



## Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

16<sup>th</sup> February 2011

### Report from the Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Improvement

## Childhood immunisation task group follow up

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked for an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Childhood immunisation task group. The task group was carried out in 2009/10 and its findings were reported to the Executive in April 2010.
- 1.2 Brent Council's Health Select Committee established the Childhood Immunisation Task Group because councillors were concerned about the low immunisation rates in the borough. Childhood immunisation rates in Brent for 2008/09 were reported to be below target for all of the immunisations in the national immunisation programme except human papilloma virus vaccine and tetanus, diphtheria and polio booster.
- 1.3 Childhood immunisation against illnesses such as measles, mumps, polio and diphtheria are crucial to protect the long term health of young people in our borough. Immunisation has the most robust evidence in terms of safety, efficacy and cost effectiveness of all healthcare activities, but there have been long standing problems in achieving good levels of coverage in London. Brent has been no exception to the London-wide trend of low immunisation rates.
- 1.4 The task group was keen to investigate how NHS Brent and partners, including the council, were addressing immunisation performance to ensure young people received the correct vaccinations to prevent the unnecessary spread of disease. It should be added that as well as looking at childhood immunisation, the task group felt it could not ignore the swine flu vaccination programme even though this would be aimed at a much wider population group than children. Swine flu was a significant issue at the time that the task group was agreeing terms of reference and so it was included in the remit of the work.
- 1.5 Although the task group has made a number of recommendations that it felt would help to improve immunisation services in Brent, members were encouraged by the efforts that NHS Brent were making to improve the immunisation service during the course of the review. There was a genuine commitment from the organisation to

improve immunisation rates in the borough and stop the spread of diseases that are clearly preventable. A significant data clean-up project has been took place which was crucial if Brent was to increase immunisation rates. Maintaining accurate data is of paramount importance so that progress can be maintained.

- 1.6 NHS Brent is responsible for delivering the childhood immunisation programme in Brent, but the task group believed that a partnership approach with children's centres and schools would be beneficial and ensure greater coverage. For this reason the task group has made a number of recommendations relating to children's centres and schools to help facilitate the immunisation programme.
- 1.7 The task group's recommendations, the original responses from NHS Brent and the latest update are included at appendix 1 to this report. Appendix 2 contains information on the latest immunisation performance in the borough, broken down into GP cluster groups.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the update on the childhood immunisation task group and question officers on the progress made to date in implementing the recommendations.

### **Background Papers:**

Childhood immunisation task group report – this is available on request.

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