Communicating your campaign
a flu fighter toolkit
Communicating your flu fighter campaign

This toolkit is aimed at staff flu vaccination leads and aims to help you:
• make the most of your campaign through planning and using the resources available to you
• link in with communications colleagues and communicate using the right channels
• understand behaviour change, identify key messages and use evidence and key facts to support your communications.

There is also a range of other downloadable guides that can be used with this toolkit on the flu fighter website: www.nhsemployers.org/flu.
Your communication strategy

There are lots of factors to consider when encouraging staff to take up the flu vaccination, so it’s helpful to create a strategy outlining how you’ll do this. Developing a coordinated approach that consistently promotes your local flu fighter campaign and provides staff with all the information they need, will help you encourage more staff to be vaccinated.

That is why the right communications can be key to successful flu vaccination uptake.
It’s all about planning

When starting to plan your communications, you may want to consider the following:

1. **Meeting with key stakeholders and communications colleagues to discuss your strategy.**
2. **What resources and budget you will need.**
3. **How you’ll develop the key messages of your campaign and what channels are available to you to let your staff know about the flu vaccine.**
4. **What departments, directorates or staff groups you specifically need to target in your workplace and if so, how will you reach them?**
5. **Events and activities and how you’ll spread the word and celebrate successes eg via social media or your intranet.**

Ensure that your planning gets off to a good start with the *Planning your campaign: a flu fighter guide* which will help you get started, even if it’s your first year flu fighting, and provides a template action plan to help coordinate and execute your campaign.

For more details refer to the flu fighter website: [www.nhsemployers.org/flu](http://www.nhsemployers.org/flu)
Work with your communications team

Having the support of your communications team can really help your local flu fighter campaign. They are the communications experts and you will be able to use their skills to develop new ideas and gain advice on:

• the best channels to target your audience
• media opportunities
• developing key messages
• house style and tone (how messages are written)
• working with the flu fighter brand guidelines
• the best time to launch for maximum impact
• timings of organisation-wide campaigns to ensure there aren’t any conflicts
• how to use #jabathon to your advantage
• other resources you may need, such as a photographer or designer
• guidelines for using social media
• creating a communications plan
• new communications trends, and whether they can be used in your campaign.

Get your communications colleagues involved sooner rather than later so they can provide some insight into the campaign, what you are planning and aiming to achieve. If you establish a positive relationship from the start you should be able to count on their support year on year.
Resources available

You don’t need to develop your own brand for your flu campaign, flu fighter is nationally recognised by NHS staff. As a part of our offering, you can use our wide range of free resources for NHS staff. Not only does this help in terms of cost, but it also has the advantage of allowing your local campaign to carry the weight of a national campaign. For example, new staff from other health organisations should recognise the flu fighter brand immediately.

Take advantage of the free flu fighter resources for NHS organisations, which include:

- newly designed posters and payslip leaflets that you can download from our website and order at no cost to you
- digital resources such as email banners, web banners, the jab-o-meter, and all our six different coloured flu bugs
- videos, blogs and case studies to share with staff
- branded promotional artwork for lanyards, sashes, banners, t-shirts, mugs and pens
- an online area you can point staff to, which contains the latest facts, clinical evidence, letters from clinical leaders and answers to FAQs about flu and the vaccine
- a guide to help you plan your campaign
- a toolkit to help you communicate your campaign
- a guide to help you review your campaign
- a closed group on Facebook where staff flu vaccination leads can interact and share challenges as well as good practice
- dedicated guidance and support on anything in this toolkit or other guides from our flu fighter team
  - email flufighter@nhsemployers.org
  - call 0844 334 5252

Find the artwork and design for the free resources on the flu fighter website: www.nhsemployers.org/flu

#JABATHON

I’m a flu fighter

INFECTION

Having your flu jab protects you from 9–11am on Wednesday

HANDS

If you have the flu, stay away from work until you are better. The virus is highly infectious and outbreaks can happen quickly.

YOUR

As well as getting your flu jab, you can help reduce the spread of flu by regularly washing your hands, particularly after sneezing or coughing. You can pass flu on without knowing it.

GET

The vaccine is up to 70 per cent effective, depending on the strains of flu circulating each year. So be a flu fighter and have the jab.

VACCINE

The adult flu jab doesn’t contain a live virus so it’s impossible to get flu from it.

FACT

You could be spreading flu 1 day before you show any symptoms.

FICTION

The flu jab gives you flu.

FACT

You can’t catch the flu from the vaccine.

FACT

The vaccine is the single most effective protection against flu.

FACT

Being healthy does not protect you against flu, and you can spread flu to others.

PROTECT

Being healthy does not protect you against flu, and you can spread flu to others.

