



flu fighter campaign

The flu fighter campaign was first created and launched for the 2011/12 flu season, to provide support and resources to NHS trusts in England. The campaign arose out of an SPF meeting. Employers, trade unions and the Department of Health agreed that an SPF supported campaign to encourage NHS staff to get the seasonal flu vaccine would be beneficial and address the low levels of take up of the vaccine – as was the case the previous year. The campaign, which is in its sixth year, helps trusts in England to encourage frontline healthcare staff to get their flu vaccination.

2016/17 campaign headlines

Uptake

The uptake of the flu vaccination amongst frontline healthcare workers has increased significantly this year and at the end of January 2017 was the highest it has ever been. The figure show that 63% of frontline healthcare workers in NHS Trusts in England had been vaccinated. For the first time we have also seen an ambulance service, West Midlands Ambulance Service, achieve over 75% uptake.

CQUIN

For the first time this year flu vaccination of frontline healthcare workers was included in the NHS England CQUIN (Commissioning for Quality and Innovation). This meant that to receive part of the CQUIN payment trusts had to achieve over 75% uptake by 31st December 2017. As a result of this the flu fighter team at NHS Employers have seen increased engagement from trusts this year.

#jabathon

To support trusts to increase their uptake the flu fighter team at NHS Employers ran #jabathon at the start of December 2016. #jabathon was a social media campaign designed to keep the flu vaccination in conversation. Staff were asked to tweet why they had had their flu jab and nominate 2 other to do the same. #jabathon was successful with one flu lead saying '#jabathon helped us to reach 75% uptake'. The figures from the campaign are below:

	#jabathon
Tweets	2,345
Timeline deliveries	9,549, 720
Contributors	1,109
Reach	3,595,508

Letter from Minister and the Parliamentary Under Secretary

Philip Dunne, Minister of State for Health, and Nicola Blackwood, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Innovation, have written [a letter thanking flu leads for all of their hard work](#) in promoting the flu vaccine in healthcare workers. They also recognised their efforts, which has helped to achieve the highest ever uptake for staff flu vaccinations.

Working in partnership

Working with staff side colleagues is a very important part of any local flu campaign. The flu fighter team at NHS Employers support and encourage trusts to work with local staff side colleagues to encourage staff to be vaccinated against flu. Examples of the partnership working that trusts show are:

- Asking for support and communications to the support the flu programme from the local staff side
- Having a staff side representative on the flu team
- Having staff side representatives as flu champions or peer vaccinators.

Below are 2 tweets showing local flu fighter campaigns being supported by staff side colleagues:

UHMBTOccHealth and 6 others follow

Health & Wellbeing @LancsHospHandWB · 7 Oct 2016
 Joint **staff side** representatives @LancsHospitals leading the way and getting their flu jabs #flufighter



Joint Staff Side representatives

Dr Andrew Furber @FurberA · 29 Oct 2012
 MT "@aliofusinmind: Our Trust fighting flu this season, with support of **staff side** colleagues. #flufighter ht.ly/eKK8L" brilliant

NHS Trust fights flu amongst staff this season - S...
 South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has joined the largest ever NHS staff vaccination campaign with a programme of local activity to protec...
 southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk

The RCN has been very supportive in encouraging nurses to get their flu vaccine this year. Helen Donovan, Public Health Lead at the RCN recorded and video and wrote a blog encouraging nurses to have the flu vaccine this year. She also had her photograph taken showing her having the vaccine.

Helen Donovan blog - <https://vivbennett.blog.gov.uk/2016/11/16/why-are-some-healthcare-staff-reluctant-to-get-a-flu-jab-by-helen-donovan/>

Video - <https://twitter.com/theRCN/status/788671846896074752>



Union union representative at South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation trust were thanked by the Chief Executive for their support with their local flu campaign this year.



More about flu fighter

To support trusts to help encourage staff to have their flu vaccination, the flu fighter team focus on four key areas:

1. Engagement

We engage with trusts and key stakeholders to provide support on increasing flu vaccination uptake for frontline healthcare workers. We have a network of over 1000 flu leads in England, at least 1 from every trust, who we contact on a regular basis.

This is done via our strong social media channels, regular emails and telephone calls. We also visit trusts who request more assistance with campaign plans and increasing uptake.

2. Sharing and celebrating what works

The flu fighter team gather and share [good practice](#) on how to increase uptake of flu vaccination for frontline healthcare workers. This is done through case studies, social media and events where flu leads can come together. To recognise and celebrate these great achievements we host the annual [flu fighter awards](#) in England.

As the season comes to a close we also help trusts to evaluate the success of their campaigns through resources and events. This not only allows them to review what has happened, we can also help to plan their next flu campaign.

3. Alignment

We work to ensure our campaign for frontline healthcare workers is aligned with other flu campaigns, such as Stay Well This Winter, the public facing flu campaign, and other workstreams, such as health and wellbeing. By working closely with these other areas we are able to build on our knowledge, which is used to develop and improve the flu fighter campaign.

We represent the flu fighter campaign at the monthly Flu Project Board, which is hosted by Public Health England. These useful meetings allows us to meet with other representatives who work in different areas of flu vaccination. It also provides an opportunity to get an update on flu vaccination in the UK, to represent employer's views and work with key stakeholders on projects such as research.

4. Supporting local campaigns

As part of the campaign we provide trusts and health boards with [free digital and printed resources](#) that support local flu.

This includes printed posters, payslip leaflets and stickers, as well as digital email footers, web banners, toolkits and artwork.

