

UNPAID CARERS

Introduction

This document presents summary findings for unpaid carers 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). 49 unpaid carers took part in the quantitative survey and two unpaid carers 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**.

Awareness of publicity about immunisation

The vast majority of unpaid carers (96%) say that they have seen or heard something about immunisations for people in the past 12 months, with this proportion being higher than the average result (89%), albeit not significantly given the relatively low base size for unpaid carers (49 in total). Those who had seen or heard information about vaccination say that it was mostly related to COVID-19 and flu, with the proportions of unpaid carers saying that they have seen information about these two vaccines being higher than average (89% of unpaid carers have seen information about the COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 84% overall; and 70% of unpaid carers have seen or heard information about the flu vaccine, compared to 62% overall). This is likely to reflect the fact that this group and those they care for are more likely to be eligible for these vaccinations.

83% of unpaid carers say that the information about vaccination that they have seen or heard in the past 12 months was in favour of vaccinations. 2% say they have seen information against vaccination and 6% have seen a mixture of information for and against vaccinations. These proportions are in line with the overall results.

Doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals are the most common channel for unpaid carers to receive information about vaccination in the past 12 months; with 38% of those who have seen information on vaccination saying that healthcare professionals are whom they heard this information from (cf. 32% overall). This is followed by: television (34%, compared to 38% overall), the NHS website (23%, compared to 18% overall), NHS leaflets (23% compared to 16% overall), and social media (19%, compared to 22% overall). Unpaid carers are more likely than average to mention sources of information related to healthcare (these differences, however, are not statistically significant given the low base size for unpaid carers). The least commonly mention sources of information about vaccinations among unpaid carers are: Snapchat (0%), WhatsApp (0%) and YouTube (2%).

Key take outs:

- **Recommended channels for reaching out to unpaid carers: healthcare professionals and settings, television, NHS leaflets, social media.**
- **Less effective channels for reaching out to unpaid carers: Snapchat, WhatsApp, YouTube.**

Unpaid carers 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 (86%, compared to 73% overall). This suggests that unpaid carers are less likely than other groups to need ‘myth-busting’ style information resources about vaccinations.

Key take out:

- **Unpaid carers are less likely than other groups to need ‘myth-busting’ style information resources about vaccinations.**

Awareness of vaccination programme

Awareness of the vaccination programme in Wales among unpaid carers is higher than average, with unpaid carers being more likely than average to be aware of most vaccines.

Vaccines unpaid carers are more likely than average to be aware of: flu (90%, compared to 76% overall), 4-in-1 pre-school booster (diphtheria, polio, tetanus, whooping cough (pertussis)) (69%, compared to 53% overall), travel vaccinations (59%, compared to 40% overall), Tuberculosis (BCG) (55%, compared to 40% overall), Hepatitis B (51%, compared to 38% overall), Pneumococcal (PCV) vaccine (51%, compared to 29% overall), Hib/MenC (Haemophilus influenzae, meningitis C) (41%, compared to 28% overall), MenACWY (35%, compared to 22% overall), and Rotavirus vaccine (27%, compared to 16% overall).

Although awareness of the following two vaccines is higher than average among unpaid carers, the vaccines unpaid carers are least aware of are: Rotavirus vaccine (27%, compared to 16% overall) and Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine (39%, compared to 27% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Awareness of the vaccination programme in Wales is higher than average among unpaid carers, which suggests that information resources for this group should focus less on explaining what vaccines protect from and more on practical details about eligibility and how to get the vaccines.**
- **Having said that, awareness of the following vaccines could improve among unpaid carers: Rotavirus vaccine and Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine.**

Attitudes towards vaccinations

Unpaid carers are more likely than average to say that most of the diseases the Welsh vaccine programme protects against are serious: Tuberculosis (94%, compared to 88% overall), Polio (90%, compared to 81% overall), Diphtheria (88%, compared to 74% overall), COVID-19 (86%, compared to 68% overall), Tetanus (86%, compared to 77% overall), Shingles (82%, compared to 68% overall), Pertussis/whooping cough (76%, compared to 68% overall), and flu (71%, compared to 56% overall).

In line with the average result, seven in 10 unpaid carers say that all vaccines are a lower risk to them than the diseases they protect from (71%, compared to 73% overall).

Additionally, unpaid carers are more likely than average to agree that: vaccines work (92%, compared to 86%), they trust vaccines (90%, compared to 83% overall), getting vaccinated is the right thing to do for themselves (94%, compared to 82%) and for society (96%, compared to 82% overall), and it is normal for people their age to get vaccinated (94%, compared to 81% overall). Moreover, this group are more likely to disagree that they are concerned about the ingredients of vaccines (45% disagree,

compared to 39% overall) and side effects (39%, compared to 31% overall). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that 24% of unpaid carers are worried about the ingredients and 47% are worried about the side effects of vaccines.

