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## **NHS Employers Flu fighter campaign**

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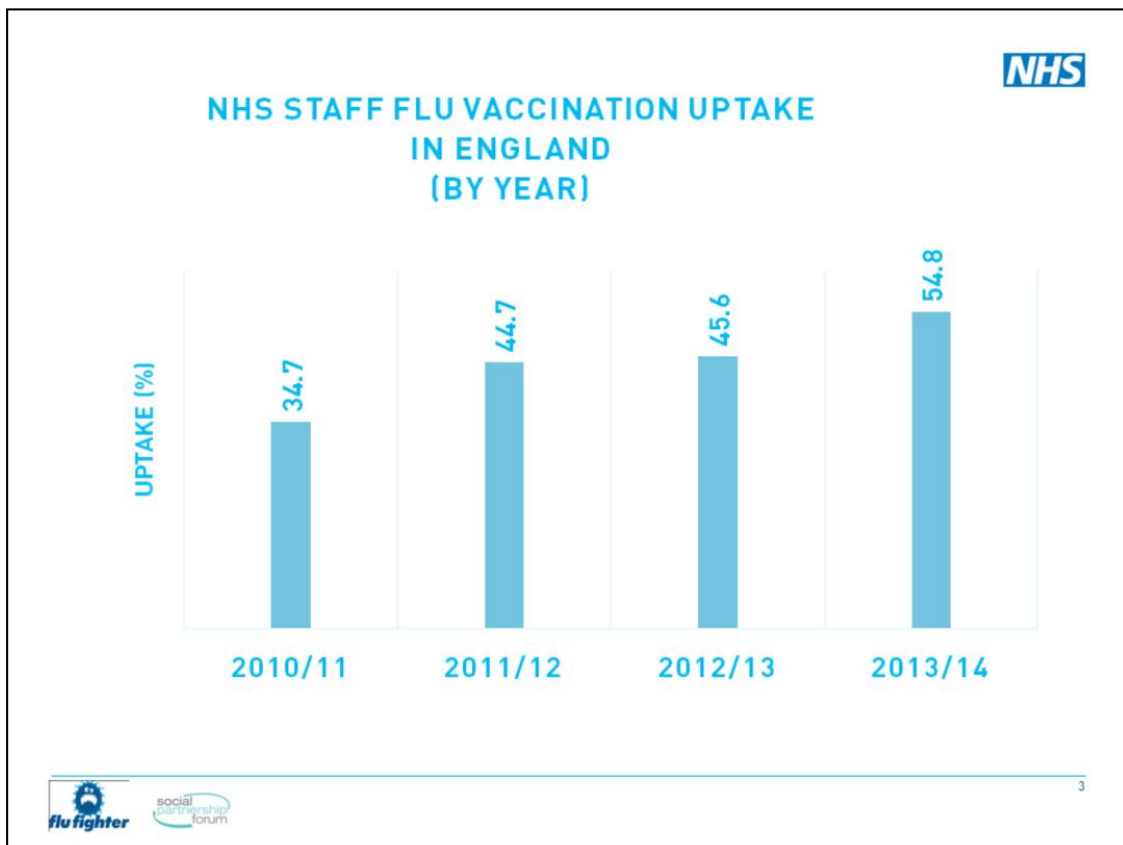


- **Achievements**
- **Impact**
- **Key learning and good practice**
- **Questions**

## Who are NHS Employers?

NHS Employers is an organisation that exists to be the voice of employers in the NHS, supporting them to put patients first.

We provide expert advice and guidance to the NHS on all matters relating to HR and workforce thinking. Strong partnership working across Government, trade unions and with a variety of other stakeholders means we can promote employers' interests at the highest levels, addressing current workforce issues in a timely and responsive way, helping to shape the future.



In 2011, NHS Employers was first commissioned to run a national staff facing campaign. Our aim was to improve the uptake of seasonal influenza vaccine in frontline healthcare workers in England. We have delivered the campaign each year since and have seen uptake increase steadily over this time.

