

Availability of Flu Vaccinations in Lancashire's Community Pharmacies

Mystery shopping report focusing on the availability of flu vaccinations in community pharmacies across Lancashire.

May 2016



V21

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Introduction and context

Between December 2015 and early January 2016 Healthwatch Lancashire completed a mystery shopping activity to identify the availability of flu vaccinations within pharmacies across Lancashire and to understand how information is shared with GP practices.

17 Healthwatch Lancashire volunteers and staff visited 221 pharmacies.

Methodology

The project was undertaken by Healthwatch Lancashire volunteers and staff through a mystery shopping exercise; visiting pharmacies with an enquiry regarding flu vaccinations.

Those undertaking the activity did not disclose themselves as Healthwatch Lancashire representatives.

Representatives asked the following questions to staff within the pharmacies as part of the enquiry:

- Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?
- Do they need an appointment?
- Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?
- If yes, how will you do this?

Representatives recorded responses to the questions immediately after each visit.

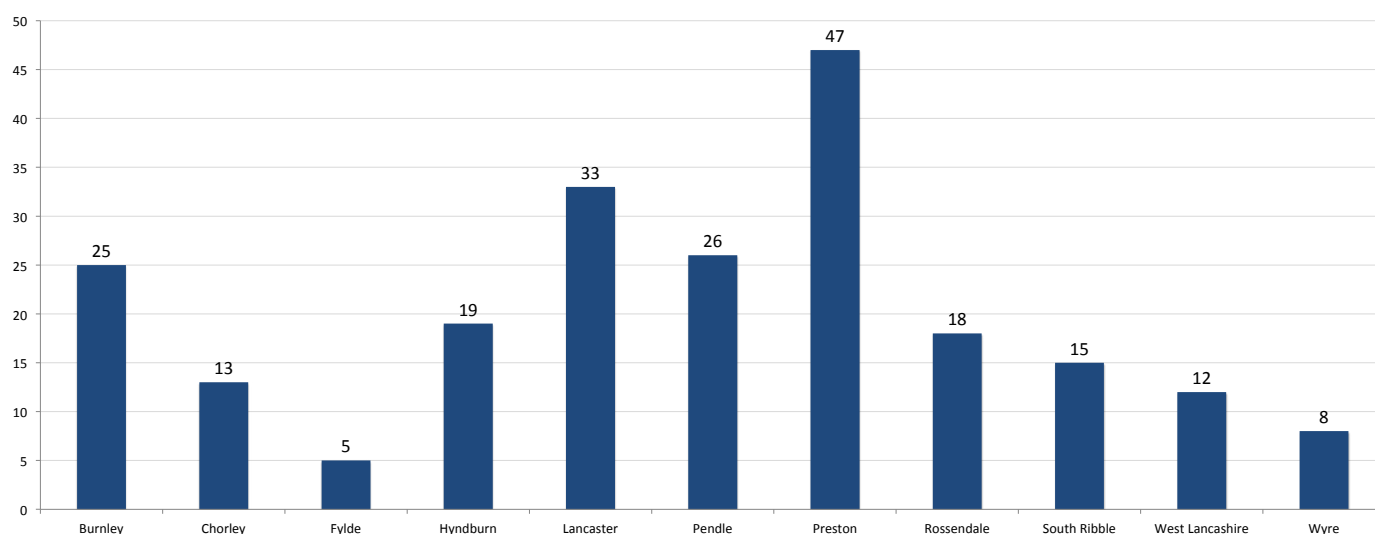


Results

Responses by location

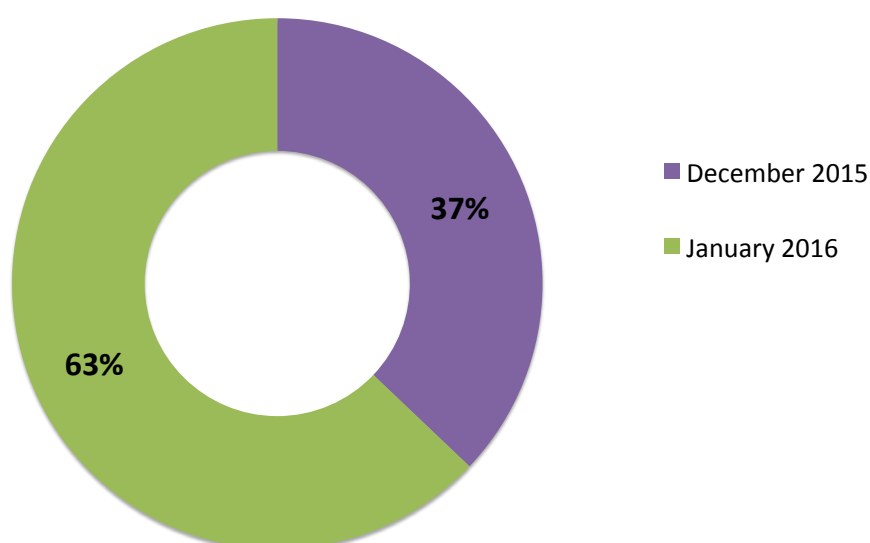
17 Healthwatch Lancashire representatives visited 221 pharmacies.

The chart below shows the locations of the pharmacies which were visited.



The visits took place throughout December 2015 and early January 2016.

The chart below shows the percentage of visits that took place in December 2015 and January 2016.



Summary of results for Lancashire

1. We asked pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?".

60.6% said Yes **38%** said No **1.4%** said Not Sure

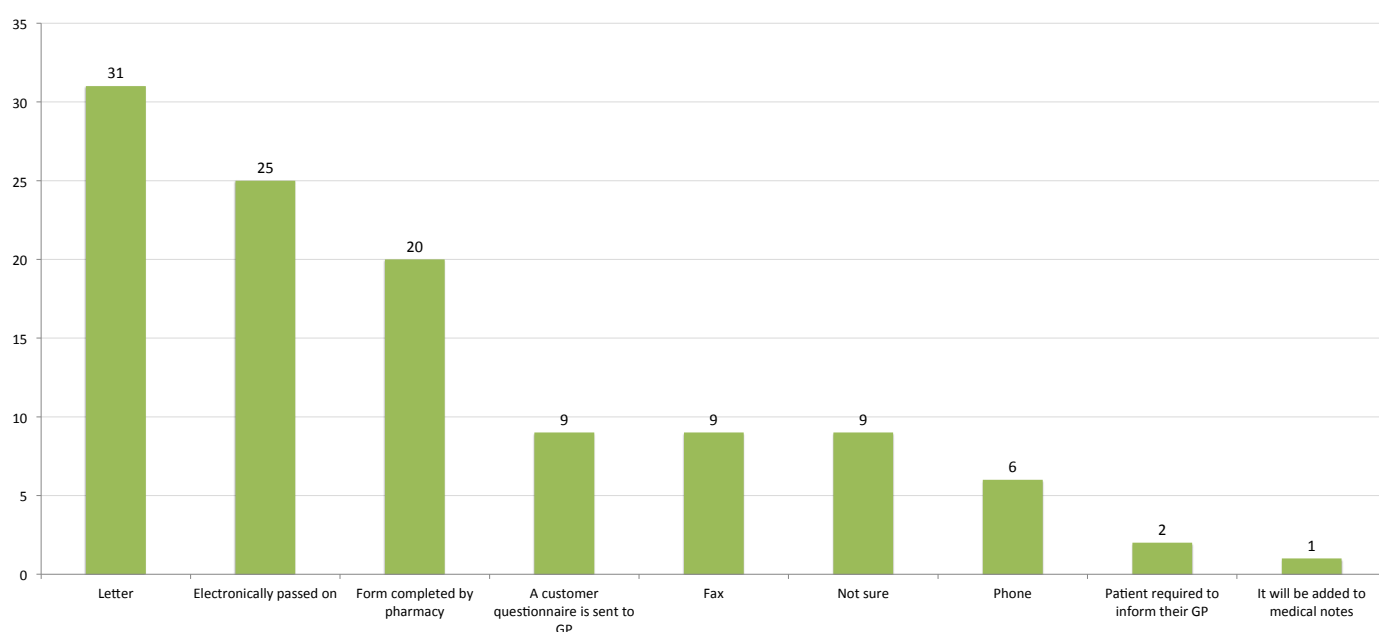
2. Those who said yes were asked if an appointment was needed.

