

**Q1. The report identifies the numbers of patients in each cohort for flu vaccines this year (with the additional age group of 50-64 year olds). Can you confirm how many flu vaccines are available across the Buckinghamshire system to meet the target of 75% in each cohort and how confident are you that you can meet this target?**

**General points:**

- Primary Care order stock in Dec/Jan for the following year
- Therefore when the flu programme was widened and the target % increased it was too late to increase flu orders in general practice and this year any additional extra stock has been taken centrally for allocation.
- The Chief Pharmacist for SE Region advises there is enough stock held centrally and as it is released people should try regularly for appointments if none are available on first try with their pharmacist
- NHSE advise there will be sufficient stock and it will be released. Currently the timescales and plans for this are not confirmed.
- The National planned communications campaign has been put on hold due to early high demand and current limited stock levels.
- Vaccination rates against each group will be monitored at practice level (being led by BOB) and specific support will be given where required to increase vaccination rate.
- CCG are in regular communication with practices around stock, issues and providing support at individual practice level

**It isn't possible to give the number of vaccines available across Buckinghamshire for several reasons:**

- Pharmacists and general practice are independent businesses and so will not declare stock levels
- Flu vaccines are delivered in batches over a period of time
- Flu vaccine is co-ordinated centrally rather than locally

**However it is possible to give an indication of the position of Buckinghamshire in relation to flu, the good progress made and the challenges faced. Position on groups:**

- **Over 65 year olds:** Achieved 72.54% uptake in 19/20 and confidence that 75% will be achieved as stock will have been ordered to reflect last years uptake in general practice and entire system is seeing early high uptake levels
- Plans in place to ensure vaccinations given to all care home and housebound patients.
- **Vulnerable Groups in under 65's:** Historical uptake has been lower, below 50% uptake rate. General practice order is at expected levels so currently do not have enough vaccines to achieve 75% alone. Pharmacists are seeing high demand and from 01/09 to 01/10 delivered 11,897 vaccines (in total) with an ongoing schedule booked.
- Pharmacists have stopped private vaccinations and are fully focused on the identified at risk groups and are reprioritising appointments to support

- **Maternity:** BHT has a planned programme to deliver vaccinations to approx. 900 women, last year they delivered 17. Pregnant women can also access their GP and pharmacy.
- **School age children:** Vaccinations in an additional 54 schools this year to include year 7s, this will be 56,000 vaccines in 6 weeks
- **2/3 years olds:** Vaccinations opened early and no concerns about stock raised
- **Staff:** Vaccination programmes started and 528 delivered on the first day in BHT
- **Current position on 50-64 year olds**
- **Update - Vaccination of the 50 to 64 Year Olds**
- *Further clarity on the position with regards to vaccinating the 50-64-year-old cohort from NHSE/I is below:*
- *At the beginning of November, the national team will undertake a review of vaccine availability. This will inform the eligibility of the 50-64 cohort. Depending on vaccine availability the offer may be to a subset of this age group. Guidance will be issued in November which will clarify the proportion of this age group which will be eligible for vaccination. Any 50-64-year-old in an at-risk group or a household contact of a shielding patient is currently eligible as part of the higher risk cohort.*
- In summary there has been unprecedented early demand that has exacerbated problems with stock levels. Stock levels are identified as a National problem with reassurance from NHSE that the stock will become available; however timescales and method for this are unclear. This is making for a challenging position for everyone.

**Q2. How well prepared are the Care Homes in Buckinghamshire, in terms of staffing levels, access to PPE and access to flu vaccines for staff and patients?**

- Care homes are more prepared now than at the beginning of the Covid emergency and in general issues around staffing have stabilised.
- Systematic Covid testing is now being undertaken. A relatively small number of isolated cases staff members and residents are being identified as positive with the majority being asymptomatic. It is promising that in these cases there has been no further spread within the home
- Access to PPE is now much more reliable and there is now no need for a local mechanism to provide emergency supplies
- The majority of care homes have received training on infection prevention control
- The Council is maintaining a provider support cell which continues to provide care providers with information and advice and access to additional support if required through an enhanced care offer which is delivered in partnership with the NHS
- CCG are leading on the delivery of flu vaccinations, and the Council is working to promote and encourage care staff to be vaccinated

**Q3. In the event of another surge in Hospital Covid cases, what lessons have been learnt around the Hospital Discharge process (i.e. patients being discharged to care homes) and what improvements have been put in place over the next few months to ensure safe discharges from the Hospital setting?**

- A key change is that all patients will have been tested for Covid within 48 hours of their discharge to a care home
- There has been a significant amount of support given to care homes including infection control training and what is described as a care home support package from the system set up.
- In June a joint review between ASC and BHT was carried out and it highlighted a number of actions to improve the quality of discharge:
  - To have a clear policy of how to identify appropriate people for transfer
  - For Datix (incident reporting and risk management software for healthcare) to be completed following more than three ward moves, as multiple ward moves are a risk to patient safety.
  - Agreed protocol for information sharing with the new care provider to include updated blood chemistry and infection status
  - Formal capacity assessment proforma to be used on all Discharge to Assess Transfers
  - Single Joint Assessment to be updated to ensure all areas of the persons care is included in it (such as skin care)

Finally Buckinghamshire partners have completed a formal review against the latest hospital discharge guidance issued in August 2020 and have an action plan to achieve full compliance with this guidance by the end of November 2020. This includes a focus on home first discharge.

#### **Microsoft Team Chat Bar questions**

**1. One member has highlighted that care homes are waiting up to 9 days for the result of a Covid test making keeping residents and staff safe very difficult. Is this issue being addressed?**

#### **Response:**

This was a national issue (we don't administer or process tests) and timelines are starting to improve. We monitor it daily. We are also not seeing any onward transmission in care homes where staff are identified as Covid positive which is good news.

**2. Is there a national comms campaign around Think 111 First?**

**Response:** Yes. There is a national Comms campaign for NHS 111 First - this will begin in December and we are waiting for marketing collateral to support this locally.

**3. What is the contingency plan if the vaccines don't arrive? Assume you are prioritising certain groups?**

**Response:** The answer to these questions is included in the full written response above in regards to confidence around the full amount of vaccines needed and prioritising certain groups.

**4. We'd like to see the comms plan for promoting vaccinations, particularly around educating additional groups being pulled into the programme.**

**Response:** It has been agreed that the Comms plan will be shared with HASC (**Action;** Kim Parfitt)

**5. It would be great to have the national portal details or a contact in your team so anyone with problems can be signposted effectively.**

**Response:**

Testing for care homes via the national portal has been rolled out in stages. Eligible care settings received communication direct from the government testing team with information on how to sign up. The Integrated Commissioning Service has also disseminated this comms through our own regular emails to providers. As the testing programme has rolled out we have supported homes to sign up and have also assisted with any queries or blockages that have been experienced. As the programme has embedded, the national support and guidance has continued to develop and there is comprehensive guidance on the gov.uk portal on the testing process. Regular webinars are also run nationally to support care homes with testing.

The central source of information is the gov.uk website:

Portal: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-care-home>

Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#care-home>

Currently the portal is open to all CQC regulated care homes. The next step will be a single round of testing for some supported living and extra care settings. We are currently working with the national testing team to identify which of our settings meet the government criteria for this. We expect routine testing to follow once learning from the initial round of testing has been considered. Again, once eligible service have been agreed they will be invited to register and the Integrated Commissioning Service will assist where required.