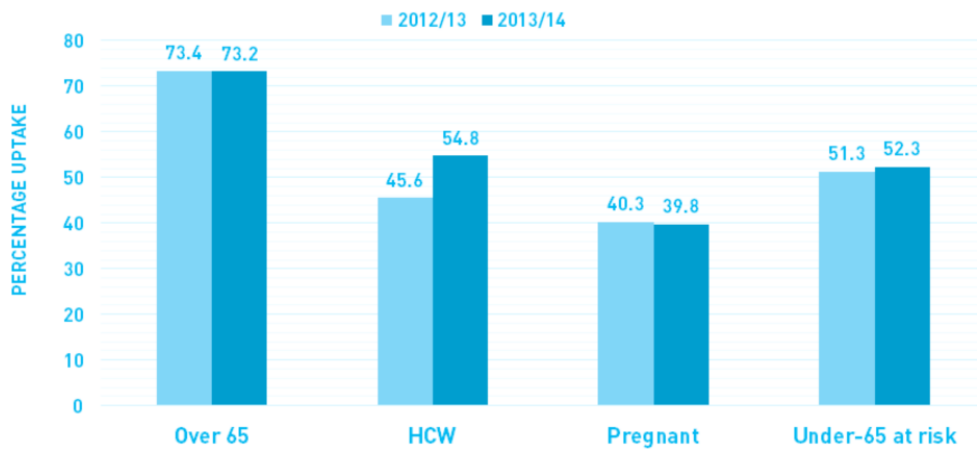
Uptake in England now stands at a record high of 54.8 per cent. This equates to over half a million frontline NHS staff who have had their flu vaccination this year.

Our campaign has an audience of over 1.4 million NHS staff. The cost to run this campaign in England and Wales equates to 13c per staff member. Through centralising resources and delivering a single campaign for England and Wales, we provide cost savings for NHS organisations who might otherwise have built their own individual campaigns.

We are now a well-established, outcome-focused campaign with a centralised, identifiable brand, well recognised by staff across the NHS.

As you can see from the graph above, in England, NHS staff flu vaccination figures have continued to increase each year, when other target groups' uptake has stagnated. This steady increase has occurred despite low circulating flu activity.

### Seasonal influenza vaccination uptake in recommended population groups in England (2012-14)



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## What do we deliver?

Over the three years we have built and maintained a network made up of over 1,100 contacts who deliver their local staff flu vaccination campaign. This network comprises of a variety of individuals from a range of departments within the local hospitals, including occupational health, human resources, communications, infection control, business continuity and nursing.

We work hard to ensure that we have two contacts at each NHS organisation in England and Wales in order to be sure that our messages and information are reaching our target audience successfully. Our campaign is so much more than posters and leaflets. As a team we provide support and engage on three levels.

## Level one: Materials



Flu fighter posters, leaflets, stickers, social media content and other marketing collateral (developed and designed based on feedback from the flu leads and healthcare workers) are printed and delivered for free to any flu lead who requests them.

In the 2013/14 season we received orders from 97 per cent of NHS organisation in England and Wales, totalling over half a million pay slip leaflets, over 22,000 sticker sheets and over 65,000 posters. We continue to gather feedback from flu leads on our resources and the support we provide and alter and adjust our programme to reflect this.

All of our campaign materials can be viewed at [www.nhsemployers.org/flu](http://www.nhsemployers.org/flu)

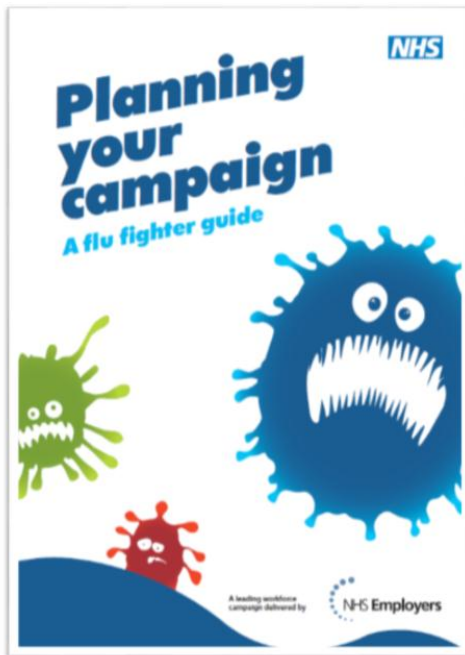
As a campaign, we have developed a strong social media presence over the last three years. Our twitter account now has over 3000 followers. Over the last two years we have also co-hosted annual twitter chats and at our most recent chat 160 accounts joined in to discuss staff flu vaccination. This online 1 hour discussion generated 1,500 tweets and trended number two in the UK.

