

Swine Flu information for carers – November 2009

Business continuity plans

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a statutory duty on councils to have in place documented, tried and tested Business Continuity Plans which they could activate should there be any form of emergency. This does not necessarily mean a disaster, it can be a minor event but it affects the service's ability to continue working as normal. This would include high levels of sickness caused by something like Swine Flu.

In the Integrated Learning Disability Services in Brighton & Hove every service (each home or day service, etc) has a business continuity plan which outlines what would be done if levels of illness in the staff or the service users become so high that the service can not provide business as usual. You can ask the staff or manager of a service to tell you what their business continuity plan is.

For Learning Disability Services as a whole there is a bigger business continuity plan that details the procedures to be followed if the services are affected by any incident or business interruption.

A copy of the plan is held by the office manager at 86 Denmark Villas, and copies are filed with the Council's Business Continuity Manager and ICT Manager.

Swine Flu vaccinations available to frontline staff

Over 400 frontline health and social care staff are now protected against swine flu. This comes after the first batch of vaccinations was given this month. This refers to staff employed in direct service user contact (i.e. hands on, personal care - not reception/telephony contact).

This applies to:

Home Care Teams

Learning Disability Teams

and those in the Children & Young Peoples Trust performing similar roles for children.

The next round of vaccinations is being planned for those working in the independent sector, as well as other council staff who are at less risk but do encounter some public contact.

The council hopes to vaccinate a further 500 in a drive to protect around 5,000 staff in priority groups. The vaccine will not only protect the individual but also their colleagues, service users and others who may feel the effects of swine flu much more severely than them.

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Swine Flu vaccinations for vulnerable people

People in the 'at risk' groups for swine flu will be able to receive their vaccinations against the virus at their local doctors' surgery.

If you, or someone you care for, are in one of the following categories, you are in the 'at risk' groups for swine flu, and will be given the vaccination as a priority:

People between six months and 65 years old in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups

Pregnant women, subject to licensing conditions on trimesters. The EMeA license will indicate whether the vaccine can be given to all pregnant women or whether it should only be offered at certain stages of pregnancy

People who live with those whose immune systems are compromised, such as cancer patients or people with HIV/AIDS

People aged 65 and over in the current seasonal flu vaccine clinical at risk groups.

If you, or someone you care for, are in one of the 'at risk' groups or you want to know more, or have concerns about the vaccine, please go to www.nhs.uk or www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu or call the swine flu information line on 0800 1513513 or contact your GP for advice.

It is important to remember this is not the regular seasonal flu vaccine. If you are in a priority group for the regular seasonal flu vaccination you should receive that as normal.