

AGED 55+

Introduction

This document presents summary findings for residents aged 55 and above across Wales, indicating where there are differences and particularities compared to overall results. For quantitative results, differences are significant at the 95% confidence level, meaning that there is only a 5% possibility that the difference has occurred by chance; a commonly accepted confidence level. All differences are statistically significant unless stated otherwise. There is a separate report showing results across groups. The title of the overall report is: 'Evaluation of information resources' (produced by BMG Research on behalf of PHW). 242 residents aged 55+ took part in the quantitative survey and nine residents aged 55+ took part in a qualitative focus group. Fieldwork took place between December 2022 and February 2023. Further information about sampling and methodology can be found on the main report cited above.

Recommendations and key take outs for this group are marked in **bold**.

Awareness of publicity about immunisation

In line with overall results, the vast majority of those aged 55+ (90%) say that they have seen or heard something about immunisations for people in the past 12 months. Those who had seen or heard information about vaccination say that it was mostly related to COVID-19 and flu, with the proportions of those aged 55+ saying that they have seen information about these two vaccines being higher than average (89% of those aged 55+ have seen information about the COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 84% overall; and 75% of those aged 55+ have seen or heard information about the flu vaccine, compared to 62% overall). This is likely to reflect the fact that this age group is more likely than younger age groups to have been eligible for more recent COVID-19 boosters and flu vaccines. Similarly, while only a minority of those aged 55+ report having heard of the Shingles vaccine in the past 12 months, this group are more likely than average to have heard of this vaccine (16% compared to 10% overall), possibly reflecting on eligibility.

Those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that the information about vaccination that they have seen or heard in the past 12 months was in favour of vaccinations (85%) and less likely than average to say that the information was against vaccination (1%). The opposite trend can be observed among younger generations, with those aged 16-34 being more likely than average to have come across information against vaccination (10%) and less likely to have seen or heard information in favour of vaccination (69%).

Television is the most common channel where those aged 55+ have seen or heard information about vaccination in the past 12 months; with 50% of those who have seen information on vaccination saying that television is where they saw or heard this information, a proportion which is higher than average (cf. 38% overall). Other channels mentioned more often than average by those aged 55+ to find out about vaccinations are: newspapers (18%, compared to 15% overall), the Public Health Wales website (18%, compared to 14% overall), and pharmacists or someone in a pharmacy (14%, compared to 10% overall). In contrast, those aged 55+ are less likely than average to say that they have encountered information about vaccinations on social media (13%, compared to 22% overall) and YouTube (4%, compared to 9% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Recommended channels for reaching out to those aged 55+: television, newspapers, pharmacists, PHW website.**

Key take outs:

- **Less effective channels for reaching out to those aged 55+: social media, YouTube, online channels.**

Respondents aged 55+ are less likely than average to have encountered misinformation about vaccinations, with a higher-than-average proportion saying that they have not seen or heard anything in the past 12 months that would make them worried or concerned about having vaccinations (83%, compared to 73% overall). This suggests that those aged 55+ are less likely than other age groups to need 'myth-busting' style information resources about vaccinations.

Key take out:

- **Those aged 55+ are less likely than other age groups to need 'myth-busting' style information resources about vaccinations.**

Awareness of vaccination programme

Awareness of the vaccination programme in Wales among residents aged 55+ is mixed, with awareness of some vaccines being higher than average among this group and awareness of other vaccines being lower than average.

Vaccines those aged 55+ are less likely than average to be aware of: rotavirus vaccine (10%, compared to 16% overall), MenACWY adolescent/fresher vaccine (Meningitis, meningococcal disease, septicaemia or blood poisoning) (17%, compared to 22% overall), Hib/MenC (Haemophilus influenzae, meningitis C) (24%, compared to 28% overall), MenB (meningitis B) (30%, compared to 35% overall), HPV vaccine (Cervical cancer, head and neck cancer, genital cancer and genital warts) (32%, compared to 40% overall), and 6-in-1/DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB (diphtheria, hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae, polio, tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis)) (38%, compared to 43% overall).

Vaccines those aged 55+ are more likely than average to be aware of: COVID-19 (90%, compared to 84% overall), flu (89%, compared to 76% overall), MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) (68%, compared to 63% overall), Shingles/herpes zoster vaccine (45%, compared to 35% overall).

Key take out:

- **Awareness of the following vaccines could improve among those aged 55+: MenACWY, Hib/MenC, MenB, HPV, and 6-in-1/DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB.**

Attitudes towards vaccinations

Those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that most of the diseases the Welsh vaccine programme protects against are serious: Head and neck cancer (96%, compared to 92% overall), Septicaemia (Blood poisoning) (96%, compared to 91% overall), Meningitis (95%, compared to 90% overall), Pneumonia (95%, compared to 91% overall), Tuberculosis (95%, compared to 88% overall), Polio (88%, compared to 81% overall), Hepatitis (86%, compared to 81% overall), Tetanus (85%, compared to 77% overall), Diphtheria (82%, compared to 74% overall), COVID-19 (76%, compared to 68% overall), Shingles (74%, compared to 68% overall), flu (64%, compared to 56% overall).

Those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that all vaccines are a lower risk to them than the diseases they protect from (78%, compared to 73% overall).

Additionally, those aged 55+ are more likely than average to agree that: vaccines work (92%, compared to 86%), vaccines are properly tested (84%, compared to 79% overall), they trust vaccines (86%, compared to 83% overall), it is normal for people their age to get vaccinated (87%, compared to 81% overall). Moreover, this group are more likely to disagree that they are concerned about side effects (38% disagree, compared to 31% overall).

