

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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UPDATE ON CHILD IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME

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Summary

The aim of this report is to provide the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the NHS England Commissioned Childhood Immunisation Programme in Medway.

The Committee had previously received reports on the childhood immunisation programme in Medway at its meetings on 5th October 2017 and 11th January 2018. At the January 2018 meeting, the Committee had asked for a further update in January 2019.

This paper describes the measures NHS England have taken during 2017/18 to gain assurance that Medway children are being immunised against vaccine preventable diseases and actions that have been taken to improve child immunisation uptake locally. It also provides the Committee with information about the percentage of children in Medway receiving key childhood vaccinations.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1. Achieving a good rate of childhood immunisation contributes to local priorities including: Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy priority: Giving every child a good start and Medway Council plan priority: Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential: Healthy and active communities.

2. Background

- 2.1. On 5 October 2017, and 11 January 2018, the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee received reports updating the committee on children's immunisations programmes in Medway. These reports described the uptake of children's immunisations in Medway and outlined actions that NHS England and partners are taking to improve the uptake of children's

immunisations locally. The Committee had asked for a further update report to be presented in January 2019.

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1. NHS England is responsible for commissioning immunisations programmes.
- 3.2. The current uptake for both Medway and England for key childhood immunisations is set out in Appendix 1 (tables 1-3).
- 3.3. Medway is above the national average for uptake of one key childhood vaccination:
 - Children having received one dose of measles, mumps and rubella by age five (95% Medway; 94.9% England).
- 3.4. Medway is similar to the national average uptake (within 2%) for a number of childhood vaccinations. Routine childhood vaccinations are listed in Appendix 1 (tables 1-3).
- 3.5. Both nationally, and in Medway, meeting national targets for uptake of children's immunisations is challenging (the national target is 95% of children vaccinated within each cohort).
- 3.6. There are many things that influence the overall proportion of children who receive childhood vaccinations. These include: parental attitudes to immunisation, accessibility of immunisation services, and having in place systematic arrangements to invite children and remind parents to vaccinate their children.
- 3.7. As illustrated in tables 1-3 (in Appendix 1), nationally, 95% uptake of childhood vaccinations is not being met for many childhood vaccinations. This pattern is largely similar in Medway, with the exception of one vaccination (outlined in section 3.3. above) where uptake in Medway is both above 95% and above the national average.
- 3.8. There is an ongoing need to continue to maintain and improve the uptake of childhood vaccinations in Medway. This will help ensure sufficient children are vaccinated to maintain 'herd immunity', meaning infectious diseases that could be prevented by vaccination, are not able to spread widely in the population.
- 3.9. The report set out in Appendix 1 outlines the actions that NHS England has taken to improve childhood immunisations in Medway during 2017/18. These include:
- 3.10. **Improving access** - Work to improve accessibility to children's immunisation services in Medway. In 2017/18, this included procuring a new community

childhood immunisation service for Medway, offering improved access to childhood immunisations.

3.11. **Improving data quality** - Continued work has taken place to improve the quality of data collection on children's immunisation in Medway. In 2017/18, targeted visits in Medway to support GP practices with submission of child immunisations data to the central reporting system, has resulted in improvements to both data quality and to the percentage of children in Medway reported as being vaccinated.

3.12. **Working with immunisation providers** – During 2017/18, NHS England has continued to work with providers contracted to deliver immunisation to improve uptake amongst the population.

4. Risk management

4.1. NHS England maintains risk registers relating to the commissioning of childhood immunisation programmes. The NHS England risk register contains a range of control measures focussed on improving uptake of childhood immunisations.

5. Implications for Looked After Children

5.1 In Medway specific tailored arrangements are in place to provide immunisation for all looked after children. Rates of vaccination of children looked after in Medway are higher than the England average.

6. Financial implications

6.1. There are no direct financial implications for Medway Council arising from this report. All costs associated with the delivery of the childhood immunisation programme rest with NHS England.

7. Legal implications

7.1. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8. Recommendations

8.1 It is recommended the Committee note the actions being taken by NHS England, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, to improve the uptake of childhood immunisations in Medway.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Update on children's immunisations.

Background papers

None

Update on Children's Immunisations in Medway 2017/18

Introduction

In order to prevent communicable disease outbreaks, it is important that sufficient numbers of a population are vaccinated. The term 'Herd Immunity' is used to describe a situation when a high percentage of the population is protected through vaccination against viruses or bacteria. This makes it difficult for a disease to spread because there are few susceptible people left to infect. The proportion of a population which must be immunised in order to achieve herd immunity varies for each disease. The underlying principle is to ensure as many people as possible are vaccinated and become immune to the disease.

In England, all children are offered vaccination to protect them against a range of diseases. Routine vaccination programmes start at 8 weeks of age. Children receive some of the most important vaccinations during their early years (age 0-5). This is an important period and critical to build herd immunity to reduce the likelihood of disease outbreaks at a time when they start to mix with other children and potentially become exposed to viruses or bacteria that could cause harm.

Current uptake of childhood vaccinations

The current uptake for both Medway and England for key childhood immunisations is set out in Appendix 1 (tables 1-3). As illustrated in tables 1-3, nationally, 95% uptake of childhood vaccinations is not being met for many childhood vaccinations. This pattern is largely similar in Medway, with some exceptions. For example, 95% of children in Medway have received one dose of measles, mumps, rubella vaccine by age five (slightly better than the national average of 94.9%).

