Dear Mr Lamb,

Flu vaccination programme in England

Thank you for your recent correspondence, I am responding as the NHS National Medical Director.

The current 2018/19 vaccination scheme for social care and hospice workers is intended to complement, not replace, any established occupational health schemes that employers have in place to offer flu vaccination to their workforce. This will be delivered again in 2019/20.

Further work is required to plan and assess for the future implementation of a robust, comprehensive and effective data collection process on the annual vaccination of social care and hospice workers. This will need to involve key stakeholders including Public Health England, NHS Digital, representative organisations for care providers and potentially the Care Quality Commission.

The principle challenge is the nature of provision in the social care sector, with large numbers of small independent providers, from which data collections would need to be established. There are a range of other challenges that this work will need to address:

- Establishing an electronic data collection service
- Effective use of supporting IT systems
- Minimising the burden of data collection
- Effective validation and triangulation of data to ensure no duplication
- A supporting data collection to provide an accurate and robust baseline of social care and hospice workers in the context of:
  - A mixed market of providers of residential and nursing home, community support services, respite care etc. Employment of care workers through the of personal budgets, the high vacancy rates within the sector and staff turnover throughout the ‘flu season’.

This work will also be informed by learning from the current data collections run by

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NHS Digital in the established Calculating Quality Reporting Service (CQRS) and the Public Health England 'Immform' data collection system used to extract vaccination data from GP clinical systems which in 2019/20 will include social care workers for the first time. The latter will be experimental data in 2019/20 and will not provide comprehensive data from across the social care sector but could be developed further in future years.

Yours sincerely

Professor Stephen Powis
National Medical Director
NHS England