

Committee(s)	Dated:
Establishment Committee – For Information	3 December 2018
Subject: Flu Vaccinations	Public
Report of: Chrissie Morgan, Director of HR	For Information
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Summary

At the October Establishment Committee Members raised a question asking whether the City of London Corporation should offer a free flu vaccination for all officers and Members to reduce sickness absence levels and maximise officer/Member wellbeing.

The Open Spaces Department are currently trialling a free flu vaccination programme for officers this year and the learning from this will be considered when recommending proposals for 2019.

This report highlights potential costs and other implications which will need to be considered in full before recommendations are brought back to Committee for consideration.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Members considered a report on sickness absence across the City of London Corporation. It was noted that the top three absences for City Corporation officers were: anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses; cold, cough, flu; and muscular-skeletal problems (excluding back and neck problems).
2. A question was raised regarding whether the City Corporation should offer free flu vaccinations for all officers and Members as soon as practicably possible to reduce sickness absence levels and maximise officer/Member wellbeing.

3. It was noted that the sickness category which includes flu also includes colds and coughs. This means that the actual number of days lost because of flu is unknown. It is common for employees to describe heavy colds as flu.

Current Position

4. The flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at higher risk of flu. This is to help protect them against catching flu and developing serious complications. The NHS advises that studies show that the flu vaccine will help prevent getting the flu, but it won't stop all flu viruses. Further the level of protection may vary, so it is not a 100% guarantee to be flu-free but getting flu after vaccination is likely to be milder and shorter-lived than it would otherwise have been. The vaccination is only for the predicted flu/s for the year and therefore does not provide cover for any type of flu.
5. The NHS advises that people should have the flu vaccine if they:
 - are 65 years old or over
 - are pregnant
 - have certain medical conditions
 - are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility
 - receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk they fall ill

Frontline health and social care workers are also eligible to receive the flu vaccine. It is an employer's responsibility to arrange and pay for this vaccine.

6. Those that qualify for a free flu vaccine can arrange for this through their GP. Some pharmacies also provide this service.
7. People who do not qualify for a free vaccine can also choose to pay privately for this vaccine, currently between £10 and £13 at local pharmacies. For example: Boots and Lloyds Pharmacy.
8. Some GPs offer free flu vaccinations to all their patients.
9. This year Open Spaces are trialling a scheme offering all of their staff, who do not already qualify under NHS rules, a free flu vaccination.
10. The Department of Community and Children's Services have offered to reimburse staff working in the adult social care team (who provide front line services to residents in the City of London) who pay for a flu vaccination privately. Currently take up has been low from officers.

Potential Future Options

11. The following options have been reviewed at a high level to provide Members with an early indication of potential costs and implications.
12. All options are proposed on the following pre-conditions:

- a. The decision to have a flu vaccination is a personal choice, so staff and Members can choose to opt in or opt out of having a flu vaccination;
- b. A private flu vaccination is only offered to employees and Members who do not already qualify for a free flu vaccination by the NHS. Anyone who is already entitled to a free flu vaccination should continue to receive these as normal if they chose to have one.

13. There are three potential options to consider in further detail:
- a. Offer a free private flu vaccination to all staff and Members;
 - b. Offer a free private flu vaccination to front-line staff only;
 - c. To continue as current and not offer any private flu vaccinations.

Financial Implications

14. Appendix 1 provides details of two pharmacies that provide a corporate flu vaccination.
15. The headcount of officers and Members is approximately 4,820 and costs have been calculated on different levels of take up. This takes into account a percentage of officers and Members who are already eligible for a free flu vaccination; and officers and Members who choose not to take up this option.

Staff / Members (c4,820)	Boots	Lloyds	
		Vouchers	PAYG
10% (c482)	£3,253.50	£4,434.40	N/A
25% (c1,205)	£8,133.75	£11,086.00	£7,011.00
50% (c2,410)	£16,267.50	£22,172.00	£18,097.00
75% of staff (c3,620)	£24,435.00	£33,304.00	£29,229.00

16. There are potential tax implications to provide private flu vaccinations and the Chamberlain's department will be consulted with as part of the full feasibility review.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. This links with Corporate Plan outcome 2 – people enjoy good health and wellbeing.

Health Implications

18. Occupational Health will be consulted with as part of the full feasibility review to identify any potential health implications.

Conclusion

19. This report provides a high-level overview of the potential options and highlights potential costs and associated implications which will need further review. A further report will be brought back to committee next year for members to consider.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1 – Corporate Flu Vaccination Options**

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Appendix 1 – Corporate Flu Vaccination Options

Boots

The City Corporation purchases e-vouchers online and must provide the name of the employee's as Boots will send out personalised e-vouchers by email or text message. The employee must then make an appointment with a participating Boots pharmacy.

E-vouchers are usually priced at the discounted rate of £8.75 per employee (for 10 or more people). For orders of 250 or more e-vouchers, a reduced rate of £8 applies, decreasing to £6.75 for orders of 1,000 or more. Orders between 500 and 999 will cost £7.75.

Lloyds Pharmacy

Offer a Corporate Flu Vaccination Programme, with three options.

- a. Flu vaccination vouchers: These are non-refundable vouchers that can be purchased in advance. This is a good option if there are large numbers who will be vaccinated. The cost reduces with the more vouchers brought. For example, up to 100 vouchers is £9.50 per voucher; over 500 vouchers is £9.20 per voucher.
- b. Pay as you go (PAYG) flu vaccination vouchers: These are a good option if numbers are uncertain. There is a non-refundable fee of £525 for the first 50 vouchers - for any additional vouchers, the City Corporation will only be charged for the number of vouchers redeemed. Reports will be provided by Lloyds Pharmacy on the number of vouchers redeemed.
- c. Flu vaccination clinic: A qualified Pharmacist will attend one (or more) of our premises with a supporting member of Lloyds Pharmacy staff to administer the vaccinations and offer expert healthcare advice. For this option there is a daily clinic cost (full day - £350, maximum 80 vaccinations; half day - £200, maximum 40 vaccinations) plus the cost of each vaccination (costs as outlined in paragraph 12a).