

Another year, another flu season.

I'm sure they come around quicker each year. Well, I suppose ours did come around a bit faster this year as we got our vaccine delivery a couple of weeks earlier than expected. Thankfully we got an email informing us of the earlier delivery date and I was able to get everything set up beforehand.

I don't know about you, but I always feel a sense of trepidation each year when it's time to start jabbing again. I think it's because there's such a gap since the last time I did an injection, so that first one always feels like a bit of a hurdle to cross. There is a temptation to put off doing that first jab until later, when I feel 'ready', but when will that be? I know that I'm just delaying the inevitable and I also know that once I've done that first jab, I will be fine.

So, time to bite the bullet.

Our delivery arrived, I unpacked it and put it in the fridge. I checked the consultation room and was putting the sharps bin out when a customer went past and asked me when I was doing flu jabs. I told him that they had literally just arrived and he said 'oh that's ok, when will you be starting?'. Decision time. I made myself say 'Now, if you want to be the first one' and he said 'Great, the wife's in the car, I'll fetch her in too.' So, I did my first two flu jabs within 15 minutes of them being delivered. Just go for it. Don't think about it too much.

Flu jabs are a real team effort with all members of staff playing their part. It's fantastic to have a service that we are well remunerated for and which fits in around our dispensing activities. Admittedly, it can be quite challenging at times, particularly in the first few weeks when it sometimes feels like a coach load of over-65's has pulled up outside, but if everyone works together you can make it happen.

The pharmacy flu jab service has been such a success. We've proven that with the overwhelmingly positive patient feedback that we have collected over the past few years. There is no doubt that patients love it and value the accessibility that we provide. And now we have a new national service to tackle – the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS).

Finally, it feels like we are being included as part of the NHS, instead of being on the sidelines. There will be challenges ahead I'm sure, but if we can make the CPCS as much of a success as the flu jab service, then we are going to be in a much stronger position within the health service than we have ever been before. This is our opportunity to show our value and we need to grab it with both hands.

It's a big ask at the moment, I know, as there is soooo much going on with the Pharmacy Quality Scheme. We've all got time to do three million audits, haven't we???

There is a lot of help out there. PSNC have so much information on their website and they are updating it all the time. Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire put information in their weekly newsletter so make sure you have signed up for that.

Join our social media group, CPWY Connect on Telegram and keep in touch with us and each other. You are not on your own. If we work together, we can do this. **We are Pharmacy!** We're basically all superheroes with invisible capes. Who else could get through the amount of work that we do? So, pat yourselves on the back. I know that you deserve it. You are all amazing and now it's time to show everyone else what we can do.

Amanda Smith
Vice Chair of Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire

Sign up to the PSNC mailing list to ensure you receive the weekly newsletters, alerts and updates here: <http://psnc.org.uk/latest-news/email-sign-up/>. The PSNC website has further information on the [flu service](#) and [Community Pharmacist Consultation Service](#).

Sign up to our mailing list here: <http://www.cpwpy.org/news/join-our-mailing-list.shtml>.

Join [CPWY Connect](#) on the social media site Telegram and connect with pharmacy teams across West Yorkshire. Join by [clicking here](#).