Since the routine children’s flu vaccine programme was introduced in 2013 vaccine uptake in two and three year olds across Wales has been increasing but remains suboptimal at 44.4% (2015/16).

In Cwm Taf University Health Board flu vaccine uptake in three year olds in 2015/16 was 42%, the second lowest in Wales. Flu vaccine uptake in the eligible school age cohort in the health board was 70% this was the highest in Wales in 2015/16.

In 2016/17 in a bid to increase flu uptake in three year olds the health board decided to pilot the administration of nasal spray flu vaccinations for three year olds in nursery school.

**What did you do?**

In 2016/17, with agreement from the Local Management Committee (LMC), Practice Manager Forum and Welsh Government, Cwm Taf University Health Board ran a pilot offering flu vaccine in nursery school to all three year olds who attended a Local Authority Nursery School in the health board area.

In September 2016, all parents of three year olds received a health board letter explaining which children were eligible for the nursery pilot; parents of non-eligible three year olds were instructed to contact their GP surgery for their child’s flu vaccine.

The pilot was implemented through a partnership between the school nursing team and health visitor teams. Prior to the nursery vaccination session parents were sent an information letter and consent form. Parents, or a nominated adult such as a grandparent or childminder, were required to attend the session while their child was vaccinated. The nursery vaccination sessions were either held at the start of day, 12 – 1pm or at the end of the nursery day to reduce disruption for the nursery and make access easier for parents.

This innovative approach exceeded all expectations. During the autumn school term 131 nursery schools were visited and 68.6% of eligible three year olds in nursery were vaccinated.

The school nursing and health visitor teams were truly inspirational despite initial concerns they pulled together and produced this fantastic result.

**What have you learnt?**

Early planning and organisation were important factors in the pilot’s success. Liaison with schools and nursery schools to book vaccination session dates took place in July 2016. Immunisation training for the health visitors, many of whom hadn’t ever vaccinated, took place in August and September prior to the nursery sessions starting.

Initially many of the health visitors had concerns regarding the pilot logistics, their lack of immunisation experience, and the impact on their time and caseloads, but these concerns
were soon forgotten. The health visitors soon realised that their time commitment was minimal, the results were very positive and the vaccination sessions were a great opportunity for additional client contact. Parents appreciated the convenience of having their child vaccinated in nursery.

From the pilot’s inception it was recognised that this would not be without its challenges, despite this, through team working and a collaborative approach it was great success.

**Contact details**

Jane Williams, Immunisation Coordinator, Cwm Taf University Health Board. Email: [Jane.Williams9@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Jane.Williams9@wales.nhs.uk)