



Providing lifesaving COVID-19 vaccinations to staff at the Trust

Coronavirus (COVID-19) staff vaccinations began on 12 January 2021 at the Trust, following national approval by NHS England and NHS Improvement for the Trust to become a 'hospital hub' vaccination site.

Background

The vaccination programme saw Trust staff vaccinated over the following months to keep them safe and well and enable key services to be maintained during the pandemic.

The Trust used national guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), alongside an internal risk-based assessment, to help identify the order in which staff were offered the vaccine. This considered known risk factors such as; age, ethnicity and certain underlying health conditions.

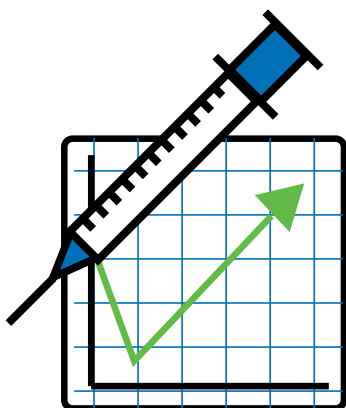
Vaccinations were also offered to all eligible people within the Trust's inpatient wards, alongside the Trust providing mutual aid to our local health and social care partners too.

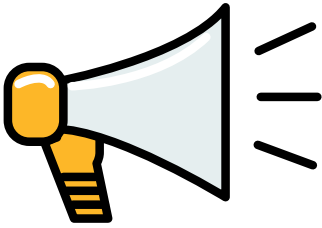
What we have done differently

Throughout the vaccination programme we used data and insight from staff to recognise areas within the Trust where staff vaccination uptake may be lower, for example in some services or groups of staff. This meant that we were able to provide tailored support and communications to these staff groups, to help listen to any concerns or feedback and remove barriers.

Data was collected through our business intelligence functions, including electronic staff records, and insight was gathered through a range of forums such as:

- Staff virtual question and answer ('town hall') sessions. This included having trusted speakers such as our medical director and chief pharmacist, alongside Staff Side representatives and our Trust chaplain
- An anonymous staff survey which was sent out directly to those staff who hadn't yet had their COVID-19 vaccine. The survey helped us to understand if staff had the right support and information to decide about having the vaccine, alongside helping us with planning for the vaccination programme.





There were some staff groups who were more difficult to reach with our communications. For example, our Trust bank staff, who often have limited access to Trust emails and other Trust communications platforms. We therefore worked with the Trust bank team to:

- Host a COVID-19 special Trust bank forum; to help answer any queries on the vaccine
- Send out an email to all Trust bank staff via their personal email addresses (with appropriate consent) to advertise the forum, share important information and to invite them to book their vaccine
- Write a follow-up letter to those remaining Trust bank staff who hadn't booked their vaccine or who we hadn't heard back from.

Our staff networks were also vital in supporting the vaccination programme; both in sharing key messages to network members and also providing insight and feedback from staff. We offered support to all our staff networks which included the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) network, carers network and the LGBT+ network.

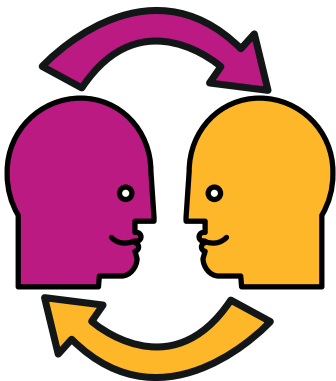
Below are examples of how we've worked with our BAME staff network to help minimise the disproportionate uptake in vaccinations from some BAME groups. The network:

- Held open BAME staff Q&A session which included trusted speakers such as Muslim faith and community leaders and clinicians
- Sent out direct emails to all BAME colleagues at the Trust, this included key messages and resources such as a BAME-specific resources sheet, which features resources in a range of languages.

Alongside this approach, we focused on making sure that our communications and engagement activities were inclusive and that we were sensitive in how we supported staff's worries or concerns. As part of this, we set up 'safe space' sessions, led by our engagement and equality team and Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. The sessions allowed staff to share thoughts, feelings and concerns in a safe space, and to talk openly about the vaccine in confidence with their peers, who were often outside of their teams or services.