There are many things that influence the overall proportion of children who receive childhood vaccinations. These include: parental attitudes to immunisation, accessibility of immunisation services, and having in place systematic arrangements for inviting and reminding parents to vaccinate their children.

Appendix 1 (tables 1-3) provides an overview of the trend in uptake of children's immunisations between 2016/17 and 2017/18 in both Medway and England. Although trends differ for different vaccinations, for five of the key childhood vaccinations, uptake has improved during this time period in Medway, despite a decrease in vaccination uptake nationally during this period (for these five vaccinations).

Roles and responsibilities

NHS England commissions immunisation programmes on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Care in England. It is responsible for ensuring all childhood immunisation targets are met. NHS England commission providers to deliver the childhood immunisation programme. Providers include General Practitioners (GPs) as well as specialist immunisation teams. Local authorities have a role in oversight of

population health including assurance (independent challenge and scrutiny) of immunisations arrangements and supporting partnership working in this area.

Actions being taken to improve childhood immunisations in Medway

There are a range of actions being taken to improve the uptake of childhood immunisations in Medway. Some of the key actions that took place in 2017-18 are outlined below:

1. Improving accessibility of immunisation services

In 2017/18, NHS England procured a new community childhood immunisation service for Medway, with improved access to childhood immunisations. This service started on 1st September 2018 and is provided by Kent Community Health Foundation Trust. The service includes new catch up clinics in the community for children who have missed routine vaccinations at their GP. These catch up clinics are new and will improve access to services. Catch up clinics have been taking place since August 2018 in Medway.

2. Improving data quality

Work has continued to improve the quality of data collection on children's immunisation in Medway. In 2017/18, targeted visits in Medway to support GP practices with submission of child immunisations data to the central reporting system has resulted in considerable improvements to both data quality and to the percentage of children in Medway reported as being vaccinated.

Joint Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) is a payment framework that incentivises organisations to improve services. A payment is linked to achievement of a specific quality improvement target. There have been a series of annual CQUINs for the past three years with the Child Health Information System (CHIS) relating to immunisation services for children aged 0-5 years. The learning from them has been incorporated into routine practice e.g. quarterly validation, described below. Current CQUINs, with both CHIS and the new community immunisation service are focussed on routinely inviting those that remain unimmunised to a community clinic for vaccination.

The quarterly validation of immunisation records between GP practices and the local Child Health Department continues to improve. A number of partners have been involved in supporting these improvements including Medway Council (public health), Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, the Screening and Immunisation Team (NHS England) as well as GP practices.

The effects of targeted visits to support GP practices and of quarterly validation can be clearly seen through monitoring systems and in the improved uptake figures for Medway. This work is ongoing and is expected to lead to further improvements in uptake figures for 2018/19.

3. Working with immunisation providers to improve uptake of immunisations

NHS England continues to develop and performance manage providers of immunisation services to improve uptake of childhood immunisations. Actions include:

- Support to GP Practices, including practice visits to discuss immunisation processes
- Sharing information and best practice using newsletters, practice meetings, visits to problem solve and giving talks.
- There is another CQUIN for the community immunisation service in Medway to promote the community immunisations clinics and to work with other children’s professional groups so that these professionals can share messages with parents and service users about the importance of childhood immunisation (part of the “every contact counts” approach).

4. Childhood Immunisation Performance

Children receive vaccinations and boosters at specific ages as part of the NHS routine immunisations programme. Tables 1 to 3 provide an overview of the percentage of children who are immunised (vaccination coverage) for specific conditions for children aged 1, 2 and 5 years in Medway in 2017/18.

The arrows in the table show the trend in vaccination uptake in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17 for both England and Medway (an upwards trend, downwards trend or stayed the same).

Table 1: For children aged 1 year in 2017/18.

	Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis/olio/haemophilus influenza	Pneumococcus	Rotavirus	Meningitis B two doses
England	↓ 93.1%	↓ 93.3%	↑ 90.1%	*92.5%
Medway	↑ 91.8%	↓ 88.8%	↑ 84.5%	* 86.8%











Source: Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics, England, 2017-18. NHS Digital (COVER) * Trend N/A as 16/17 data not available in routine dataset as Men B vaccination programme was new.

Table 2: For children aged 2 years in 2017/18

	Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis/olio/haemophilus influenza	Pneumococcal booster	Haemophilus influenzae/meningitis C	Measles/mumps/rubella - dose 1
England	→ 95.1%	↓ 91%	↓ 91.2%	↓ 91.2%
Medway	↑ 94.2%	↑ 90.1%	↑ 89%	↑ 90.4%

Source: Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics, England, 2017-18. NHS Digital (COVER).

Table 3: For children aged 5 years in 2017/18

	Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis/polio/haemophilus influenza	Measles/mumps/rubella - dose 1	Measles/mumps/rubella - dose 2	Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis/polio	Haemophilus influenzae/meningitis C
England	 95.6%	 94.9%	 87.2%	 85.6%	 92.4%
Medway	 94.2%	 95%	 86%	 80.9%	 89.3%

Source: Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics, England, 2017-18. NHS Digital (COVER).