



## Section 7A (NHS Public Health Functions) Agreement: minor change to delivery approach to childhood flu immunisation in Cumbria

July 2015

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A request has been received from the NHS England team in Cumbria to diverge from the section 7A (NHS Public Health Functions) Agreement and change the delivery approach to childhood flu immunisation to increase uptake in that area.

As per the Section 7A Service Specification for 2015-16, key deliverables for NHS England in relation to the childhood flu immunisation programme are:

- a) Arrange provision of childhood flu vaccination for all 2, 3 and 4 year olds
- b) Continue to arrange provision for all primary school aged children in those areas included in the 2014-15 pilots for primary school aged children
- c) Arrange provision for childhood flu vaccination for all children eligible for schooling in years 1 and 2 (i.e. 5 and 6 year olds, including those who turn 7 on or after 1 September 2015).

With regard to b), NHS England conducted the pilot using pharmacy/GP and school based delivery models in the Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear area during 2013/15 and 2014/15. There was a dramatic difference in the uptake between the two models of delivery in 2014/15, with the school based model achieving much higher uptake than the community based pharmacy model. This was despite significant input from partners across Cumbria following a lessons learned exercise to improve the uptake rates achieved in 2013/14.

Given the evidence on uptake rates, the NHS England team in Cumbria has proposed discontinuing the pharmacy/GP delivery model in Cumbria and replacing this with the school-based commissioning model for years 1 and 2. This should mean better outcomes for children as uptake rates should be higher than the pilot delivery model. The programme will be implemented at the same pace but not form part of a pilot scheme. This proposal constitutes a minor change in the agreed deliverables in the 2015-16 section 7A Agreement.

The Department of Health recognises how valuable the work of the Cumbria team has been to the child flu immunisation programme. The team were very innovative in developing the pharmacy model of delivery, including conducting a robust evaluation that will be influential in helping other areas considering using this approach. The Department accepts that adjusting the approach to a school-based model is an appropriate response to the poor uptake rates experienced, in order to ensure the best possible public health outcomes in that area.

Therefore, the Department supports this change, given that this proposal is consistent with the offer for the rest of England (non-pilot areas). This note is being published on the GOV.UK website alongside the 2015-16 Agreement itself, in order to provide clear accountability for the change we have agreed.