AROUND YOU.

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AROUND YOU.
Platforms

To help spread the message far and wide, you can apply the flu fighter resources to the many existing platforms you already use when communicating with staff. This will not only help to raise the profile of your campaign, but you will also be able to keep staff who are spread across a wide geographical area better informed.

Here are some examples of the platforms you may be able to use:

- email signatures
- e-bulletins
- exhibition stands
- intranet
- magazines
- newsletters
- noticeboards
- plasma screens
- screensavers
- team briefings
- social media
- website

Choosing your channel

It’s important to think about how your audience like, and are able to receive communications. To help, we have a few key questions that you might want to consider when developing your communications strategy:

- How will you reach different healthcare staff groups and will the same message work for everyone?
- Where are your staff based? Do they work remotely and do they regularly check emails or have access to the intranet?
- Are posters or payslip leaflets the best way to reach your staff? (The flu fighter team offer these for free!)
- Would a letter from a senior member of staff be a good way of encouraging staff to get their jab? You could ask the chief executive or medical director to write to all staff, or alternatively, print copies of flu letters from senior leaders from the flu website.
- Can you ask line managers to communicate key messages, for example, in team meetings?
- How can staff communicate with their local flu team? Do they have contact details for the flu lead, or is there a dedicated inbox for enquiries?
Communicating with your multi-generational workforce

There are four different generations in the workplace, each with their own preferred communication channels. Communicating through a generation’s preferred channels will help increase awareness and engagement of your campaign.

**GENERATION Z**
Born: 1995 onwards
- Instant message apps
- Always online
- All social media

**GENERATION Y**
Born: 1981-1995
- Text message
- Social media
- Instagram and Snapchat

**GENERATION X**
Born: 1961-1980
- Email and text message
- Use images and graphics
- Twitter and WhatsApp

**BABY BOOMERS**
Born: 1945-1960
- Face-to-face
- Telephone and email
- Facebook and LinkedIn


Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals used the staff newsletter to highlight the vaccination rates by care group, which encouraged healthy competition.
Social media, social media, social media

Social media can be a great tool for communicating your flu fighter message, as it can create discussions and can also make staff feel like they can take ownership of the campaign. You may not want to use all these platforms, but a good mix will help you to engage with more staff. To help keep staff informed you can even promote regular Q&A sessions on these channels.

Before you use any of these platforms we would highly recommend you speak to your communications team, who can provide advice and share the trust’s policies on social media.

Twitter

- Allows you to engage with a wide range of people and to tap into national campaigns, such as #jabathon, which could be helpful in spreading your message.
- A more conversational style that moves quite fast.
- Use hashtags to become part of bigger conversations.
- Work with your communications team to create a Twitter account specific to flu, or to post tweets on your organisation’s account as most staff will already be following their own employer.
- Be a part of the national #flufighter conversation and follow @NHSflufighter.

Facebook

- Allows you to create more detailed posts as there is no character limit.
- Most people have a personal Facebook account, so it will be easier for them to join your group or page.
- Work with your communications team to create a Facebook page, or to post on your organisation’s page.
- Facebook is helpful for creating open and closed groups for discussions and conversations with your audience.
- Create and invite followers to your event pages to promote clinic times or activities.
- As a staff flu vaccination lead, we would encourage you to join our closed flu fighter Facebook group, where you can share good practice and discuss challenges with other leads.
- Keep up to date with everything flu by liking our open flu fighter Facebook page.
**YouTube**

- If your organisation and systems permit it, YouTube can be a useful platform for sharing videos.
- If your work computers are unable to support YouTube or videos, work with the communications team to see if they can be displayed on a TV screen in a communal or high traffic area and in training sessions.
- A short film, or clip, is a great way of grabbing people’s attention or highlighting something you are doing. Don’t forget to make sure that the video and content is appropriate for public viewing.
- Free flu fighter videos that you can share or embed on your website can be found on [the flu website](#).

**Instagram**

- Instagram is an image-led platform where you can share pictures to get your message across. This really lends itself to developing something creative with your communications team.
- When using Instagram, make your posts eye-catching by using props or flu fighter branding, and add relevant hashtags to get your posts noticed.

