

Committee: Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 16th March 2017

Wards: ALL

Subject: Childhood Immunisations Update

Lead officer: Julia Groom (Consultant in Public Health)

Lead member: Councillor Katy Neep, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Contact officer: Hilina Asrress – Senior Public Health Principal, 020 8545 339

(hilina.asrress@merton.gov.uk)

Recommendations:

- A. Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel note and comment on the progress made following the childhood immunisations scrutiny report recommendations in 2015
- B. Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel agree for the Merton Immunisations steering group to continue to drive actions and improvements going forward
- C. Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel note that the Health and Wellbeing Board will review childhood immunisations annually as part of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Children's Trust Board will monitor progress quarterly.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update to the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel following the Merton childhood immunisation scrutiny report published in 2015. It sets out the responsibilities of different parts of the health and local government systems for immunisations, it highlights current performance and it updates on actions undertaken in response to the recommendations of the scrutiny report.

This paper complements the NHS England '*Report to Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Section 7a Seasonal Flu and 0-5s Immunisation Programme in London Borough of Merton 2016/17*', which details commissioner-led progress and actions on immunisations.

Uptake of childhood immunisations has historically been low in Merton and in 2012/13 Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust reported some of the lowest immunisations rates in London.

Since April 2013 NHS England has been the commissioners of childhood immunisations and through the London Immunisation Board they are accountable for ensuring that the London population are protected from vaccine preventable diseases. The local authority as a partner can help support NHS England, but the role of the

Director of Public Health is to have an oversight and duty to ensure plans are in place to protect their population.

The London Borough of Merton Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Commission conducted a review in 2015 facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and chaired by Cllr Brenda Fraser. The results of the review were presented in the *'Improving the uptake of Immunisations in the 0-5 age group Overview and Scrutiny Report'* which sets out recommendations on how the borough's partners can make improvements in performance.

There were nine key recommendations made in the scrutiny report and work has been undertaken to review and address them, the details of which are provided below. There is an understanding that continual and sustained work needs to take place to increase and maintain the childhood immunisations rates in Merton.

2. BACKGROUND

The NHS vaccination schedule sets out details of the immunisations every child should receive by their 5th birthday and beyond. Details are available at:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/vaccination-saves-lives.aspx>

Historically, Merton's childhood immunisations uptake has been lower than London and England averages. The World Health Organisation (WHO) sets a target of 95% coverage for all childhood immunisations but Merton has not achieved this target.

Changes in commissioning arrangements for immunisation came into effect on 1st April 2013 as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The overall roles and responsibilities of the different organisations are as follows:

- **The Department of Health** continue to have overall responsibility for immunisation policy, securing the necessary funding and supporting implementation of new vaccination programmes;
- **Public Health England** are responsible for buying, storing and distributing vaccines, holding coverage and surveillance data, communication, and providing expert analysis and advice (including through the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation) at a national level and, through the PHE Centres, supporting the area teams of the NHS England;
- **NHS England** are responsible for commissioning all national immunisation programmes from local providers in line with agreed service specifications. This will be done through Screening and Immunisation Teams which have NHS England and PHE staff working together;
- **Local Authority:** Local Government (through the Director of Public Health) have an oversight function and duty to ensure plans are in place to protect their population; the overview and scrutiny process plays an important part of the oversight function.
- **Providers of immunisation services, such as GPs and school nurses** continue to deliver immunisation programmes following national schedules commissioned through NHS England.

Further direction is available in guidance published in May 2013 (click on pdf link below).



Imms and Screening
national delivery -frar

3.0 CURRENT PERFORMANCE

Table 1 provides the latest Annual 2013/14 to 2015/16 performance for a selected number of immunisations indicators. Comparing the latest Merton 2015/16 position with the London average, out of the 6 indicators shown, 2 are better than the London average, 2 are inline with London and 2 are below the London average. Previously Merton had one of the lowest rates of childhood immunisations in London. Q1 and Q2 data for 2016/17 suggest however that all 6 indicators are higher or inline with London including the preschool booster and MMR2 at 5 years. If this performance is maintained for Q3 and Q4, 2016/17 should achieve a higher uptake than in 2015/16. This is addressed in the attached NHS England Report.

