



CASE STUDY

LONSDALE MEDICAL CENTRE

Background

Jane Jackson is Assistant Practice Manager at Lonsdale Medical Centre in Tunbridge Wells and is responsible for the practice's flu campaign. The surgery has just under 7,000 patients.

Approach to planning flu

Jane says 'I normally start thinking about clinic dates in August. We run two big weekend clinics on a Saturday and Sunday. It's helpful for those who work and from a practical point of view it's easier to park on a Sunday.

We tried having walk-in clinics but it didn't work as everyone arrived at the beginning of the session and then had to wait. We now run the clinics from 9.30am - 12pm with timed appointments.

We have 4 clinicians and each has a data entry person. Each appointment is for one or two minutes. The data entry person checks date of birth and whether the patient should receive the over 65 or under 65 vaccination.

Before the clinic we run a list of those who need shingles vaccinations and pneumonia vaccinations and then we administer these at the same time. It's a good opportunity to make sure everyone is up to date with jabs. Staff are careful to find out whether patients are new to the surgery before offering shingles or pneumonia because their vaccination record may not have been added to their notes.



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The clinics are also a good time to capture data such as smoking and allows us to remind patients to come in for their chronic disease checks and blood pressures.

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We try and make the clinics fun with a cake bake sale - this year half of the money raised goes to the local hospice and the rest for our equipment fund. It creates quite a buzz.

Our practice is on two floors and we go through the appointment list in advance to make sure the over 85s, any disabled individuals or anyone who is frail has their injections downstairs. Our receptionist does a final check to make sure that no-one has been overlooked.

We start by sending out invitation letters using Docmail (a fantastic way to save time on printing and posting letters, which I would recommend to anybody). Appointments can be booked on-line which saves the surgery being flooded with phone calls.

The night before each weekend clinic we print the list for data entry just in case any of the computers go down on the day, it means that we can then carry on and input data after the event and sort any queries.

We like to offer appointments for 2 to 3 year olds and for children at risk of flu in the weekend clinics, but the child vaccine often arrives quite late. This year they were later than ever and didn't arrive in time. We had to write to parents and carers letting them know and it was chaotic. It's frustrating that NHS England puts so much effort into education and then it's let down by the vaccines not arriving on time.

As a result of this, reluctantly we have decided that next year we will not be able to include children in the clinic which is a real shame as many parents work and we wanted to make it easier for them to attend.

There are some practicalities that we've also learned to process in advance e.g. you need to be sure about batch numbers and make sure that you have different protocols for the data entry for each type and that you identify different batches for each delivery.



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Clearly not everyone can or wants to attend a weekend clinic, but we like to offer the maximum number of ways patient can receive their flu jab.

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We also like to vaccinate as soon as possible as it offers optimum protection for the whole of the flu season, (we obviously 'came a cropper' with children). We run clinics at the end of September or in early October.

We prefer to vaccinate patients at the surgery rather than them going to the pharmacist. It's not just about us receiving the payment but it's also a lot less work as we can enter data direct to our systems at the time of vaccination and don't waste valuable time chasing up patients when they have had the vaccine elsewhere.

The vaccines come in packs and we've learned that you can save loads of time by taking them out of their wrappers and put them in sterile bowls ready for use. It also means we can get rid of the packaging and recycle properly.

One dedicated nurse puts out all the extra needles and swabs and makes sure there are stickers for children.

The run through is really quick with everyone in and out in a few minutes. Every year patients say 'how fantastic!'

We create little waiting areas so that patients are seated outside the door ready to be vaccinated. We've got it down to a fine art so it is a real conveyer belt.

Frankly the speed was interfering with our ability to sell cakes so we had to slow it down a bit!

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