The higher levels of trust in vaccinations among unpaid carers compared to other groups were also captured via the qualitative interviews with this group:

"Medical professionals know what they're doing and I trust the vaccines. [...] With the COVID vaccine, it was given to old people first and I think if there were any issues with it, they wouldn't give it to old people first". Unpaid carer

Key take out:

- **Attitudes towards vaccinations are more positive than average among unpaid carers. 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.**
- **Information resources for unpaid carers should address concerns about side effects as just under half of unpaid carers are worried about this.**

Access to information and decision-making

Nine in 10 unpaid carers agree they have had enough information to make an informed decision about whether or not to have each of the vaccinations they have been offered so far (90%). 82% say that they know where to find information on vaccination, and 88% say that they know how vaccinations work. These results are in line with overall results. Insights from qualitative interviews with unpaid carers validate the finding that this group feel well informed about vaccines:

"Yes, I think I have enough information. There's always information on the letters we receive inviting me and my dad and my daughter to vaccines and they also include numbers to ring if you have any questions". Unpaid carer

"I always felt fully informed". Unpaid carer

When it comes to the sources of information used to find out about vaccinations, the most common sources of information for unpaid carers are: doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals (61%, compared to 52% overall), the NHS website (49%, compared to 42% overall), the PHW website (37%, compared to 28% overall) and NHS leaflets (29%, compared to 29% overall). While these results are not statistically significant given the low base size for unpaid carers, it is notable that unpaid carers are more likely than average to use healthcare professionals, the NHS website and the PHW website to find out about vaccinations. Conversely, the least frequently used sources of information to find out about vaccination among unpaid carers are: YouTube (0%, compared to 8% overall), Snapchat (0%, compared to 3% overall), WhatsApp (2%, compared to 2% overall), and social media (6%, compared to 10% overall).

In terms of decision-making, unpaid carers are more likely than average to say that they automatically have all the immunisations when they are due/offered (76%, compared to 57% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Most unpaid carers say that they have all the information they need to make informed decisions on whether or not to have vaccinations. Moreover, this group is 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 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 unpaid carers: healthcare professionals, PHW website, leaflets.**
- **Less effective channels for reaching out to unpaid carers: social media, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat.**

Vaccine uptake, barriers and motivations

When asked whether they had refused or delayed any vaccines offered to them, unpaid carers are more likely than average to say that they have had all the vaccinations offered to them so far (86%, compared to 73% overall).

Protection of oneself is the most prominent motivation among unpaid carers to get vaccinated (69%, compared to 64% overall), in line with the overall result. Nonetheless, unpaid carers are more likely than other groups to say that protecting others was a motivation for them to get vaccinated (21%, compared to 11% overall). The theme of protecting others was also found to be a strong motivator for unpaid carers to get vaccinated in qualitative interviews:

"Being a carer, I'll always worry how me not doing something affects other people. If I didn't have the COVID jab, I could possibly pass it on to my dad or my daughter". Unpaid carer

Only a small minority of unpaid carers say that they have refused vaccinations (8%, lower than the average result: 17%).

A lack of trust and hearing about other people having side effects are the most commonly cited barriers to vaccine uptake among unpaid carers.

Key take out:

- **Claimed vaccine uptake is higher than average among unpaid with protection of oneself and others being the most prominent motivations to get vaccinated (with protection of others being a larger motivation than for other groups). Information resources for this group should, therefore, draw on protection of oneself and others as a motivator to encourage vaccination uptake/draw attention to information resources.**

Awareness and views of PHW publicity

Awareness of PHW publicity is in line with the average result among unpaid carers (43%, compared to 41% overall). Awareness of the *Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau/Vaccination saves lives* logo among unpaid carers is also in line with overall results (35%, compared to 39% overall).

GP surgeries (38%) and vaccination centres (29%) are the most common places where unpaid carers have seen PHW publicity, in line with overall results.

Views of PHW publicity are more positive than average among unpaid carers when it comes to the design/layout (95%, compared to 85% overall), how clear the information is (95%, compared to 87% overall) and overall satisfaction (95%, compared to 88% overall). Views in relation to relevance of the materials (86%, compared to 86% overall) and the amount of information (90%, compared to 89% overall) are in line with overall results.

Further insights in relation to views of PHW publicity were provided in the qualitative interviews with unpaid carers. As with other groups, QR codes and links to further information are positively regarded when they are present and missed when not included in materials:

"Everything I said I wanted is on there. There's more information, a QR code. It's well laid out, I can just scan it to find more [...] it's great!". Unpaid carer [Adult COVID and flu leaflet]

"I would like a link to the main website at the end". Unpaid carer [Flu and COVID guide for adults, A4]

Similarly, and also in line with other groups, there is a preference among unpaid carers for eye-catching, colourful resources with concise information (as opposed to a lot of text):

"It's not very enticing. It doesn't catch your attention. There are no colours, just lots of text". Unpaid carer [Flu and COVID guide for adults, A4]

"This is really good. It's very clear. It would appeal to anyone with the short statements and the images. It's very concise and to the point and it seems to be giving the information that is needed and it also gives more information and directs you to proper websites". Unpaid carer [Easy Read HPV leaflet]

For unpaid carers to engage with materials, the target audience needs to be clear, as seen with other groups:

"Looking at the front page, I'd think it's aimed at over 60s". Unpaid carer [Adult COVID and flu leaflet]

Key take outs:

- **As for other groups, information resources for unpaid carers should clearly indicate the target audience.**
- **As for other groups, information resources for unpaid carers should be colourful and eye-catching.**
- **Information resources for unpaid carers should be short and concise (as for other groups), with links to further information/QR codes to find out more.**