Table 1 – Annual performance trends 2013/14 to 2015/16

	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio Pertussis, Haemophilus influenza type b (DTaP/IPV/Hib) Age 1	Hib/Men C booster Age 2	MMR1 Age 2	Pneumococcal infection (PCV booster) Age 2	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis (DTaP/IPV – pre school booster) Age 5	MMR2 Age 5
Merton Annual 15/16	91.8%	86%	86.3%	85.5%	68.7%	80%
Merton Annual 14/15	93.3%	87.9%	88.8%	87.7%	71.7%	80.4%
Merton Annual 13/14	82.1%	81%	82.1%	82.8	64.8	72.3
London average 15/16	89.2%	85.9%	86.4%	85.6%	78.3%	81.7%
England average 15/16	93.6%	91.6%	91.9%	91.5%	86.3%	88.2%
Merton Annual 15/16 vs London Annual 15/16	↑2.6%%	↑0.1%	↓0.1%	↓0.1%	↓9.6%	↓1.7%

Source: NHS England and NHS Digital

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT

The Overview and Scrutiny report (*‘Improving the uptake of Immunisations in the 0-5 age group Overview and Scrutiny Report’*) is provided below for information. NHS England, as the commissioner of all childhood immunisations, is responsible for

ensuring that local providers deliver effective immunisation services, working with local partners as appropriate, including the local authority. A number of actions have been undertaken to improve childhood immunisations performance in the past year as a result of the Scrutiny report.



Imms Scrutiny report
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Each recommendation is detailed below with the actions that have taken place as a result and any outstanding actions to be undertaken.

4.1. Recommendation 1 – Joint working

'NHS England, Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, Sutton and Merton Community Services and the Local Authority develop a joint working protocol including development of a joint action plan setting out frequency of meetings and priority actions to improve the take up of immunisations. Ensure the group leads on embedding immunisations messages in all nurseries, children's centres and early years' services in Merton.'

As a result of the childhood immunisations Overview and Scrutiny report, a Merton Immunisations Steering group was re-established by NHS England, with partners Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (MCCG), LBM Public Health and the Community Health Services provider, which from 1st April 2016 changed to Central London Community Health (CLCH) NHS Trust. The steering group is chaired by Fiona White (Merton CCG Clinical Lead for Transforming Primary Care Nursing & Maternity). The group developed a joint action plan which is refreshed and updated each year. The group has been meeting regularly and oversees the implementation of the Immunisations Action Plan (please see NHS England report for details of the latest action plan). The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny report were embedded into the action plan.

4.2. Recommendation 2 – South West London report

'The group should review the recommendations in the NHS Southwest London report Childhood Immunisations and Vaccinations 2013 and decide what would be appropriate to take forward.'

In October 2012, an organisation was commissioned by NHS South West London to undertake a piece of work to explore parents' attitudes and behaviours in relation to getting their child immunised. This was before Health and Social Care Act changed the roles and responsibilities of organisations around childhood immunisations and Primary Care Trust were abolished.

An action to review the report was incorporated into the Merton Immunisations action plan. Following this review, some recommendations were picked up through existing services. It was agreed that others actions would require resources and capacity to implement which were beyond that of the group and its members resources e.g. mass media campaigns and targeted social marketing to those less likely to be immunised.

Examples of ideas from the SWL report that have been taken forward include –

- a) *The process of inviting and reminding parents about their child's immunisations need to be strengthened in Merton with many parents indicating that didn't receive any reminders and simply had to try and remember.*

NHS England have undertaken visits to low performing GP Practices to review and strengthen immunisations processes including call and recall of patients (see NHS England report for details).

- b) *Families stated staggered verbal and written information during pregnancy to the last immunisation (pre-school booster) would support them remembering to get their children immunised.*

The Health Visitor mandated checks (Antenatal, New Birth, 6-8 weeks, 1 year, 2-2.5 year) provide opportunities to remind parents of immunisations (see also recommendation 6). Midwives and GPs also provide an important role in promoting immunisations throughout pregnancy and early childhood. In addition use of media and information outlets, such as My Merton and Young Merton Together, has helped to get consistent messages to parents to carers.

4.3. Recommendations 3 – Reporting to Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny Commission

'The group should report to the Health and Wellbeing Board on an annual basis and report their progress to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on a six monthly basis until the Commission are satisfied that this work has been taken forward and that further improvements in immunisations have been made.'

Reports went to the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2015 and in November 2016 which provided an update on progress to improve childhood immunisations in Merton. The latest update on childhood immunisations was provided to the Children's Trust Board in January 2017. Childhood Immunisations is a key priority in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2015 – 2018) for Merton and the Children's Trust Board monitors progress on key immunisation indicators on a quarterly basis.