30.5% said Yes **68.7%** said No **0.8%** said Not Sure

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

84.2% said Yes **15.8%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.



Summary of results for Burnley

1. We asked 25 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

48% said Yes **52%** said No

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"You will have to go to the doctors"

"We have none left."

"I advise you to go to a health centre."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

90.9% said No **9.1%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"We do flu vaccinations but don't have any vaccine left."

"Ring the day before to check the vaccine is available."

"You could book an appointment but you don't have to."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

81.8% said Yes **18.2%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We email it across to them."

"It goes through to their local GP as a computer receipt. If they are not local a photocopy is sent to their GP's address."

Summary of results for Chorley

1. We asked 13 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?".

84.6% said Yes **15.4%** said No

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"We don't do flu vaccinations, you have to go to the surgery which is in the same building."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

63.6% said No **36.4%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"We have to get in the vaccine."

"No appointment is necessary. Available any day except for Wednesday."

"An appointment is needed. There is not always a member of staff on duty who can give the jab."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

90.9% said Yes **9.1%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We fill in forms and take them across."

"After filling in paperwork a copy is sent by post to their GP."

"We fax it over."

"It is sent automatically."

Summary of results for Fylde

1. We asked 5 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

100% said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"Flu vaccinations are available from Monday to Thursday."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

80% said No **20%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"They are available as long as the pharmacist is in."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

40% said Yes **60%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We send a slip through to the GP."

"We send a form to their GP."

Summary of results for Hyndburn

1. We asked 19 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

52.6% said Yes **47.4%** said No

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"We don't have an accredited pharmacist to carry out the flu jabs."

"None in stock."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

90% said No **10%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"It would be good if they phoned to check if registered pharmacist is in."

"They can just turn up on the day but recommended phoning to make sure a registered pharmacist is available."

"I suggested avoiding busy periods."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

80% said Yes **20%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We send an email or form to the surgery."

"We send a letter and it will go on their record."

"I think it is a letter but I'm not sure."

Summary of results for Lancaster

1. We asked 33 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

48.5% said Yes **48.5%** said No **3%** said Not Sure

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"Stock destroyed due to power failure during floods."

"Ran out of stock mid - December and we aren't ordering more."

"We haven't got any in stock and can't get any due to a problem with the manufacturer."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

62.5% said No **37.5%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"I recommended that an appointment is made."

"If the pharmacist who does it is in then it shouldn't be a problem. Best day is Friday."

"She could just come in."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

87.5% said Yes **12.5%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We will inform them if you want us to, not sure how."

"A questionnaire is completed by the customer and passed onto their GP."

"Will take their details and pass onto the GP."

"By email."

Summary of results for Pendle

1. We asked 26 pharmacies “Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?”.

76.9% said Yes **23.1%** said No

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

“I advise you to go to a health centre.”

“We don’t do flu vaccinations but I know Leedams are doing them and think ASDA as well.”

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

60% said No **35%** said Yes **5%** said Not Sure

Comments from pharmacies:

“I am not sure if the pharmacist is in all the time. She could book an appointment.”

“There’s someone here all the time so she can come whenever.”

“It would be better if she made an appointment.”

3. We asked “Would the pharmacy inform my relative’s GP that the flu vaccination had been given?”

90% said Yes **10%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

“It depends on the GP if they have their end set up electronically we can send it that way but if they don’t we fax the form over to them.”

“We would phone them up or send a letter.”

“We do let the GP know if they are local. I couldn’t tell you how, I’m not sure.”

