

QUARTERLY MEETING BETWEEN SCRUTINY AND THE CCG.

MONDAY 8 NOVEMBER, 2021 - 3.00pm to 3.40pm

Present: Cllr Julie Cooper, Andrew Bird, Geoff Durham, Denise French, Tracey Shewan CCG

Tracey Shewan gave an update on the current situation with Covid: Currently, in Newcastle over a 7 day period, the number of cases were 203.3 per 100,000 population. The current hospital bed occupancy, at 1 November, in Royal Stoke Hospital was 92 people with Covid and 16 of those were on ventilators.

Tracey stated that there was an expectation that flu cases would start in December. However the vaccine this years was said to be a good one so it was hoped that cases would be low. The efficacy of the flu vaccine was currently being checked.

Andrew Bird advised that the Council had again done the voucher scheme for staff and there had been a good uptake.

Andrew stated that there seemed to be a belief amongst some people that the Covid booster was included with the flu Vaccine and asked if this was actually possible. Tracey stated that it would be good if it were possible but there had to be a six month gap between vaccines . There still needed to be the push for people to get both their booster and the flu vaccine. It was believed that after six months the efficacy of the Covid vaccine began to wane.

The NHS was not seeing a lot of outbreaks i.e. in Care Homes. There seemed to be more community transmissions, for example meeting with others.

With regard to vaccine uptake, it was lowest amongst the 60-69 year olds who were due their booster.

Tracey reported that the number of ambulances coming into hospital was lower than pre-covid. However, ambulances were then stuck due to delays in the patient flow through hospital. Regarding bed spaces, a Ward in the Haywood Hospital for 'Acquired Brain Injury' had been moved to Cheadle in order to create more capacity.

A Community Rapid Intervention Service was also working really well in North Staffordshire.

Councillor Julie Cooper asked, of the cases in hospital, how many were 'double jabbed'. Tracey advised that 75% of those in hospital had not been vaccinated. One in five patients in ETMO were pregnant, non-vaccinated women.

Councillor Julie Cooper suggested that the 'space' rule was no longer being adhered to and was advised that it was now 'for guidance' and no longer enforceable.

Covid was still impacting on the workforce in general as parents with sick children were having to be off work to care for them.

Andrew asked if there had been an improvement in the take-up amongst ethnic groups and Tracey advised that it had improved but still needed to be worked on .

Denise asked about face to face appointments and Tracey advised that these had been happening throughout Covid for those that needed a 'physical examination'. GP surgeries were experiencing a huge increase in phone calls.

Tracey advised that at next month's County Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 December there would be an item on GP access where the committee would hear from a representative of GPs, the ambulance service and urgent care.

The backlog of hospital appointments needed to be addressed. There was a plan for recovery but it would not be a quick one.