4.4. Recommendation 4 – Championing childhood immunisations

'The task group chair to champion improving immunisation rates and raise the profile of this issue in appropriate forums.'

The Merton immunisation steering group is chaired by Fiona White who was previously Merton CCG Clinical Director for Children and Maternity services when the group was first established and is now the Clinical Lead for Transforming Primary Care Nursing Lead & Maternity. She has been working on improving childhood immunisations in Merton for a number of years and is a champion on improving childhood immunisations in Merton. Her role supporting GP Practice Nurses delivering immunisations and chairing the Merton immunisations steering group helps ensure all parts of the local immunisations system are connected and coordinated.

4.5. Recommendation 5 – Health Champions

'That health champions deliver immunisations messages within their communities and public health team seek to develop health champion roles in communities where immunisation rates are the lowest where possible.'

Merton's Healthy Lifestyles services for adults have been re-procured. The new service will start from April 2017 onwards. The service has been re-procured within the framework of 'Think Family' approach. This will provide an opportunity to shape the new service and ensure that childhood immunisations become part of the messages taken forward through the Health Champions in communities in Merton.

4.6. Recommendation 6 – Role of Health Visitors

'That the Public Health Team ensures that the role of health visitors in delivering information on immunisations is specified and strengthened in the commissioning arrangements.'

The re-procurement of Merton 0-19 Healthy Child services, including the Health Visiting Service, in 2015 provided an opportunity to strengthen the service specifications and the role of Health Visitors in promoting childhood immunisations with families at every contact. The new service commenced on 1st April 2016 and provides 5 mandated checks that the Health Visiting service delivers and is now co-located within Children's Centres. This gives an opportunity to check childhood immunisation status through speaking to parents/carers and checking the Red Books. Where immunisations are not up to date, parents/carers are reminded to take babies/children to their GPs to be immunised.

4.7. Recommendation 7 – Top Tips for GPs

'Public Health Merton to work with Merton Clinical Commissioning Group to conduct an audit of GPs on the 'top tips' sheet including checking which practices use the text messaging service. Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health Team to explore future options for expanding the text messaging service'

The 'Top Tips' for GPs was developed by Public Health and shared with GP Practices through GP Locality meetings. The Top Tips also provided a checklist for each GP Practice to audit themselves against each tip. An audit of each GP Practice was not possible within the remit and resources of the Public Health team, however, GP Practices were encouraged to audit themselves against the Top Tips and ensure they were meeting them.

4.8. Recommendation 7 – School entry packs and reviews

'Public health team to ensure that information on immunisations will be part of school entry packs and asked within the school entry health review, using the review as an opportunity to identify those unimmunised, promote immunisations uptake and signpost to child's GP.'

As part of the school entry reviews conducted by the School Nursing service, a questionnaire is sent out to all parents of children aged 4-5 which asks whether children are up to date with their immunisations. This provides a reminder to parents/carers that children should be up to date with immunisations.

Promoting childhood immunisations using different media has also been part of actions. Therefore within LBM, media outlets such as My Merton and Young Merton Together (which goes out to schools, nurseries, children's centres, professionals

working with CYP and their families) have been used to continue to disseminate the importance of being up to date with childhood immunisations.

4.9. Recommendation 8 – Accurate data

‘Public health team should take every care to ensure that the immunisation data received from Public Health England is accurate.’

NHS England are the commissioners of childhood immunisations, therefore they are responsible for ensuring that providers report accurate and timely data and ensure the denominator is accurate and cleaned regularly. There are national data validation processes in place and Director’s of Public Health are assured through this national process.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Increasing uptake of childhood immunisations remains a high priority for Merton. The Overview and Scrutiny process provided an important opportunity to hold commissioners to account and identify opportunities to strengthen action to improve uptake of childhood immunisations.

NHS England as commissioners are responsible for achieving immunisation targets and will continue work with Public Health England under the London Immunisation Board to ensure that the London population is protected from vaccine preventable diseases. They will continue to work with local partners through the Merton immunisations steering group, with local oversight from the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children’s Trust Board.

6.0 TIMETABLE

N/A

7.0 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

None relating to this covering report

8.0 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

None relating to this covering report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory implications of the topic being scrutinised.

9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community.

10.0 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None relating to this covering report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the crime and disorder implications of the topic being scrutinised.

11.0 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None relating to this covering report

APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

NHS England Report – Report to Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Section 7a Seasonal Flu and the 0-5s Immunisation Programme in London Borough of Merton.