

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Winter Preparedness	
REPORT OF Director of Health and Wellbeing	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	DATE 7 th January 2025
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report provides an update on health protection and adult social care activities undertaken in preparation for the winter season. It highlights collaborative efforts to address health risks, vaccination uptake, hospital discharge, and care workforce capacity.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>Contact Officers:</p> <p>James Fox Senior Policy and Projects Officer London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG James.fox@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>That the Committee notes the report.</p>	

Signed:



Kirsten Watters, Director of Health and Wellbeing

Date: 19th December 2024

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report provides an update on health protection and adult social care activities undertaken in preparation for the winter season. It highlights collaborative efforts to address health risks, vaccination uptake, hospital discharge, and care workforce capacity.

2. Public Health

- 2.1. Public Health continue to coordinate stakeholders on health protection issues via the Camden Health Protection Group, for example surveillance of winter respiratory viruses, norovirus (which causes diarrhoea and vomiting), and cold weather alerts. Public Health also work with North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) colleagues to monitor vaccine uptake and coordinate on immunisation promotion and access via the Camden Immunisation Group. Both forums meet monthly. Public health updates are also provided at the Borough Resilience Forum for the broader system and emergency responders.
- 2.2. Through this winter season, Public Health have worked closely with Adult Social Care (ASC) commissioning colleagues and care home managers this year to ensure that the offer of winter vaccinations for staff is as clear as possible to them. Care Home Managers have been asked to share a letter from the Director of Public Health with staff which outlines where they can receive their free vaccines and contains an information leaflet about the benefits of vaccination.
- 2.3. This year we recognised the importance of improving access to vaccination for care home staff working in Camden, most of whom do not live in the borough and spend time commuting before and after long shifts. Therefore, the UCLH immunisation team, ASC commissioners and Camden Bus team added additional sessions located closer to care homes. The Outreach team visited the care homes beforehand to leave additional information leaflets with staff and provided them with a contact in case they required a lift to the bus vaccine location. In all this led to 22 additional vaccines in staff, demonstrating that where access is improved some care home staff are more likely to take up the offer. Some staff continue to refuse the offer, so engagement is planned with care home staff in the new year ahead of next year's winter season.
- 2.4. Public Health continue to attend monthly care home and extra care forums to provide health protection updates. These updates have been used to promote the winter vaccine offer for both residents and staff (including the new respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine programme for 75–79-year-olds). Information from the latest surveillance data for flu, COVID-19, RSV, Norovirus and rotavirus is also shared at this forum along with information about cold weather impacts and how to register for the Cold-health alert system. Cold weather alerts are

circulated to the Health Protection Group with links to guidance. In addition to this, guidelines have been shared on how to manage acute respiratory illness and how to report suspected outbreaks to the North London UKHSA (UK Health Security Agency) Health Protection Team.

- 2.5. Beyond adult social care, winter vaccines are promoted more broadly to Camden residents through our routine communication channels including social media. This includes how to use the national booking system, location and times of Camden Immunisation bus and UCLH drop-in clinics. Cold weather alerts are also pushed through including links to cost of living advice. We have worked with a new school immunisations provider Vaccination UK, school nursing and the UCLH vaccine team to promote uptake in schools and early years settings. In addition to the usual access in schools, Vaccination UK have also delivered catch-up clinics for flu vaccines via family hubs and children centres. The UCLH vaccine team are delivering additional immunisation sessions at events being held in December at Family Hubs and these have been promoted through primary care. The 'Find and Treat' team have been delivering winter vaccines to our population in Camden who are living with homelessness. Each year the council also purchases 300 flu vouchers each year available for council staff to claim, who may not be eligible for NHS flu vaccines, to help reduce staff sickness through the winter season.

3. Adult Social Care

- 3.1. The Adult Social Care (ASC) hospital teams are fully staffed, and the department continues to work closely with health partners to ensure safe discharge. Admission avoidance and early discharge continue to be a key focus across the system, supported by the collaborative working on virtual wards and the urgent response service (previously rapid response) between health and social care.
- 3.2. The five neighbourhood homecare providers have good capacity within the care workforce and are in a positive position going into winter. There is additional capacity available through spot provision if required.
- 3.3. Reablement is an essential aspect of discharge and winter preparedness across the health and care system, reducing the need for residents to draw on longer-term care and support. In October 2023, two new reablement contracts for the north of the borough supplemented the service in the south of the borough. The services are now well established and offer good capacity across Camden.
- 3.4. Commissioners have been working closely with reablement workers throughout the year and have arranged additional skills training in safeguarding and occupational therapy; in the coming months there will also be a focus on good nutrition and hydration.

4. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

- 4.1. The Executive Director of Corporate Services has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report

5. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 5.1. There are no legal implications from the contents of the report

6. Environmental Implications

- 6.1. No Identified environmental implications