

## Report for the Children, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on Tuesday 14 September 2021

### 1. National clinical shortage of blood bottles

A global supply issue is affecting the availability of the blood tubes used for blood tests and this is having an impact on the number of tests that are being carried out.

The shortage means surgeries and other healthcare settings across BaNES are having to restrict the number of blood tests they can carry out and reduce non-clinically urgent testing.

However, patients have been reassured that blood tests will only be deferred where it is clinically safe to do so.

The supply position of the equipment remains constrained and is forecast to become even more constrained over the coming weeks.

While it is anticipated that the position will improve from the middle of September, overall supply is likely to remain challenging for a significant period.

Communications have been sent out to clinical colleagues on guidance of when it is appropriate to take bloods currently, giving scope for clinical judgement. So far the reduction in blood tests has fallen in line with the requested target from NHSE.

In the meantime, patients have been kept informed by their surgeries and through information on the BSW CCG website that those needing test for urgent health problems will still get one but, where a clinician recommends that it's safe to do so, they may be asked to come back for a test at a later date, or their appointment may be rescheduled.

### 2. Flu vaccine delays

While this year's programme of winter flu vaccination clinics across BaNES is set to begin over the coming weeks, vaccine provider Seqirus has advised that due to unforeseen road freight challenges, there will be a delay to scheduled deliveries of around one to two weeks.

This change means that practices will inevitably have to reschedule clinics.

As a result, Seqirus has pledged to keep practices informed through various delivery updates and practices across BaNES are keeping patients informed.

### 3. Supporting GPs and parents of children with Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

BSW CCG has put measures in place to help address a rise in the number of children affected by Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

RSV is a potentially serious respiratory illness which children often pick up during the colder months of the year which health officials have been reporting in increasing numbers over the past few months

The CCG has supported by supplying a range of RSV-related materials for GP practices and other health settings including display posters and leaflets and organising education sessions for GPs on how to manage cases, as well as when to refer onwards to hospitals.

Awareness of the rise has been made to primary care colleagues to help manage children whose families may otherwise be putting unnecessary pressure on hospitals. There have also been communications with the public on guidance of when to contact primary care regarding the illness and when it is safe to monitor children.

Plans are being developed across the system for surge planning should a worse-case scenario occur and hospital and community colleagues are unable to effectively manage the rise in demand.

#### **4. BSW ICS Partnership Integrated Care System update**

Following the appointment of Stephanie Elsy as Chair-designate in July, NHS England and Improvement have started the recruitment process for BSW Partnership's Chief Executive-designate. The recruitment is part of a nationwide process.

Recruitment to a key leadership position has also taken place within the BSW Academy with Dr Sarah Green being announced as BSW Academy Director. Sarah will lead a brand new academy for BSW, creating a place where leadership, learning, innovation, improvement and inclusion are at the heart of the way we work together for the benefit of our local communities and our workforce.

As the Health and Care Bill continues its passage through Parliament and the April 2022 date when the Bill is anticipated to become law and create 42 statutory Integrated Care Systems approaches, our Board and partner organisations have been reading and assessing a number of new guidance documents that have been published during August. The overarching BSW ICS Development Programme plan has been updated to reflect the new guidance.

Guidance published during August includes [Interim guidance on the functions and governance of the integrated care board](#), [HR guidance](#) and [guidance on provider collaboratives](#) to cover closer working between hospitals.

There are also events taking place this month with contributions from clinical colleagues to discuss how we can best add value from clinical leadership and how it is appropriately distributed in the governance of the ICS

## 5. Covid mass vaccination programme

Our Covid vaccination programme continues to make strong progress with vaccinating our populations in BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire.

- In BaNES, 92 per cent of all people in the top nine most at-risk age groups have been fully vaccinated against coronavirus
- So far, more than 1.3 million vaccines have been given out across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire
- More than 94 per cent of all people in the top nine most at-risk age groups have been fully vaccinated against coronavirus. Approximately 70 per cent of all adults aged between 18 and 29 have now had a first vaccine, with around 20 per cent having had both doses.
- Focus is now on vaccinating 16 and 17 year-olds across BSW with 27 per cent having had their first vaccination and 6% having had both doses. Bath Racecourse and Salisbury City Hall, as well as smaller sites in Melksham and Devizes are now offering the vaccine to younger people.
- We have also begun to vaccinate younger children aged between 12 and 15 years old who have a specific underlying health condition or are living in a household where someone has a weakened immune system.
- We remain on track to deliver booster vaccinations throughout September and the autumn, and this will coincide with the annual winter flu programme.
- All vaccination centres, including those that offering walk-ins, are now listed on NHS England's national [Find My Nearest Walk-in Vaccination](#) service
- Those using the online tool will be able to see a list of the vaccination centres closest to them by entering their postcode in the search box

## 6. RUH 2021 AGM

A year in review presentation from Chief Executive Cara Charles-Barks and a discussion around the future of cancer services will be among the topics on the agenda when the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust holds its AGM on Wednesday 22 September.

The online event will take place from 2pm – 4pm and be available for everyone to view on the Microsoft Teams video platform. Join in at [www.ruh.nhs.uk/AGMlive](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk/AGMlive)

The AGM will also include presentations from staff about the hospital's culture and people, as well as reports on the Trust's operational and financial performance, the annual report of the Council of Governors and an update about the Trust's progress on its priorities for 2020/21.