

Local Outbreak Engagement Board (Health and Wellbeing Board sub-committee)

Monday 24th May 2021, 1.00pm

Present: Councillor Judith Smyth, Cllr Jeanette Smith, : Councillor Suzy Horton, Stef Nientowalski (Shaping Portsmouth), Roger Batterbury (Healthwatch), Helen Atkinson (Director of Public Health), Dr Linda Collie (Portsmouth CCG), Louise Wilders (HIVE Portsmouth), Richard Lee (Assistant Director- Regulatory Services, PCC), Matthew Gummerson (Strategic Lead for Intelligence, PCC), Alison Jeffery (Director of Children, Families and Education, PCC), Dominique Le Touze (Consultant in Public Health, PCC), Claire Currie (Consultant in Public Health), Kelly Nash (Strategy Unit, PCC).

Apologies: Councillor Jason Fazackarley

1. Notes of last meeting (26th April March 2021)

The notes were agreed as accurate record of the meetings.

2. Local Intelligence Summary

Matt Gummerson provided an overview of the latest data and key messages.

Of the Portsmouth CCG registered population, 110,185 adults (60%) have now had at least one dose of vaccine.

In terms of the local infection data, Matt reported that there have been 42 new cases reported in the last week, with the 7 day infection rate per 100,000 in Portsmouth now 19.5. The city rate is above that in Hampshire, and the wider SE region rate. Rates are highest among the 0-14 age group, although not of significant concern, and positivity rates remain low. Rates amongst over-60s are very low.

Contact tracing data shows that most people are exposed to the infection in households, although exposures in leisure and through visiting have increased in the most recent two week period. The ONS survey shows that the proportion of adults meeting up indoors with someone not in their household, childcare or support bubble in the last 7 days has increased to 19%, compared to 10% in the prior period.

In relation to variants of concern, nationally there has been an increase in cases of B.1.617.2 in the last 7 days, and further variants are under investigation. However, there are no concerns around these issues locally.

In relation to PHUT, there have been 2 admissions and 4 inpatient diagnosis in the last 7 days.

There have now been 289 covid-related deaths in the city since the end of October, with none of these in the last 7 days. There have been 369 covid-related deaths in total. The total number of deaths in the city last week werelower than the average week in the previous 5 years.

3. Director of Public Health and Head of Regulatory Services Update

Helen Atkinson reported that Portsmouth and Plymouth have been asked to participate in a national Low Prevalence study testing hypotheses about why some areas experienced lower rates of infection than may have been expected taking into account socio-demographic factors. Lines of enquiry include:

- Behaviour, attitudes and community spirit
- Strong and effective local infrastructure (including embedded collaborative working)
- Population spread and mobility

Data has been provided and the research team will be conducting some interviews in the coming weeks. Helen will keep the Board informed of any outcomes from the work.

Richard Lee reported on the next stages on the roadmap for lifting restrictions. It was noted that there have been 8208 Covid Business Compliance Officer (CBCO) interventions up to 23rd May, which is an average of 220 inspections a week. The compliance rate is 96.7% overall, although there were 52 incidences of non-compliance recorded in the previous week, which were mostly around the need to update risk assessments in light of new guidance, so advice was offered and no formal action taken. It was noted that the contract with Red Snapper for provision of CBCO services has been extended through to September to ensure that the roadmap can be properly supported and this is being funded through the COMF. It was also noted that work continues around events, managed through the PESAG process. Of particular interest is Victorious, and the organisers are taking a very proactive approach to progress this for 2021.

There were no questions following the updates.

4. Test, trace and isolate

Dominique Le Touze ran through a presentation summarising the test, trace and isolate position.

It was noted that the city currently has 2 walkthrough local test sites, a site for a drive-through mobile testing unit, and a regional test site that can be accessed in Southampton. Home testing is also for people with symptoms. Work is underway to look at the local test site provision, as Eldon will be closing and there is a need to move the Northharbour site. Options will be presented to LA Gold in the near future.

In respect of asymptomatic testing, there are various sector routes, a national workplace programme and community testing. Community LFD testing is led by local authorities and a site is based at Somerstown Central, and 11 pharmacies are also offering supervised LFD testing. Community collection of LFD test kits is available through the LTS/RTS sites (will be available until the end of April), and kits can also be collected from Somerstown, almost all pharmacies in the city and a mobile collection offer is being developed.

Dominique Le Touze reported that there has been a fall off of testing at the asymptomatic site but increase in collection of LFD self-tests. The team are dropping off kits in settings such as play and youth centres to encourage uptake

In respect of local contact tracing, the city has now launched Local Oas of 18th April (which means the LA undertake all contact tracing of positive cases), and have a 90% case completion rate, which is in excess of the target rate. A system of support calls is now in place, and the authority receives ICERT reports from PHE to enhance outbreak detection and enable review where there may be low risk sites that require more analysis.

Only 26% of applications for self-isolation payments have been successful, and work is underway to understand why and to gauge how we could better offer support. Other forms of support are also emerging and there are now 9 pilot sites nationally looking at particular initiatives to provide support, including provision of alternative accommodation and social care support. It was noted that the payments issue continues to be seen as a barrier to self-isolation locally.

5. Vaccination programme

Claire Currie reported that nationally, 32 year olds are now eligible to book vaccination. 2nd dose intervals for 50+ people now being brought forward from 12 to 8 weeks. The preferred vaccine for under 40s is Moderna or Pfizer.

Locally, outreach work is continuing for the homeless community. A small clinic was run by Portsdown PCN to reach the Chinese community. It was noted that in relation to other groups at risk of inequalities, coverage amongst those with learning disabilities is now 87%, which is very positive.

Cllr Judith Smyth asked what is known about the impact of people with antibodies on infection and transmission, and it was suggested that information about the current research on this would be added to the intelligence presentation at a future meeting.

6. Assurance report

The Board received the report which covered:

- Local context - updated with the information taken from the data reporting (and updated to include information about variants of concern and enduring transmission)
- Local activity - bringing together a range of information about what our work is telling us about our preparedness
- Assurance around high-risk settings, populations and underserved populations.
- Key risks, including relating to the relaxed restrictions.

There were no questions, and the Board noted that on the basis of information and evidence that they have received, they have a high degree of assurance on local arrangements.

7. Any other business

It was agreed to bring information around Long Covid research to a future meeting.

8. Future dates

Future meeting dates were noted - dates are now in the diary until August.