

August 2017

PSNC Briefing 062/17: Flu Vaccination Service press release template

This template press release provides some suggested text for LPCs to use with local media outlets. The areas marked **xx** should be completed with the LPC region in question.

LPCs may wish to substitute the other highlighted areas with local information, e.g. to give local vaccination rates, or include information about local services.

The quotes from a local community pharmacist and LPC representative below are suggested comments that may give LPCs an idea of the direction local quotes could take, but they will need to be attributed to relevant local people.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Melinda Mabbutt, Communications Officer](#).

Local community pharmacies hoping for record-breaking flu vaccination season

Community pharmacy teams in **xx** are this week starting to offer free NHS flu jabs and they are hoping for a record-breaking year. In the 2016-17 flu season, nearly one million people chose to have their flu jab administered in a community pharmacy – this year pharmacies in **xx** want to help the sector to make it past the one million mark.

As part of the NHS Flu Vaccination Service, all adults aged 65 years and over, and those aged 18 years or over and in clinical risk groups, can receive a free of charge NHS flu jab at community pharmacies across **xx**, often without the need for an appointment. People in at-risk groups include pregnant women and those with certain medical conditions including asthma and diabetes. Pharmacists will be administering the same flu jab as those offered by GPs, and patients' GP practices will be notified that they have been vaccinated.

The NHS Flu Vaccination Service provided by community pharmacists offers people a convenient location in which to be vaccinated, often on a walk-in basis. This can help the NHS to ensure that many people as possible who need the vaccination, receive it, helping to meet World Health Organization vaccination targets. Patients have been overwhelmingly positive in their feedback on the pharmacy service in the past.

Community pharmacists in 8,451 pharmacies across England provided 950,765 flu jabs to patients under the national NHS Flu Vaccination Service in 2016/17. On average, 113 flu jabs were carried out by each participating pharmacy, although three pharmacists greatly exceeded this by completing over 1,000 NHS flu jabs each. **[If your area includes a record-breaking pharmacist, you may like to ask the local media if they would like to feature them!]**

xxx [local community pharmacist] said:

“As a community pharmacist, I am really excited about the start of this year's Flu Vaccination Service. I have been offering vaccinations and other public health services for several years and my patients have been extremely positive about these. Last year we vaccinated **xx** patients, and I'm really hoping to beat that this year! There is so much that community pharmacists and their teams can do to help people with their medicines and their health.

Community pharmacies are the most accessible healthcare locations; we offer convenient access to medicines and a range of services without the need for an appointment. This will be of particular value in flu jabs, where we can really help the NHS to meet its vaccination targets. In 2016/17, more than 70% of all community pharmacies in England provided the national service to almost one million people. This shows that patients value the convenience of being able to choose to have their NHS flu jab from their local pharmacy.”

xxx [LPC representative] said:

“Community pharmacy provision of NHS flu jabs this flu season means that once again many eligible adult patients will have greater access to this service. Many people may choose pharmacy because they are unable to attend GP clinics due to factors such as their work hours and because they can visit pharmacies in a variety of locations and without the need to book an appointment.

Community pharmacists are looking forward to providing the service and we are keen to work with colleagues in general practice to help ensure that as many eligible people as possible are vaccinated this year.”

Notes for Editors

Further information about NHS flu vaccinations

More details on the annual programme for flu vaccination is included in the annual flu letter: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flu-immunisation-programme-plan>

Additional background information on the pharmacy Flu Vaccination Service is available on the PSNC website: psnc.org.uk/flu

Further information about community pharmacy

Community pharmacists are regulated healthcare professionals. Their training includes a four-year degree along with a year working in practice followed by examinations. Pharmacists are experts in medicines and are regulated by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). There are around 11,700 community pharmacies in England and in 2016/17 8,451 (71.2%) signed up to provide the national Flu Vaccination Service after their pharmacists undertook the required training.

More than 99% of people living in areas of the highest deprivation are within a 20-minute walk of a community pharmacy. Around 99% of community pharmacies in England now have private consultation rooms. Pharmacies use these to provide a range of public health and other services including services to help people to get the most benefit from their medicines and to lead healthier lives.

Contact

xxx Local Pharmaceutical Committee represents community pharmacy contractors (owners) in **xxx**. For further information on this press release please contact:

[Contact details including phone and email]