



Hello,

The COVID-19 vaccination winter campaign has continued this year with **167** community pharmacies participating to contribute significantly by delivering **213K**, being **46.72%** of all **455K** vaccines administered in West Yorkshire. This is an outstanding achievement and really does show what community pharmacy is capable of with the unique nature of the relationships we have within the communities we serve.

Addressing health inequalities in our communities to tackle population health, especially around COVID-19 vaccination uptake is a number one priority for the healthcare system in which we work.

We have had an opportunity to secure funding for several community pharmacies working in the areas of West Yorkshire that fall into IMD 1, the most deprived communities. This funding has enabled teams to carry out various activities, to reach out to their local communities to address vaccine hesitancy, whilst also taking the opportunity to promote health improvement with other services such as BP checks and health promotion. The work done to reduce vaccine hesitancy by the pharmacies in IMD 1 will ultimately encourage vaccine uptake across the wider population in West Yorkshire, which will benefit all community pharmacies participating in future COVID campaigns.

Local contractor, and CPWY committee member, Adeel Sarwar said:

"I own and run Roundhay Pharmacy in Harehills. I have been involved with the mosques and day centres for many years in the Harehills and Chapeltown areas, also working with local churches and food banks. The community I serve is in IMD 1, it is known that populations in IMD 1 will typically have a lower life expectancy than those in areas with a higher IMD. There are many socio-economic reasons for explaining the differences in both length and quality of life in these areas.



Roundhay Pharmacy has offered COVID-19 vaccinations alongside flu since September 2023. I have seen young healthy patients pass away unexpectedly from Covid complications, so I was keen to support the service. It was very busy with vast majority of patients in peak season being the internet savvy, healthcare concerned populations from Harrogate, Alwoodley, Adel, Scarcroft, Wetherby. All were very grateful for the vaccine, and many had travelled some distance. It was great to be able to provide a service to these people, but where were the people of Harehills and Chapeltown?

My team and I opportunistically spoke to our regular patients with limited success. By December there was significant tail off in vaccination just as winter viruses were on the rise. It was about this time I was pleased to be asked to participate in this project which is different to everyday practice and gives you the opportunity to get out into the community. I have since been able to visit sheltered housing. I have been to day centres to visit ethnic minority elderly populations – not all chose to have the vaccination, some did but there were many useful conversations.

It has given me the ability to address vaccine hesitancy which I see on a day-to-day basis but don't usually have the time or resources to tackle with quality conversations. While the multi-language leaflets have been useful, mainly it has been the trust built over many years that has convinced the hesitant to get vaccinated. We discuss other issues of lifestyle, hypertension, exercise, and diet.

Just before Christmas this project allowed for me to work with a local journalist to write the [following article](#). It discusses many of the issues faced by IMD 1 areas and will go some way to make a positive impact on health inequalities. I would not have been able to facilitate such a project this time of year without the support of this project.

On Saturday 6th January 2024 I joined Dr Mo Sattar on Asian Fever Radio to discuss vaccine hesitancy (see below). Dr Sattar is the Clinical Lead for Chapeltown PCN. The radio is mainly an Urdu language station that has been widely popular for many years in the Pakistani community. I used the resources of this project to work with the station to plan and discuss vaccine hesitancy in the Pakistani and Asian communities. We also discussed the upcoming Pharmacy First Service and other lifestyle changes people could make in the new year as part of their resolutions. It was a nerve racking and stressful experience – something I'm not used to however it appears to have been well received."

Asian Fever Radio kindly allowed us to share this radio segment from Saturday 6th January 2024 between Adeel and Dr Mo Sattar. You can listen to Adeel's radio segment here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnfv8ZNZ_sO.

All the best,

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