**Things to consider when using social media**

Using these platforms can help you create a more engaging campaign that can encourage staff to get their flu vaccination. To make sure you get the best from social media, you will need to:

- adhere to your organisation’s social media policy (speak to HR or your communications team for more details)
- write appropriately for the channel you are using – scan Twitter or Facebook to get a feel for language and tone
- remember social media is a two-way communication channel – reply, mention and follow others to engage and build your online community
- use short hashtags that are relevant and memorable to spread your message, for example: #flufighter #flu
- use images, graphics, videos and GIFs (a graphic image on a web page that moves) to help your content go further
- drive traffic back to your website by including links – use free tools such as owly or bitly to make long links shorter
- tag people or organisations in your posts so they can share your post too
- keep momentum going, so consider creating a social media calendar of activity before you get started.
#jabathon

This week-long social media campaign by NHS Employers aims to encourage positive conversations around flu. During #jabathon, staff are encouraged to share why they've had their flu jab using the #jabathon hashtag and to nominate two colleagues to get their jab. It lasts a week, so make sure to use this campaign to your advantage.

As well as retweeting #jabathon posts on social media you could:

• offer the chance for colleagues to get the flu jab during #jabathon week, at any time, any place (within reason)
• encourage staff to take part in #jabathon by organising an internal competition between departments
• encourage your medical director, director of nursing or other leaders to write a blog on why they’ve had their jab, or share a picture of themselves having their jab
• during the week, make flu the main topic in your organisation and organise key activities around this theme
• share our jabathon images and flu fighter resources using the #jabathon hashtag.

To find out more about jabathon visit: www.nhsemployers.org/jabathon
It’s all about behaviour change

Trying to persuade someone to have their flu vaccination is not always easy, but by using the EAST framework you can help encourage more people to get their jab. EAST has been developed by the Behavioural Insights Team, a social purpose company owned by the government and NESTA (an innovation charity) and its employees. It can help you plan and implement your communications to make sure they have the maximum impact.

**Easy:** When planning your communications, make it as easy as possible for your staff to get involved by:
- keeping your message simple so they can easily see what you want them to do
- minimising any hassle by keeping the process simple.

**Attractive:** To make something attractive you need to make the action more appealing by:
- highlighting the benefits of an action
- using rewards to attract people to take part.

**Social:** We are social beings and are heavily influenced by what those around us do and say. When we tell someone else we are going to do something, we are much more likely to see it through. Make your campaign social by:
- showing people performing the desired behaviour eg getting their flu jab
- using the power of your networks
- encouraging people to make a commitment to others
- getting key influencers on board with the campaign eg team leaders, matrons, nursing directors, medical directors or chief executives.

**Timely:** We are much more likely to respond to something if it comes at a convenient time, and are more likely to change our habits during times of transition. You could:
- prompt people when they are likely to be most receptive eg avoid busy periods
- highlight the immediate costs and benefits eg getting your jab early on in flu season is another job off your list
- tie into wider national events like #jabathon or link your flu communications in with the change of season.

For every staff member that was vaccinated against flu, Birmingham Women’s and Children’s Hospital NHS Foundation Trust offered ten tetanus jabs to expectant mothers and children in Africa via Unicef.
Key messages

Having key messages will help your staff understand exactly what it is you want them to do. Here are some flu fighter messages you may want to use in your organisation.

The three ways to fight flu this winter

1. GET YOUR VACCINATION

Having your flu jab protects you and those around you. It’s a serious illness that can result in death. The vaccine is up to 70 per cent effective, depending on the strains of flu circulating each year. So be a flu fighter and have the jab.

2. WASH YOUR HANDS

As well as getting your jab, you can help reduce the spread of flu by regularly washing your hands, particularly after sneezing or coughing. You can pass flu on without having any symptoms.

3. STAY AWAY

If you have flu, stay away from work until you are better. The virus is highly infectious and outbreaks can happen quickly.

South Tees Hospital NHS Foundation Trust promoted key messages in weekly bitesize chunks using a range of techniques, including a series of short videos that were promoted both internally by emails and externally on social media.
Use what’s available to you

It can be hard to identify exactly what will encourage your colleagues to get their flu jab. As a general rule, the more relatable the statistic or personal the story, the better.

Statistics

• If your trust had a high uptake of the flu jab last year, share this statistic to make having the flu vaccination seem like the norm. For example: 70 per cent of staff in our trust got vaccinated last year, can we do better this year?

• If fewer people were vaccinated at your organisation, why not use the national uptake data as an incentive for your organisation to improve. For example: More than 62 per cent of all frontline healthcare workers got vaccinated last year. Don’t be left out, get the flu jab.

• If you want to target specific staff groups, share statistics that relate to them. For example: 68 per cent of intensive care nurses got their flu vaccination last year, have you had yours yet?

• Create some friendly competition between wards or directorates by sharing their weekly statistics.

Follow @NHSflufighter for the most recent statistics relating to flu. We also tweet regularly to help bust common myths about flu.

Personal stories

Often it is the personal stories that help people to really understand the benefits of a programme. Collecting quotes and testimonials from colleagues is a great way of highlighting the benefits to your audience. A series of blogs from clinical leaders as well as patients, are also available on the flu fighter website.

