

## PRIMARY CARE STAFF

### Introduction

This document presents summary findings for primary care staff 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 all service provider groups. The title of the overall report is: 'Evaluation of information resources' (produced by BMG Research on behalf of PHW). 43 primary care staff took part in the quantitative survey and three primary care staff took part in qualitative interviews. Given the relatively low base sizes for this group, findings should be interpreted with caution. 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**.

### Interactions about immunisation

The vast majority of primary care staff (88%) say that they have had conversations or questions/comments from service users about immunisation. 79% primary care staff say that they initiated one or more conversations about vaccinations with their service users and 47% say that their service users have initiated one or more conversations with them about vaccinations. The remaining 12% say that they have not had any conversations with their service users about vaccinations. Most of the conversations primary care staff have had with service users about vaccinations related to the COVID-19 vaccine (89%) and the flu vaccine (79%). These results are in line with the overall results for service providers.

In terms of the frequency of conversations about vaccinations with service providers, most primary care staff say that these conversations take place once a week or more often (79%), in line with the average result.

The vast majority (92%) of primary care staff who have had conversations with service users about vaccinations say that they have had comments or questions from service users who were worried or concerned about having vaccinations. According to primary care staff, the vaccines that service users were most concerned about are: the COVID-19 (89%) and the flu (60%) vaccines. Primary care staff say that side effects (91%) and whether vaccinations have been properly tested (71%) are the most prominent concerns about vaccinations among their service users.

Insights from the qualitative interviews also show that most of the conversations primary care staff have with service users either address concerns about side effects or aim to encourage service users to get vaccinated:

*"Children and young people, the discussions are about side effects/how they will feel/do I have to have it at school [and the] same with parents, especially around HPV".* Primary care staff

*"It depends on the vaccination, not often about kids' vaccines, but I do have conversations about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine, and for flu it's usually me bringing it up and trying to persuade them that it's a good idea. A lot of people are quite dismissive about flu jabs".* Primary care staff

*“It will be mostly negatively linked. There is of course loads with COVID but even before that, there were lots of videos going round of young girls negatively reacting to the HPV vaccine and parents sending documentation not consenting.” Primary care staff*

**Key take outs:**

- **The vast majority of primary care staff have had conversations with their service users about vaccinations, including conversations with service users who were worried about getting vaccinated. Side effects and whether vaccinations have been properly tested are the main concerns primary care staff have to reassure service users about. PHW should make sure primary care staff have information resources about how vaccines are tested and side effects so that they can address the concerns of their service users with confidence.**

**Awareness of vaccinations available for health and social care staff in Wales**

When it comes to awareness of the vaccinations available for health and social care staff in Wales, there are high levels of awareness, among primary care staff, of the COVID-19 vaccine (100%), the flu vaccine (93%) and the Hepatitis B vaccine (74%). While 37% are also aware of the MMR vaccine being available to health and social care workers, fewer than three in 10 primary care staff are aware of other vaccines being available to health and social care workers. These results are in line with the overall results for service providers.

**Key take out:**

- **There are high levels of awareness among primary staff of the COVID-19, the flu and the Hepatitis B vaccines being available for health and social care workers in Wales. However, awareness of other vaccines that may be available for health and social care workers could improve.**

**Levels of information and confidence to talk about vaccinations**

The majority of primary care staff (72%) agree that they have enough information to help service users make an informed decision on vaccination. Most primary care staff also agree that: they feel confident talking to service users about the seriousness of the diseases that vaccines protect from (88%), they know where to signpost their service users to so that they can learn more about vaccination (88%), they know where to find information to help service users make an informed decision on vaccination (86%), they feel confident explaining to service users or answering questions about how vaccines work (81%), they are confident initiating conversations with their service users about vaccinations (81%), they feel confident talking to service users or answering questions about vaccine safety (77%), and that they feel confident talking to service users or answering questions about the side effects of vaccines (72%). Conversely, primary care staff feel less confident talking to service users or answering questions about how vaccines are tested (60%) or about the ingredients of vaccines (56%). These results are in line with the overall results for service providers.

### **Key take out:**

- **Most primary care staff feel informed and confident to talk to service users about vaccinations, including vaccine safety and how vaccines work. However, confidence to talk about how vaccines are tested and the ingredients of vaccines is lower than for other topics. Information resources should be available for primary care staff, containing information about ingredients and vaccine testing, so that they can confidently talk to service users and address their queries.**

### **Access to information and supporting service users' decision-making**

The most common sources of information that primary care staff have used to signpost their service users to are: the PHW website (70%), doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals (60%), the NHS website (56%) and NHS leaflets (56%). Trust in these sources of information is high among primary care staff. Apart from these resources, the primary care staff who took part in the qualitative interviews also mentioned the Oxford Vaccine Knowledge Project as a resource they use to signpost service users to for them to find out more about vaccines:

*"[The Oxford Vaccine Knowledge Project] would be my go-to one. The NHS websites can put people off because they view it as 'this government business'. If you give them something independent, they're more likely to go for it, I think. Plus, I don't think the NHS sites as are as interesting to interact with as this Vaccine Knowledge Project is. It deals with most things though, like a lot of the reasons I would use that would be for people who were on the borderline. So they'll have worries about vaccines and that has specific sections on things like the ingredients in the vaccines or what the safety checks were. It has videos of people's personal experiences of things [...]". Primary care staff*

Primary care staff who took part in the qualitative interviews were also asked what information resources they use to educate themselves. The resources used by primary care staff to educate themselves are similar to those that they recommend to their service users and include the PHW and NHS websites as well as conferences and work emails. There was some feedback, however, that the PHW website has become harder to navigate:

*"The PHW website has got a little more difficult to navigate. It used to have lists of FAQs". Primary care staff*

Nine in 10 primary care staff (91%) say they had any conversations with one or more service users who were hesitant about whether to get vaccinated or not. The vaccines that primary care staff's service users were most concerned about are the COVID-19 (79%) and the flu (54%) vaccines. This is in line with overall results for service providers.

