

	<h2>Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</h2> <h3>2018</h3>
<b>Title</b>	<h2>2018/19 winter communications in Barnet</h2>
<b>Report of</b>	Director of Public Health
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
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<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>The health and social care system comes under considerable strain each winter due to increased preventable mortality and morbidity of our local population. A coordinated Barnet CCG and Local Borough of Barnet communications campaign has been developed to provide advice to residents about how they can stay well in winter and where they can best access services when they need them.</p>

<h2>Recommendations</h2>
<p>1. To note the development of a coordinated winter pressures communications campaign</p>

- 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**
  - 1.1. During its 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018 meeting, the HOSC noted residents' confusion about health service provision and implications for inappropriate use of emergency

services. It suggested the development of coordinated communications for the winter ahead. HOSC recommended that co-ordinated communication campaign includes information on seasonal flu vaccination, messages on self-care and also promote GP extended hours hubs and walk-in centres as an alternative to Accident and Emergency attendances.

- 1.3 Barnet Council and Barnet CCG communications have met to develop a coordinated communications plan for the 2018/19 season. This includes the national NHS campaign 'Help Us Help You Stay Well This Winter' and incorporates lessons from the council's previous 'Winter Well' campaigns.

The national NHS campaign sets out three objectives: Prevention – which is about changing public behaviour by helping them to understand how to use services more efficiently. Preparation – which encompasses messages to raise awareness of the efforts that the NHS and its partners are making to get ready for winter, for example, through extra GP appointments. Finally, Performance which is a more reactive objective concerned with managing reputational issues and responding to challenges (such as for example those faced during periods of snow).

These areas will be supplemented with attention to local service provision, such as the location of hubs providing extended primary care access, and with advice about self-care during the winter months.

- 1.4 Our core communication messages of the campaign include self-care during winter, promoting the uptake of Flu vaccination - particularly amongst vulnerable groups, encouraging the use of pharmacy services for minor ailments, details of GP extended access and Walk in Centres in Barnet, and the use of the NHS 111 telephone number.

The campaign will include both population wide messaging and more tailored communication to those groups with particular needs including for example with existing long-term conditions, the house bound, university students, pregnant women and parents with young children.

- 1.5. The national NHS campaign is phased as follows:
- NHS 111 campaign – 1 October 2018 – 15 October
  - Flu campaign – 8 October – 29 October
  - Stay well this winter campaign – 5 November – 31 December
  - GP access campaign – 26 November – 31 December
  - Pharmacy campaign – 19 January – March

- 1.6 Locally coordinated communications will focus on promoting flu immunisations in October and November following by self-care and service advice from December to March. This will include advice in Barnet First, posters at bus shelters around the Borough and targeted social media.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Recent years have shown that winter is a particularly challenging time for the health and social care economy both nationally and locally. This includes spikes in illnesses and increased pressure on urgent and emergency services, which leads to longer waiting times, delays in care and stretched local services.
- 1.2 Whilst some of these issues are difficult to avoid, robust communications can help signpost local-residents and professionals to the most appropriate services, helping people to access the right care in the right care setting at the right time. It should be noted that this will help support behaviour change but on its own it won't change people's behaviours overnight.
- 2.2 The Royal Free conducted a review of winter pressures and communications last year and highlighted that healthcare professionals and stakeholders across the urgent and emergency care system are not always aware of commissioned services that are in place to support a reduction in A&E attendances. In order to promote greater awareness amongst staff across the health and social care economy, internal communications will be shared to ensure consistency of message.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Past campaigns concerning winter pressures have not been coordinated across local partners. The recognition of the potential added value of coordination has stimulated this work.
- 3.2 In reviewing options for the local campaign the potential for a single agency leading communications on behalf of all partners has been rejected because whilst there are clear areas where communication priorities and audiences are shared, there are also groups – particularly respective workforces, where each organisation is best placed to reach intended audiences.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 Initial communications, particularly on the promotion of flu vaccination, are already underway. A more detailed communications plans for the season is currently being finalised between council and CCG communications departments.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must ensure that the work of Scrutiny is reflective of the Council's principles and strategic objectives set out in the

Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020.

The strategic objectives set out in the 2015 – 2020 Corporate Plan are: –

The Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is the place:

- Of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
- Where people are helped to help themselves
- Where responsibility is shared, fairly
- Where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer

5.1.1 This work supports the Barnet Health and Wellbeing Strategy which identifies a commitment to reducing negative health outcomes and excess winter deaths and promoting better and more appropriate access to health services as well as co-ordinated approach to Care Closer to Home (CHIN).

## **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 Council bus shelters have been used for winter well messages in past years and have again been reserved for periods of this winter. Costs of printing of posters and space in Barnet First will be covered from the public health grant. Other resources are committed from NHS nationally, Barnet CCG locally and provider trusts.

## **5.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.3.1 Under regulation 8 of the Local Authorities Regulations 2013, made under section 6C of the National Health Service Act 2006, local authorities have a duty to provide information and advice to relevant organisations to protect the population's health. This is reasonably taken to include advice about keeping well in winter and the availability of services when required.

5.3.2 The Council's Constitution (Article 7) sets out the terms of reference of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee as having the following responsibilities:

*“To perform the overview and scrutiny role in relation to health issues which impact upon the residents of the London Borough of Barnet and the functions services and activities of the National Health Service (NHS) and NHS bodies located within the London Borough of Barnet and in other areas.”*

## **5.4 Risk Management**

5.4.1 Coordinated campaigns might be considered to risk creating further uncertainty about the responsibilities of different statutory agencies in the provision of health and social care. In this campaign local partners are moving towards shared messages placing residents and patients at the heart of planning rather than organisational responsibilities.

## **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 Equality and Diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in decision making in the Council pursuant to the Equality Act 2010. This means the Council and all other organisations acting on its behalf must have due regard to the equality duties when exercising a public function. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality and good relations into day to day business, requiring equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services and for these to be kept under review.

5.5.2 The specific duty set out in s149 of the Equality Act is to have due regard to need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are – age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. Health partners as relevant public bodies must similarly discharge their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and consideration of equalities issues should therefore form part of their reports.

5.5.3 Winter messages will be developed with attention to both ensuring equity and addressing health inequalities. Specific communications will be targeted appropriately. For example, immunisation uptake is lower in socially deprived and ethnic minorities. Winter vulnerabilities also increase with age. This is the result both of individual health status and indirectly via other issues such as social isolation or financial difficulties.

## **5.6 Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 No consultation or engagement has been conducted specifically for this coordinated campaign but it draws together work from NHS and local authority partners and workstreams that have been informed by extensive consultation and engagement in particular concerning the barriers to flu immunisation and access to non-emergency health services.

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 None