtain aTIV to offer to older staff
	Ideas for improving for next year?	<p>Enabling providers to obtain vaccines with a timescale that is better aligned to their own service provision.</p> <p>If data on location of vaccine stocks was available to CCGs this would assist with redistribution</p>
Partnership working	What went well?	<p>Good working relationships between PHE South East, CCGs, out of hours providers and Care Settings to enable outbreak response in care settings</p> <p>Collaborative working between NHS England, CCGs and providers was required to manage the impact of introducing a new vaccine combined with the phased distribution model. Partners worked well to re-distribute vaccine, although this required large amounts of staff time and risked impact in other areas during the busy winter season.</p> <p>The East and West Berkshire Flu Action Groups are seen as a valuable forum for collaborative action around flu; engagement in both groups has increased since the previous season.</p> <p>Excellent relationships between School Immunisation Team, LA, CCG and other partners has supported the school-aged campaign to perform strongly.</p> <p>Close working with the School Immunisation Team enabled LA partners to localise their communications to align with the timetable of school visits across the Borough</p>
	Any challenges?	Teams in all organisations are becoming leaner, meaning those leading on flu have increasing numbers of competing priorities to manage
	Ideas for improving for next year?	<p>Targeted Out of School/ Home educated population</p> <p>Using MECC (Champions) as one of the channels for flu messaging and engagement</p>

2018-19 Berkshire Flu Report

Jo Jefferies, Public Health Services for Berkshire
May 2019

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10. Local Communications and Engagement Activities

Table 7: Local communications and engagement activities

Organisation	Actions
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<p>East Berkshire CCG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • numerous press releases were issued locally featuring different target groups and shared with media, partners, stakeholders, on our websites and via social media • media interviews on BBC Radio Berkshire and on Asian Star radio station in Slough • short flu videos starring local GPs were shared via social media, partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinated a two-week radio campaign on Asian Star which contained key messages targeting parents of children aged 2-9 in both English and Hindi • funded a paid advert in the Primary Times magazine which is delivered to parents of young children across Berkshire. • worked with Language Line, the national children's flu poster was translated into Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and Polish and shared with all local partners • As a pilot, worked with two practices in Bracknell to run a mini social media campaign which included photos of people vaccinated holding an A4 paper with #Fluvaccine • the team has worked closely with the school-aged immunisation programme lead to advertise the mop-up flu clinics and attended the clinic held in the RBFRS Fire vehicle • Spoke with local people at the event in Slough to understand their reasons for having or not having a flu vaccine • flu updates for GP Practices across East Berkshire have been included in the weekly bulletins • the team has helped arrange and co-ordinate publicity for staff flu clinics which have been well attended this year • taking part in the NHSE flu comms call updating on local progress and sharing ideas • Included a piece on the importance being vaccinated in the East Berkshire CCG quarterly stakeholder newsletter • training sessions for practices on improving flu uptake and support were offered particularly in WAM through BCF money, however this offer was not well taken up
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11. Collated feedback from local partners

An evaluation template was provided to flu leads in LAs, Trusts and CCGs in March 2019, a summary of key points is provided in Table 8.

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		<p>groups such as Carers Strategy Group, Adult Safeguarding Board, Learning Disability Partnership etc</p> <p>Development and use of more video clips to promote flu, particularly children-specific</p>
<p>LA staff flu offer / NHS Staff flu offer</p>	<p>What did you do differently to last year?</p>	<p>Set up a Borough-wide flu steering group in Slough</p> <p>RBHFT focussed promotional posters on key messages including incidence of flu infections in the Trust in the preceding season, fact that flu infection may be asymptomatic whilst infectious.</p> <p>BFC PH team were able to obtain denominator figures for staff offered for the first time</p> <p>West Berkshire council engaged with staff across the council to become flu champions to help spread key messages and combat myths</p> <p>RBHFT developed a focused theme of promotional posters on key messages including prevalence of flu virus in RBFT during 2018 and how around 50% of confirmed cases may be subclinical.</p> <p>RBHFT linked with Unicef and pledged to donate 10 tetanus jabs for every 1 flu jab given to staff 'Get a jab, give a jab' campaign linked the staff campaign with Unicef, pledging to donate 10 tetanus vaccines for every flu vaccine given through the "Get a jab, give a jab" campaign.</p> <p>BHFT promoted the vaccine to all staff groups across all sites, utilising staff meetings and the staff intranet as well as other channels. Peer vaccinators enable vaccine to be delivered in and out of core daytime hours.</p>
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<p>Vaccine supply / distribution</p>	<p>What went well?</p>	<p>CCGs provided support in liaising with practices with shortage in first instance to help with orders of aTIV where shortage was detected</p> <p>Later in the season, CCGs worked with NHS England on redistribution of any aTIV and QIV surplus to surgeries in need</p> <p>CCGs also liaised with PHE and SCWCSU to send out targeted messages to practices which were achieving below the national average to encourage them to keep vaccinating</p>
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Partnership working	What went well?	<p>Good working relationships between PHE South East, CCGs, out of hours providers and Care Settings to enable outbreak response in care settings</p> <p>Collaborative working between NHS England, CCGs and providers was required to manage the impact of introducing a new vaccine combined with the phased distribution model. Partners worked well to re-distribute vaccine, although this required large amounts of staff time and risked impact in other areas during the busy winter season.</p> <p>The East and West Berkshire Flu Action Groups are seen as a valuable forum for collaborative action around flu; engagement in both groups has increased since the previous season.</p> <p>Excellent relationships between School Immunisation Team, LA, CCG and other partners has supported the school-aged campaign to perform strongly.</p> <p>Close working with the School Immunisation Team enabled LA partners to localise their communications to align with the timetable of school visits across the Borough</p>
	Any challenges?	Teams in all organisations are becoming leaner, meaning those leading on flu have increasing numbers of competing priorities to manage
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2018-19 Berkshire Flu Report

Jo Jefferies, Public Health Services for Berkshire
May 2019

APPENDIX 1: Feedback on Local Authority Flu plans 2018-19

<p>Bracknell Forest</p>	 BFC_DRAFT_HWBB Flu update_aug2018
<p>Reading</p>	 Berkshire Flu Leads_201920 Evaluat
<p>Slough</p>	 Berkshire Flu Leads_201920 Evaluat
<p>West Berkshire</p>	 Berkshire Flu Leads_2018-19 Evaluat
<p>RBWM</p>	
<p>Wokingham</p>	 Berkshire Flu Leads_201920 Evaluat