Guidance and support, including conversation prompts and briefings, were also offered to managers and workplace champions to help them have 1-2-1 peer support conversations with other colleagues. This was following staff feedback that showed some staff preferred to talk to someone they knew and trusted in the workplace.

We further made sure that our communications materials, such as case studies and photos, were diverse and reflective of our workforce; whilst also producing materials to reach out to those staff groups with lower vaccination uptake too. For example, our data identified that there were a large group of health care assistants who had not yet had the vaccine. We worked with our clinical teams



“ Amongst the percentages were thousands of positive comments, which praised our vaccine hubs as being “safe”, “organised” and “clean” alongside staff working in the hubs who were described as “caring”, “knowledgeable” and “reassuring”. ”



to produce a case study from a health care assistant, which talked about real and personal concerns, and shared this with their peers to help open up conversations amongst this staff group.

We also used the insight and feedback from staff to develop a [frequently asked questions \(FAQ\)](#) web area. This is a live resource and features FAQs from both NHS England and Improvement, but also our own FAQs raised by staff at the Trust through the above feedback and insight mechanisms.

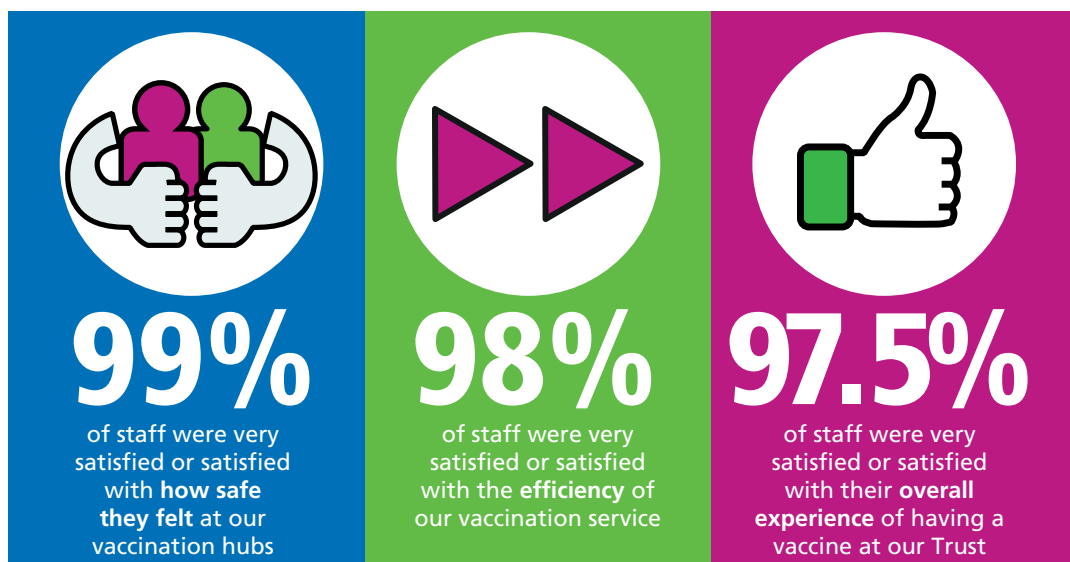
The FAQs were further complemented by our offer of clinical advice and support for staff and managers through our occupational health team and chief pharmacist. This helped to support more specific enquiries and reassure staff as they were able to talk to clinicians.

Taking advice from our equality and inclusion teams, we also ensured the vaccination appointment system was flexible to consider staff who may be celebrating religious holidays and festivals such as Easter and Ramadan.

Outcomes

Over 1,100 Trust and local health and social care staff shared their experiences of having their COVID-19 vaccine at the Trust by completing a survey, which was emailed out to every person who had had their first vaccination at a Trust hub.

Headline findings from the survey shared that:



Amongst the percentages were thousands of positive comments, which praised our vaccine hubs as being "safe", "organised" and "clean" alongside staff working in the hubs who were described as "caring", "knowledgeable" and "reassuring".

The Trust was also evidenced as a best practice example of delivering the vaccination programme regionally and locally.

Future

The Trust continues to support staff, including new starters, to have a COVID-19 vaccine.

The vaccination programme will also undergo 'lessons learned' sessions and we will use this to plan and prepare for any future vaccinations at the Trust, to help us to continually improve.

