

Case Study

COVID-19 mobile clinic at Newbigins Community Trust

Turn up, get jabbed, and receive a free meal and £5 cost of living grant to boot!

**Covid-19 Mobile Clinic
At
Newbigins Community Trust
09/11/2022**



Last updated Shannon van Lier 16 Mar 2023

Background

Is the COVID-19 virus still with us? The answer is unfortunately - Yes! But today (9/11/2022) saw a big drive, getting the local people of Winson Green vaccinated against the virus in time for the coming winter. And the local Lodge Road Church Centre became 'Vaccination Central' for the day. For those who turned up, got jabbed, received a free meal and £5 cost of living grant to boot!

COVID-19 is still here, with hospital admissions and deaths. You'd be forgiven for thinking the virus has passed, as the world is moving again. Shops, cinemas and bars are open again. And the news doesn't bang on daily about new infection rates and numbers who've died. But just because it's not on TV or in newspapers, doesn't mean the virus has gone away. It's out of the news, but still ongoing!

It's thought there are around '400 Thousand' people across Birmingham, who have either not had any vaccinations or not received their full course of first second and booster. The most significant variant been 'Omicron'. It's deemed less deadly, but more easily infective.

Those unvaccinated tend to live in deprived areas, with low vaccination uptake for many factors. People on low incomes, can't or are unwilling to travel to other non-local areas for vaccination jabs due to cost or effort. They may mistrust authorities, or had bad experiences of GP's and hospitals. They fear hospitalisation, don't know their NHS number, or aren't even registered with a GP. There may be language barriers, (meaning people missed important information).

Winson Green is one such area, with a low vaccination uptake. Meaning it's a risk of becoming a pocket for the proliferation and spread of the virus. Rev Angela Barker (Anji) explains, "In communities like ours, there tends to be a high density of people with delicate, underlying and vulnerable health conditions".

Anji added, "Some people have a history of drug or alcohol misuse, or smoking related COPD. These only serve to weaken organs (making these people most at risk and susceptible to serious illness and hospitalisation), caused by the virus".

People, who aren't vaccinated, may also be excluded from places and events. Anji didn't want vulnerable people in Winson Green to miss out. As part of 'Flourish', (a West Birmingham NHS partnership), Anji met Sandra Fitzpatrick, a Registered Nurse, (with an MBE no less). Sandra's a 'Clinical Lead for Covid Programmes', and 'Inequalities Lead for Birmingham'.

Together with Anji, they launched the scheme to reach and vaccinate as many people in the community as possible, using the Newbigins Trust drop in Centres as Hubs. This was a more effective strategy to reach the people, (where local people feel more comfortable and at ease). As pop up vaccination clinics, using a mobile van wasn't as effective,

as people would walk on by.

Sandra already had success setting up a vaccination scheme to reach pregnant women going through maternity. Called 'The big push', it's been going for 9 months. A concern of expectant mothers, was the safety to the baby. But Sandra explains, "The vaccine produces antibodies to the virus in the mother, that crosses the placenta to protect the baby. And after birth, the protective antibodies are passed onto the baby through the mother's milk".

The visiting nursing team talked to people about the positives of having the vaccine jab. Sandra explains, "We talk about staying healthy during the winter period. Discussing chest infections, then flu jabs, and then talking about Covid. How receiving a jab gives protection from becoming really ill from Covid, and being less likely to need hospitalisation". Sandra also talks to families about their childhood immunisations and the importance of contacting their GP/Health Visiting service to receive any outstanding immunisations.

Today was 'Day 1' of this NHS initiative in the Community Centre. Anji, herself received a COVID-19 vaccine booster jab, (setting a positive example for others). The vaccination day was so successful, that after just an hour, the team ran out of doses, ordering more to be rushed to the Centre, because of the bigger than expected uptake, (by 20 people in all). The nursing team expected to be at the centre from 10am – 2pm, (but stayed until 3pm due to the demand).

From a national standpoint, utilising Community Centres as 'Vaccination Hubs' is proving a good strategy to better reach people in deprived regions, particularly serving the vulnerable. So eliminating pockets for COVID-19 to linger and spread within communities.

Meaning people are less likely to need hospitalisation, which reduces winter pressures on NHS clinics and hospitals. This frees up hospital bed availability for those who need them for other conditions. This strategy is to be repeated across the region. Newbigins Trust have two more drop in sessions planned for this month.

Further information

For further information please contact sandra.fitzpatrick3@nhs.net

Resources

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Document	Birmingham and Solihull Newbigins Community Mobile Clinic	17 Mar 2023



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