This year we aim to run another twitter chat, with a focus on the link between staff accessing their free flu vaccination and how that influences them to encourage

patients to do the same.



## Level two: Guidance



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Support to help flu leads set up and run their local Flu Fighter campaign is published on our flu fighter website for local download. This includes:

- Clinical evidence for vaccination written by a leader in the field
- Letters to specific staff groups within the NHS from their respective leaders, for example, the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Nursing Officer of England.
- Guides on planning and evaluating a local campaign
- Toolkits to support local communications campaigns

We also dedicate a significant amount of time to gathering good practice examples from across the NHS and sharing these in guidance documents and case studies.

## Level three: support, praise and feedback



We have an extensive programme of engagement with individuals running their local flu campaigns in NHS organisations across the country, sharing what works, and supporting those who are struggling to improve uptake. We know that this engagement and support is integral to the success of the flu fighter campaign.

Our healthcare worker specific Flu Fighter hotline (0844 344 5252) and email address ([flufighter@nhsemployers.org](mailto:flufighter@nhsemployers.org)) provides direct support to flu leads who want to speak to a member of our team to discuss their campaign and ask any questions they may have about running their campaign. Site visits to organisations are also used to provide support and enable us to learn about implementation of the campaign at a local level. We help local flu leads to solve key challenges they face by sharing national good practice and innovative strategies.

Each year we run a Flu Fighter Awards event to champion best practice and innovation from the flu leads. This acts to praise the work of the network and provide a chance for flu leads from across the country to meet and share their knowledge. We received over 140 nominations for these awards this year.

Support at this level also includes regional round-up meetings at the end of each flu season. This year these events were attended by 150 flu leads, representing a third of NHS organisations in England. These meetings are held across England and Wales

and are a forum for all flu leads to provide feedback on what did and didn't work, both in terms of the campaign materials and support we provide, but also to share intelligence about their own strategies to improve uptake. The information gathered at these events helps to evolve the campaign from year to year.



Each year we evaluate the flu fighter campaign to identify key learning points in order to improve how we deliver the campaign.

Over the last three years we have identified some common key learning themes:

1. Its important to support flu leads to help them meet their targets, but not own those targets ourselves. This puts us in a supportive role rather than a performance management one
2. Having a single, central identifiable brand for the healthcare worker campaign builds the image and visibility of the brand and it's messaging. But one size doesn't fit all – our campaign is flexible enough to allow local staff to tailor it to meet their needs.
3. Engaging with national clinical leaders, such as the Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Medical Officer to publicise the evidence base behind the vaccination adds credibility to our work
4. Keep in contact with those who have to deliver the local flu campaigns – we listen to what they say, answer their questions and importantly use their knowledge and feedback to tailor our resources
5. We make sure the healthcare worker campaign fits with the other national flu programmes, for example adults at-risk, pregnant women, childhood etc. This might mean that we share messages, attend joint planning meetings or are just aware of what is happening so that we can be joined up

## To conclude

To conclude:

- Our flu-fighter campaign has supported a significant improvement in the uptake of the flu vaccination among healthcare workers in England.
- We provide a centralised identifiable brand which is used across the NHS in England and Wales.
- We provide campaign material free of charge to all NHS organisations in England and Wales and downloadable digital imagery and products.

But more importantly we engage extensively with the people responsible for delivering the flu campaigns. It is the mix of engagement and a strong centralised brand which has led to our success.

Making the change does not happen overnight, we have worked hard for three years and there is still work to do. Each year you have to start all over again and pick up the momentum. This is about changing behaviour and attitudes, posters alone won't do this, you need to engage and talk to staff.

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## Thank you for listening

[www.nhsemployers.org/flu](http://www.nhsemployers.org/flu)

[flufighter@nhsemployers.org](mailto:flufighter@nhsemployers.org)

 @NHSFlufighter