This year our online order system for printed resources for trusts in England received 235 orders. We saw a significant increase in orders this season. This included orders for:

Order	Increase from previous year
89,899 posters	29,012
500,082 payslip leaflets	146,082
1,098,800 stickers	35,440

- Good practice

To help local flu campaigns we have also developed an infographic that focuses on the [seven elements to running a successful flu campaign](#). From collating good practice, we have learnt that the implementation of these elements helps to increase uptake for flu vaccinations among frontline healthcare workers. We also pull together an array of case studies that share the good practice from other NHS organisations.

- Dedicated flu page for staff

New for this year, we have launched the [why it matters](#) webpage, which is a dedicated page that flu leads and vaccinators can direct staff to. It contains information and facts about flu, the vaccine and the importance of having the vaccination. This page has been a very well received and in September it had been viewed 1400 times.

- Social media

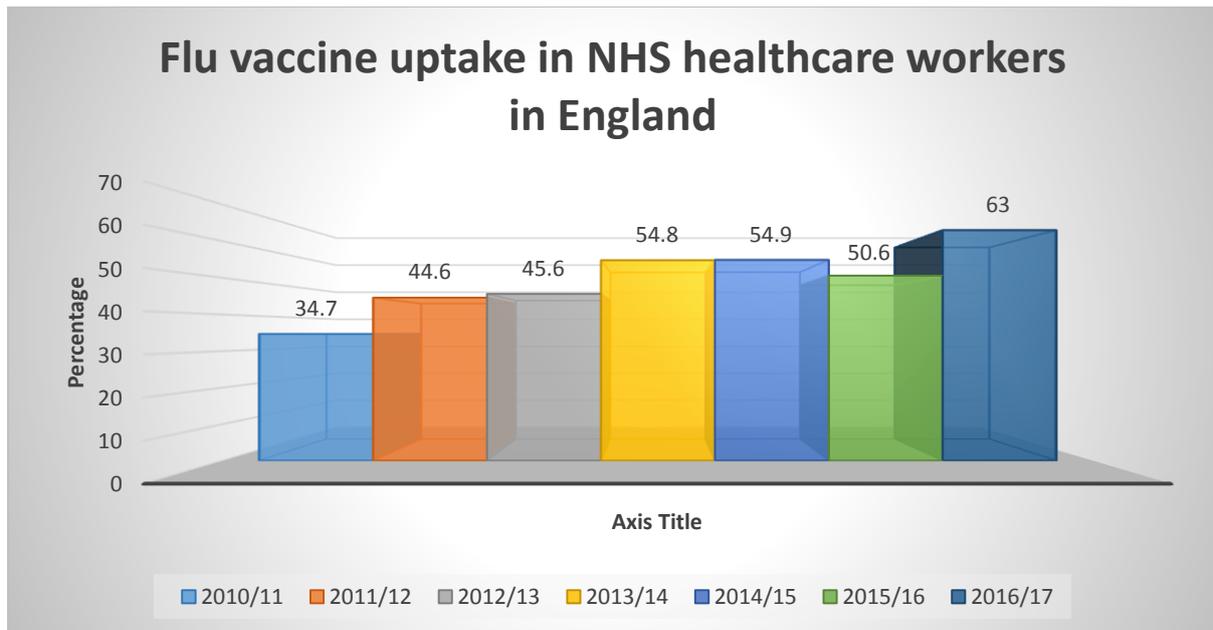
Our continual social media presence allows us to engage with trusts, health boards and flu leads. Our Twitter feed is well established and allows us to view the great work from flu teams, it gives us a more direct channel to organisations. To capitalise on this we have created mythbuster Monday's during flu season, which helped organisations to clarify any misconceptions around flu and the vaccine. This was extremely popular last season, and was our most retweeted tweet.

To join [#flufighter](#) conversation you can find [@NHSflufighter](#) on Twitter.

Evidence of impact

England

In 2010/11, the year before the flu fighter campaign began, uptake for the flu vaccine among NHS frontline healthcare workers in England was 34.7 per cent.



Since the introduction of the flu fighter campaign, uptake has consistently increased, going up to 63 per cent in 2016/17, which is an increase of 28.3 per cent since 2010/11.

Please note, for 2015/16 there was a slight decrease in uptake across nearly all at risk groups eligible for vaccination against flu. Although formal research has not been undertaken, it is suggested that this decrease could be from the low efficacy of the vaccine in the previous season and the late outbreak of flu in February/March.

One-to-one support

As part of our offer for support, the flu fighter team visit a few trusts with the lowest uptake. This one-to-one support allows us to work with the flu team so we can help them to create an effective plan to increase uptake. This has had a positive effect and the trusts we have worked with have seen an improvement in uptake.

Over the last three years, we can see that when the flu fighter team works with the trust, they achieve an average 8.8 per cent improvement in uptake of the flu vaccination for frontline healthcare workers.

If we look at the average uptake in trusts, which was 36.7 per cent, the year flu fighter provided one-to-one support uptake rose to 45.6 per cent.

What our flu leads say...

We work very closely with our flu leads so we can support and help them to encourage frontline healthcare workers to have the flu vaccination. The feedback has been very positive, and you can see what our some of flu leads have said:

- I am usually waiting eagerly for the time I can order the all-important free flu promotional materials and much sought after flu fighter stickers.

- The news emails are a great prompt and help to keep the campaign fresh, it's also good to know that you're part of a large network of NHS trusts.
- As a campaign leader the website is invaluable and provides a central hub of information and knowledge that we are all in this together.
- Your website and tips are excellent and your team are always available to help when necessary.
- The flu fighter programme provides invaluable information to help plan our yearly flu campaign and encouraging support all year round.
Your support and comms has been fabulous and very timely this year which is a huge help.

Helen Bogan
Programme Lead
NHS Employers