Key take out:

- **Attitudes towards vaccinations are more positive than average among those aged 55+. This suggests that information resources for this group should focus more on the practicalities of when and where they can get vaccines and less so on highlighting the benefits of vaccination.**

Access to information and decision-making

Respondents aged 55+ are more likely than average to agree that they know where to find information on vaccination (89%, compared to 85% overall). Similarly, agreement with the following statement is also higher than average among those aged 55+: *I've had enough information to make an informed decision about whether or not to have each of the vaccinations I've been offered so far* (92%, compared to 86% overall).

In line with the average result, 81% of those aged 55+ agree that they know how vaccinations work.

When it comes to the sources of information used to find out about vaccinations, the most common sources of information for those aged 55+ are: doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals (51%), and the NHS website (44%). These results are in line with the average result. Nonetheless, those aged 55+ are more likely than average to have used the following sources to find out about vaccinations: NHS leaflets (34%, compared to 29% overall), television (26%, compared to 17% overall), and newspapers (14%, compared to 8% overall). Conversely, those aged 55+ are less likely than average to have used the following sources of information: friends/family/colleagues (12%, compared to 16% overall), social media (5%, compared to 10% overall), YouTube (4%, compared to 8% overall), Snapchat (<0.5%, compared to 3% overall), and WhatsApp (<0.5%, compared to 2% overall).

Trust in information sources among those aged 55+ is generally in line with the average result, with trust being highest for healthcare professionals and healthcare related sources of information.

In terms of decision-making, those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that they automatically have all the immunisations when they are due/offered (63%, compared to 57% overall).

This automatic decision-making process was also highlighted in the qualitative focus group of participants aged 55+ as a generational trait:

"We've grown up in a culture where we had to have vaccinations. We knew we would have them". Participant aged 55+

Given that this group is more likely than others to make an automatic decision to get vaccinated, information resources can be seen as more superfluous for this group than for others. Nonetheless, a minority said that they had read information about the COVID-19 given the negative coverage around safety concerns.

“I remember being handed a piece of paper with a million words on it [about the COVID-19 vaccine]. I don’t think anyone ever reads it”. Participant aged 55+

Key take outs:

- **Those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that they have all the information they need to make informed decisions on whether or not to have vaccinations. This group is also more likely to say that they make automatic decisions when it comes to vaccine uptake, as opposed to weighting up pros and cons. This supports the recommendation that information resources for this age group should focus more on practical details about how to get vaccinations and less so on highlighting the benefits of vaccinations for persuasion purposes.**
- **Recommended channels for reaching out to those aged 55+: healthcare professionals, television, newspapers.**
- **Less effective channels for reaching out to those aged 55+: social media, YouTube, online channels, word of mouth.**

Vaccine uptake, barriers and motivations

When asked whether they had refused or delayed any vaccines offered to them, those aged 55+ are more likely than average to say that they have had all the vaccinations offered to them so far (79%, compared to 73% overall).

In line with average results, protection of oneself is the most prominent motivation among those aged 55+ to get vaccinated.

Only a minority of those aged 55+ say that they have refused vaccinations (16%, in line with the average result: 17%), with COVID and flu being the most commonly refused/delayed vaccines by this age group, as seen across other groups.

A perception that vaccines are not needed and a lack of trust are the most commonly cited barriers to vaccine uptake for those aged 55+, in line with overall results.

Key take out:

- **Claimed vaccine uptake is higher than average among those aged 55+, with protection of oneself being the most prominent motivation to get vaccinated (in line with average results). Information resources for this group should therefore draw on protection as a motivator to encourage vaccination uptake/draw attention to information resources.**

Awareness and views of PHW publicity

Awareness of PHW publicity is lower than average among those aged 55+ (28%, compared to 41% overall). Those aged 55+ are also less likely than average to have seen the *Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau/Vaccination saves lives* logo (21%, compared to 39% overall).

GP surgeries (28%), vaccination centres (19%) and pharmacies (13%) are the most common places where those aged 55+ have seen PHW publicity, with pharmacies being mentioned more often than average by those aged 55+. Nonetheless, when asked about the most effective ways of conveying information about vaccination, participants aged 55+ who took part in the qualitative focus group agreed that TV adverts would be most effective, with the effectiveness of leaflets and GP surgeries being seen as low:

"In this day and age, there must be a better place to spread information than with leaflets".
Participant aged 55+

"No one would see these if they were just leaflets piled up in a surgery [...]". Participant aged 55+

Views of PHW publicity are in line with average results, with 94% being satisfied with the materials overall, 91% agreeing that the information is clear, 87% positively rating the design/layout, and 84% agreeing that the materials are relevant.

Further insights in relation to views of PHW publicity were provided in the qualitative focus group. In line with findings from other groups, those aged 55+ have a preference for resources that present information in a summarised form, avoiding jargon, and there is also a preference for resources where participants can clearly recognise themselves as the target audience. Information about side effects is also widely appreciated.

"Really simple and tells you how to prevent getting ill." Participant aged 55+ [Catch it, bin it, kill it poster]

"This is good as it's about the side effects you should expect. [It's] really obvious who should read it". Participant aged 55+ [Flu and COVID adult leaflet]

"It's not clear immediately that it would be relevant to me so I might not pick it up".
Participant aged 55+ [Pneumococcal disease leaflet]

Key take outs:

- **As for other groups, information resources for those aged 55+ should clearly indicate the target audience.**
- **As with other groups, information resources for those aged 55+ should include information about potential side effects of vaccinations.**
- **Information resources for those aged 55+ should be short and concise (as for other groups).**
- **Further research with people aged 55+ may be needed to understand how leaflets can be made more effective for this group since results show that leaflets are seen as ineffective by this group and awareness of PHW publicity is lower than average, with a preference for TV advertising to convey information about vaccinations instead.**