



THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Community Wellbeing, Health and Care
Subject:	Support for older and vulnerable residents in Portsmouth this winter with the RSV vaccination programme
Date of meeting:	Monday 9 December 2024
Report by:	Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health, and Andy Biddle, Director of Adult Social Care
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Matthew Winnington
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by Councillor Matthew Winnington

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To note the support for older and vulnerable residents this winter from both the NHS vaccination programmes as well as Portsmouth City Council Adult Social Care Services. Following the October Full Council motion where the administration were asked to review whether we have the ability to support older members of our society who are excluded from the Government's policy to access RSV vaccine via alternative means this winter.

3. Information Requested

- 3.1 The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is an expert scientific advisory committee which advises the UK government on matters relating to vaccination and immunisation. The JCVI made a full statement with recommendations to the UK government on Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in 2023 which led to the delivery of the RSV vaccination programme in 2024. The JCVI recognised in their statement that there is a significant burden of RSV illness in the UK population which has a considerable impact on NHS services during the winter months.

[Respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\) immunisation programme for infants and older adults: JCVI full statement, 11 September 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-full-statement-11-september-2023)

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- 3.2 For most people, RSV infection causes a mild respiratory illness. In older adults, RSV is an important cause of acute respiratory illness, particularly those living with frailty and co-morbidities. A typical RSV season in the UK starts in October, peaks in December and declines by March.
- 3.3 Cost effectiveness is a key factor in JCVI's considerations which is used to ensure that the finite resources of the health service are used to maximise the health of the population. In summary JCVI found the evidence was stronger to vaccinate 75-80 year olds in terms of clinical and cost effectiveness but further evidence was needed to confirm protection in older populations (>80). This evidence would come from reviewing the real-world impact of the initial programme and therefore there may be further recommendations from JCVI on extending the programme
- 3.4 It would not be feasible for the council to support older members of our society to access this vaccine via alternative means this winter due to vaccine availability and the clinical governance arrangements that exist within the NHS around population vaccination programmes. However, there are other ways that Portsmouth City Council provide support to older and vulnerable residents in the city.
- 3.5 Health and Care Portsmouth continue to support our older and vulnerable residents, who have a long-term condition and are eligible, receive their seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccination. [Evidence shows](#) the significant impact from last year's flu vaccine with a 30% reduction in the number of those aged 65 and over being hospitalised.

Latest UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) data shows that over the past 2 winters at least 18,000 deaths were associated with flu, despite last winter being a relatively mild flu season. While pandemic restrictions and social behaviours saw flu levels fall dramatically for a few years, these latest mortality figures show that flu is a deadly virus, particularly for older people and other groups at greatest risk. While uptake in older people last year remained high, only 4 in 10 (41%) people with long-term health conditions, received the flu vaccine.

To help reduce the impact of winter viruses on those most at risk, UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) with Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England have launched a Get Winter Strong campaign which started on 7th October and is running for 10 weeks. The campaign will urge those eligible to get their flu and COVID-19 vaccination when invited, targeting those at greatest risk. All eligible people in England can now book their flu and COVID-19 vaccines through the NHS, from the beginning of October. Health and Care Portsmouth will deliver the national campaign locally in Portsmouth to ensure we encourage all our older and vulnerable residents take up this vaccine offer to protect them this winter.



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3.6 The Independence & Wellbeing service is offering practical support and advice to older people to reduce their vulnerability to winter viruses. This support includes delivery of health eating sessions and physical activities to maintain good health and wellbeing. In addition, the service works in collaboration with PCC's Tackling Poverty Partnership Group to signpost low income householders to where they can access help with their energy costs and/or those will lose their winter fuel allowance.

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Signed by (Director)

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location