Summary of results for Preston

1. We asked 47 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?".

63.8% said Yes **36.2%** said No

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"We don't do them" (Volunteer noted a poster on the way advertising flu vaccines).

"Can't at the moment as the pharmacist is on holiday for two weeks."

"I advise you to try their GP surgery."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

80% said No **20%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"The pharmacist can only do them on certain days so ring first."

"Can only do it Monday and Tuesday though. Also ring first to check they have enough vaccines."

"Just walk in, as long as they haven't got a cough or cold."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

90% said Yes **10%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"By phone or electronically if in the Preston area."

"We can inform their GP by phone if requested."

"Not sure if we inform the GP, think it's up to the patient."

"Once done, the paperwork is passed on to their GP."

Summary of results for Rossendale

1. We asked 18 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?".

55.6% said Yes **33.3%** said No **11.1%** said Not Sure

Comments from pharmacies who said no:

"We don't do them but ASDA pharmacy do."

"I think so but I'm not sure. You'd be better phoning up tomorrow to ask."

"We did last year but the pharmacist that did them left so we decided not to do them this year."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

45.5% said No **54.5%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"She doesn't need an appointment, there's someone here that can do it all the time."

"She could book an appointment or just show up."

"It would be better if she made an appointment because there's not always someone here to do it."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

100% said Yes

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"We fill out a form and send it to them."

"Electronic, we just send it through. If the systems are down and the surgery is local we would drop it off."

"We fax it through to them so they can update their records."

Summary of results for South Ribble

1. We asked 15 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

80% said Yes **20%** said No

Comments from pharmacies:

"We only have a few left."

"You would have to use the surgeries."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

66.7% said No **33.3%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"Only one staff member can give jabs."

"No appointment necessary but it is Monday to Friday only."

"Person who gives jabs only works part-time."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

66.7% said Yes **33.3%** said No

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"The patient has to inform their GP."

"We only inform the GP if it's a free (NHS) one. If private you have to tell your GP. It is done electronically."

"Send a letter to her GP surgery."

Summary of results for West Lancashire

1. We asked 12 pharmacies “Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?”.

50% said Yes

50% said No

Comments from pharmacies:

“We do not carry out vaccinations in store, but she can go to her GP who may arrange for it to be done either in surgery or at home.”

“Unfortunately no more vaccines in stock. I suggest you try Boots or Morrisons.”

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

60% said No

40% said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

“Vaccinations are available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.”

3. We asked “Would the pharmacy inform my relative’s GP that the flu vaccination had been given?”

100% said Yes

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

“We send it either by fax or letter.”

“We don’t usually but we can do.”

“We will send a letter to their GP.”

Summary of results for Wyre

1. We asked 8 pharmacies "Can my elderly relative have their flu vaccination at your pharmacy?"

37.5% said Yes **62.5%** said No

Comments from pharmacies:

"We don't have any in at the moment, might have some next week."

"The nurse at the doctors might do them."

2. We asked pharmacies who said yes if an appointment was needed.

66.7% said No **33.3%** said Yes

Comments from pharmacies:

"Details are taken and provided to GP surgery."

3. We asked "Would the pharmacy inform my relative's GP that the flu vaccination had been given?"

100% said Yes

4. We asked those who said yes to Question 3 how would the GP be informed.

Comments from pharmacies:

"Details are taken and provided to their GP surgery."

"It's up to the person, you fill in a box to say if you want your GP to be informed or not. I think they are inform by letter."

Summary

The report highlights variabilities in the availability of the 2015/16 flu vaccination service by community pharmacies.

The report also highlights the need for a more consistent approach to informing GPs when flu vaccinations have been given by a community pharmacist.

Response from NHS England

The findings of the report were shared with NHS England who provided the following response:

“NHS England would like to take this opportunity to thank Healthwatch Lancashire for this important work, which will be used by the Local Pharmacy Network to learn lessons and improve this service for patients in the future. We see this as a positive opportunity to engage with local pharmacists, to improve patient experience and access to this valuable programme.”



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