Most (77%) primary care staff who have had interactions with hesitant service users say that they had all the information they needed to have these conversations. Just nine primary care staff say that they did not have all the information they needed to talk to their hesitant service users. Out of these nine respondents, four say they did not know where to find the information they needed. When asked what they were missing, these four primary care staff said they would have liked to know more around exact details or research studies to share. The results for these questions should be interpreted with caution given the low base sizes.

When it comes to the impact of conversations between primary care staff and hesitant service users on decision making, half (51%) of primary care staff who have had conversations with service users say that the service user(s) they spoke to changed their mind and decided to immunise while 28%

say that the service user(s) still didn't want to immunise. The remaining 21% don't know what the outcome of the conversation was.

**Key take outs:**

- **The PHW website is the most commonly used source of information by primary care staff to signpost their service users to learn more about vaccinations. It is therefore important that the PHW website is kept up-to-date and for it to be easily accessible. There is some feedback that the PHW website has become harder to navigate for primary care staff.**
- **Most primary care staff have had conversations with service users who were hesitant about whether or not to get vaccinated. While most primary care staff felt that they had all the information they needed to have these conversations, a small minority were missing some information, such as specific details or research studies. Information resources for primary care staff should include links to research studies for them to find out more.**
- **Ensuring that primary care staff have all the information they need to address queries about vaccinations is important given primary care staff's role in encouraging vaccine uptake: Half of the conversations primary care staff had with hesitant service users led to the service user deciding to get vaccinated.**

### Awareness and views of PHW publicity

Awareness of PHW publicity is high among primary care staff (91%, compared to 89% overall), as is awareness of the *Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau/Vaccination saves lives* logo (93%, compared to 86% overall).

Vaccination centres (62%) are the most common places where primary care staff have seen PHW publicity, in line with overall results for service providers.

Views of PHW publicity are positive among primary care staff, with 85% of primary care staff saying that they are satisfied overall, 92% being satisfied with how clear the information is, 90% being satisfied with the amount of information, and 90% positively rating the design/layout.

When it comes to accessibility, 60% of primary care staff say that they would like to have PHW materials available in languages other than English or Welsh for the benefit of their service users, with Polish and Ukrainian being the most commonly cited languages in which primary care staff would like to have information resources available.

Similarly, 81% of primary care staff say that they would like to have information resources about vaccinations available in accessible formats, with Easy Read, Large Print, Braille and audio description being the most commonly cited accessible formats.

Further insights in relation to views of PHW publicity were provided in the qualitative interviews with primary care staff. As seen across other groups, there is a preference for short and concise information resources with a limited amount of text.

*"I like that there is not a lot of writing, as young people would get bored of that and not read it".* Primary care staff [HPV leaflet]

*"It's easy to read as there isn't a lot of written information".* Primary care staff [Easy Read leaflet]

*“There’s lot of information. I suppose it’s all important to be said, it’s just a lot to read”.*

Primary care staff [Adult COVID and flu leaflet]

There was also a preference for information resources to include visual elements that help convey health messages:

*“This has a nice picture on the front. Although some might find it gross, it is good to show what it can look like”.* Primary care staff [HPV leaflet]

However, the images need to be seen as appropriate to convey health messages, otherwise they can be seen as confusing or a deterrent for people to engage with the information resource in question:

*“Showing needles may not be a good idea as they may be different from the needles the nurses actually use so may confuse people”.* Primary care staff [HPV leaflet]

*“The pictures of pigs are quite sad [...]”.* Primary care staff [Nasal flu spray resource]

In terms of the formats of information resources, primary care staff emphasised the need of having resources both in digital and paper formats (including written and audio) to make sure a wide range of service user groups can access information about vaccination:

*“There’s so many pros and cons of digital. Some people are very savvy with it and some people have no internet at all.”* Primary care staff

*“Information should really move online for young people, as they’re on their phones or computers and more likely to see things there than they are to pick up a piece of paper that they’ve been sent or that they see out and about”.* Primary care staff

*“Leaflets to give people, depending on age and vaccine etc. [...] Online videos that exist for some are also good”.* Primary care staff

**Key take outs:**

- **As for other groups, information resources for primary care staff should be short and concise, including visual elements to convey information where possible.**
- **Information resources for primary care staff to share with their service users need to be available on a variety of formats including digital and paper and a mixture of written and video materials, so as to ensure no user groups are excluded from accessing information.**
- **Information resources for primary care staff should be short and concise (as for other groups), with links to further information/QR codes to find out more.**
- **More than half of primary care staff would like information resources about vaccination available in languages other than English or Welsh, with Polish and Ukrainian being the most prominent languages in which primary care staff would like to have information resources available.**
- **Most primary care staff would like information resources to be available in accessible formats, including Easy Read, Large Print, Braille and audio description.**