Leadership

Leadership is key to creating a flu vaccination culture and helping you communicate your key messages. Engage your line manager, board and leadership team by asking them to help promote your flu fighter activity. Use board meetings, or key briefings as an opportunity to talk to them about your flu fighter plans.
**Podcasts and videos**

A podcast is a digital audio file that the audience can access via different internet platforms, such as Soundcloud. They can be recorded using specialist equipment or a standard smartphone or tablet.

Videos can be cost effective and easy to produce using smart phones and tablets, or for a more professional finish, you could employ the services of an audio visual company.

Before you create or publish any of these products, please get in touch with your communications team. They may be able to provide support and advice on how to create something that is in keeping with the organisation’s guidelines.

Podcasts and videos can help showcase real-life stories that staff can identify with, in a way that uses a person’s own words and conveys their emotions. Get your key messages across by creating fun videos that involve the flu champions and key influencers in your organisation.

Let the flu fighter team know if you create any videos or podcasts, so we can highlight them on the flu fighter website: [www.nhsemployers.org/flufightervideos](http://www.nhsemployers.org/flufightervideos)

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*Poole Hospital’s chief executive set up a director-led flu campaign. The nominated director managed the core flu team alongside representatives from occupational health, human resources and communications.*

*One of the best ways to communicate with staff is face to face. Use line managers and staff-side reps to reach those people who may otherwise be difficult to pin down.*
The key facts about flu

Our Why it matters web page highlights key facts about flu that many healthcare workers may not be aware of. You may want to include these facts in your key messages or when speaking to staff.

**FACT**

You could be spreading flu right now

Studies show that up to 77 per cent of people with flu have no symptoms and could potentially spread it to the most vulnerable.²

**FACT**

The adult flu jab doesn’t contain a live virus so it’s impossible to get flu from it.

**FACT**

Flu affects healthy people too

Up to one third of influenza deaths are in healthy people.⁵

**FACT**

Flu kills

An estimated average of 8,000 people die from flu in England each year.³ That’s more than eight times the number of confirmed cases of measles, mumps and rubella combined in 2016.⁴

**FACT**

Pregnant women can be vaccinated

Pregnant women can have the flu vaccination at any stage of their pregnancy. It’s even effective in preventing hospitalisations in infants with flu by 92 per cent.⁵

**FACT**

The risk of having a serious (anaphylactic) reaction from the flu jab is less than one in a million⁷ and is much, much lower than the risk of getting seriously ill from having the flu itself.

For further evidence and facts, visit: [www.nhsemployers.org/flumatters](http://www.nhsemployers.org/flumatters)

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2. www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600%2814%290034-7/fulltext
6. www.bmj.com/content/339/bmj.b5213
Celebrate success

If your campaign is successful, make sure to let people know! Share your successes with other flu leads via the closed Facebook group or let the flu fighter team know directly so we can add it to the good practice flu fighter web page.

Remember to share successes with communications colleagues in your organisation so they can spread the word internally, or externally with local media, if relevant to the wider community. The following could be of interest inside and outside your organisation:

• events that you want people inside or outside your organisation to get involved in
• photographs from events eg healthcare workers receiving their vaccination, your chief executive or medical director receiving their flu jab
• colleagues’ personal stories about why they got their flu jab
• anything you might be doing to support #jabathon

Before approaching any media, get in touch with your communications colleagues. They will already have strong contacts.

flu fighter awards

In past years our flu fighter awards have celebrated individual members of staff, teams and trusts for their hard work and efforts in fighting flu.

The awards have been an opportunity to share some of the amazing stories behind the success of flu campaigns, shine a light on a range of achievements and celebrate the innovative approaches that have been developed locally.

Take inspiration from past award winners: www.nhsemployers.org/fluawards

flu fighter conference

In past years, the flu fighter conference has been an opportunity for trusts to listen to key speakers and to better understand and develop strategies to improve the uptake of the flu vaccination in healthcare workers.
Test, learn and adapt

It’s important to keep testing your strategy, learning from challenges and successes and adapting it, across the flu season and each year. Ensure that you have defined the outcome of your strategy so that you are able to test it throughout the season and reliably measure the impact. This can be done by using uptake figures but you can also break it down into smaller categories: how accessible the vaccine was; how effective your posters were; or how well the myths were dispelled.

Use our Reviewing your campaign: a flu fighter guide for more information on how to evaluate well and how to continue planning and running your campaign year on year.

Contact us

If you have any questions about the flu fighter campaign, you can:

Visit our website:
www.nhsemployers.org/flu

Contact us via
flufighter@nhsemployers.org
or 0844 334 52 52

Tweet @NHSflufighter
and join the #flufighter conversation

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