

Fighting flu in a rural area

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Introduction

North Yorkshire is England's largest county spread over **3,000** square miles.



There are approximately **2,500** social care staff employed by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) in **53** settings, plus around **8,000** staff in commissioned services, working in **199** privately owned Care Homes and **91** privately owned Domiciliary Care Agencies.



Uptake of the flu vaccine amongst social care staff in North Yorkshire has historically been low.

Aim:

to increase uptake of the seasonal influenza vaccine amongst all health and social care staff in a rural area.

Methods and reflections

What did we do?

Worked with pharmacies to:

- Set up a patient group direction (PGD) enabling them to vaccinate health and adult services staff not eligible through the national flu programme
- Piloted a pre-pay voucher scheme from www.fluvouchers.co.uk
- Invited a pharmacist to vaccinate care home staff at a county wide network meeting

What did we learn?

- Pharmacies and staff are familiar with the NYCC PGD and process for claiming payment
- The PGD took time to develop and sign off
- Only 15 pharmacies out of 113 signed up to the PGD which left large areas unprovided for
- The pre-pay vouchers were popular with staff, easy to use and most pharmacies accepted them. However it is not possible to track whether the pre-pay vouchers have been used and who by
- Inviting a pharmacist to vaccinate on site during large team meetings was a success
- The late national decision to include some health and social care staff led to delays in planning
- We have struggled to engage with social care providers commissioned by NYCC to identify what support they need to increase and monitor uptake

What did we do?

Commissioned a hospital trust to:

- Vaccinate staff at a large county wide meeting
- Allow NYCC employees to access hospital staff drop-ins across the county

What did we learn?

- Bringing vaccines to staff was successful – large numbers of staff (60 out of 86 attendees – 70%) were vaccinated at a large meeting
- Presentations to staff at the same time as having the vaccine available increased uptake. Powerful messages were used in presentations which helped increase uptake e.g. *77% of people with flu have no symptoms* and that *one third of flu deaths are in previously healthy people*
- Timescales did not allow a full procurement exercise. Capacity issues prevented additional on-site drop ins being offered
- The hospital trust is not coterminous with NYCC boundaries – not all areas had access to hospital drop-ins

What did we do?

Monitored uptake of the flu vaccine amongst staff by:

- Introducing an incentive – staff reporting having had the vaccine were entered into a prize draw for £250 of shopping vouchers
- Asking all managers to report uptake for their teams through a spreadsheet

What did we learn?

- Ethical issues have been raised about asking staff if they have been vaccinated –and some staff are reluctant to disclose
- Collating returns has been time consuming. Not all teams have returned forms and some data are incomplete

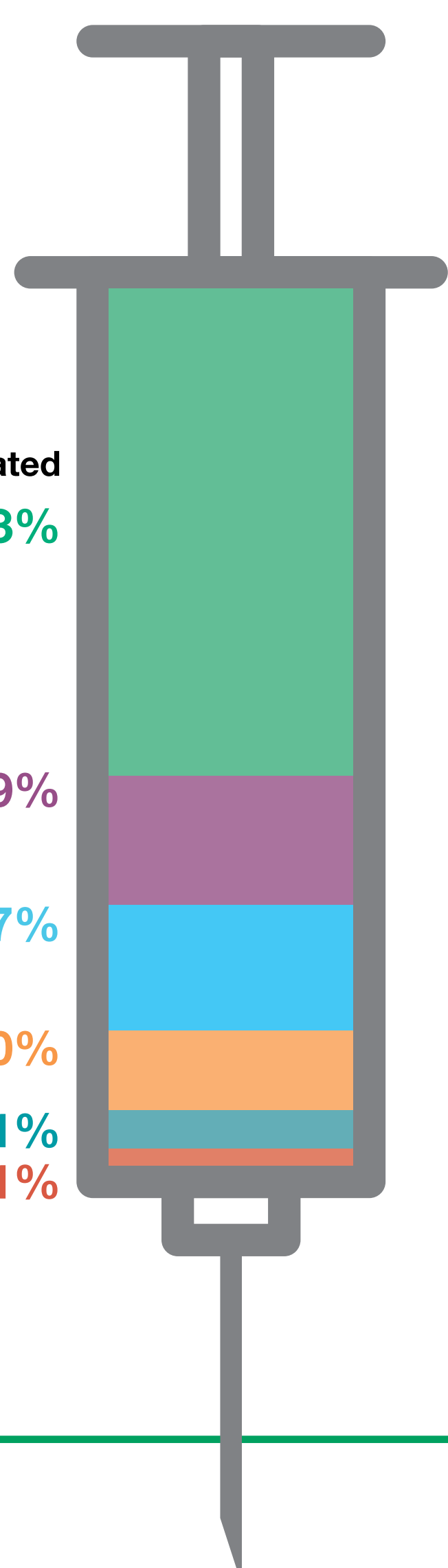
Results

Data gathered through the monitoring forms returned is as follows:

Total number of staff responded = **1,092**, of approximately **2,000**

Of these, **452** reported having had the flu vaccine (**41.5%**)

Source of vaccination	% vaccinated
Blank	55.33%
Own GP	14.79%
NYCC drop in	14.37%
Pharmacy	9.10%
Hospital drop in	4.41%
Care home	1.71%



Recommendations for 2019/20

- Explore whether pharmacies could be commissioned to offer vaccines at staff sites across North Yorkshire
- Survey staff to gather feedback on the programme and any barriers
- Agree eligibility criteria for the programme early – don't wait for a decision on the national flu programme
- Finalise the pharmacy PDG early and promote to pharmacies to encourage sign up
- Explore ways of increasing and monitoring uptake amongst externally commissioned providers
- Roll out flu presentations dispelling myths across team meetings at the same time the vaccine is available on site

Questions:

- How do you offer vaccination to social care staff?
- How do you work with externally commissioned providers to encourage uptake of the vaccine?
- What cohort of staff are eligible for the vaccine?