

Public Forum 29 September 2021
Questions from members of the public

There were no questions submitted in advance of the meeting. All questions below were asked during the Public Forum.

Question asked by Jane Collinridge

Are there any more problems with the delivery of the vaccine? I am also interested to know how pharmacies are receiving deliveries of the vaccine ahead of PCNs.

Andrew Eyres, Strategic Director for Integrated Health and Care responded and noted that there are currently no issues with delivery of the Covid-19 vaccine.

Jane added that she was also asking about the flu vaccine.

With regards to the flu vaccine, this is ordered by individual hospitals, GP practices and pharmacies and these are beginning to arrive now.

Dr Raj Mitra, GP and Children and Young People's Alliance Clinical Lead, noted that the Lambeth Walk Practice had received their order and they have begun vaccinating the over 65's as well as under 65's.

Jane added that she had received feedback that the flu vaccination was being given at the pharmacies rather than GP practices.

George Verghese, GP, and Clinical Cabinet Co-Chair noted that there had been some supply issues with the over 65 flu vaccine to some GP Practices.

Question asked by Jenny Cobley

How many Covid-19 patients are in our hospitals? Are the numbers increasing? Who are the patients that are dying? Are these non-vaccinated patients or are they vaccinated with underlying conditions?

Ruth Hutt, Director of Public Health (Lambeth), gave an initial response to this question and noted that the data shows that numbers of hospital admissions have now started to reduce. In relation to deaths, a piece of analysis is currently being produced so we can fully understand this. Generally, we are seeing a higher proportion of people who are unvaccinated and within this there are some co-morbidities that are not part of the usual risk factors. We are also seeing a small number of deaths of patients with serious co-morbidities that have been vaccinated. We will continue to analyse the data as it comes through over the next month or so and will report back.

Julie Lowe, Chief Executive Kings College Healthcare NHS Trust, added that the numbers of patients in Intensive Care are coming down from 90 in August to circa 60 in September. The trust is largely admitting patients with Covid -19 who are either not vaccinated, are partially vaccinated (one dose) and/or patients with co-morbidities. There are also deaths from Covid-19 of unvaccinated patients with no underlying illnesses.

Public Forum 29 September 2021
Questions from members of the public

Sarah Austin, Director Integrated Care Guys and St Thomas' NHS Trust, noted that the number of patients in hospital fluctuates between the 50's and 60's in number. This cohort is made up largely of people who are either not vaccinated or partially vaccinated. In terms of mortality, the numbers are very low at 3/4% but they tend to be people who are over 65, people who have frailties and people who have long-term conditions.

Question asked by Dr Raj Mitra

We have noticed that people are calling into the practice with coughs who have only completed a lateral flow test and not a PCR test. With winter approaching will there be any public health messages to highlight this.

Ruth Hutt responded to this question and noted that the threshold for having a PCR test has changed and individuals no longer need to have one of the three main symptoms. We have been encouraging people to take a PCR test whilst performing surge testing within the borough and subsequently after surge testing has finished. This is part of our winter messaging and there are no current issues with the availability of PCR testing.

Question asked by Wendy Horler

How concerned are you about the Health and Care Bill impacting on Lambeth Together given that local placed based boards don't seem to be getting much influence on ICBs, who will be handing out the finance? Also, they all have to come up with their own constitutions, can you as Lambeth Together try to give as much input as possible?

Andrew Eyres responded to this question and confirmed that the ICS is required to build a new constitution as a new statutory body. Within SEL there is a clear commitment to develop place-based arrangements, such as Lambeth Together. In Lambeth we are in a good position to influence how this is progressed. Across the SEL footprint there is a commitment to recognise the primacy of borough based arrangements alongside collaborative arrangements through provider collaboratives. Within Lambeth Together we are looking at the ICS as a way to progress our aims to improve services and reduce the health inequalities of our population.

Lambeth Together will develop the next steps in this process between now and November, we will bring back proposals as to how we strengthen and progress our partnership working. In Lambeth we are at the most progressed end of the spectrum and can offer some learning and experience to others.

Cllr Jim Dickson added that we have been very clear that democratic and political representation at the ICS level has to have senior voices and we will be putting forward the Leader of Lambeth Council. We are looking for a fruitful partnership between Council, clinical and other leaders.

Public Forum 29 September 2021
Questions from members of the public

Question asked by Gay Lee.

I do appreciate that Lambeth have done a lot of work and is probably going to be very influential, however am I right in thinking that the constitution of the ICB, where we will probably have less influence, is crucial? Will Lambeth be taking part in the discussions about the content of the constitution?

Andrew Eyres responded to this question and noted that some elements of the constitution will be defined by the process going through parliament and then further guidance from NHSE, so parts of the constitution will be within our gift and other parts will be beyond that. The way the ICS is constituted at the moment is that the various partners, which includes representatives from each borough, are involved in developing and designing it together and this will continue as we go through the next stages. The ICS is embracing the integration of the NHS with local government, this has been a feature of our work over the last twelve months and will continue to be.

Sue Gallagher, Lay Member added that as a lay member and in discussion with other lay members and the Chair and Chief Executive designate of the ICS, she felt very positive about the future role of borough-based boards.

Question from Sue Gallagher

The wearing of masks has decreased and particularly on public transport. What should the message be, as even though on public transport masks are required, this is not being enforced? When people are challenged there are very rude and aggressive responses. Have the Councils had any discussions with public transport? Are hospitals requiring masks to be worn by all visitors and staff?

Ruth Hutt gave an initial response to this question and noted that this has been observed by many. The Mayor of London has been doing a lot to promote the wearing of masks as a condition of travel on public transport, however, this cannot be enforced and it is not a legal requirement. The advice given to our enforcement staff is to not put themselves in any danger, so an initial request can be made but if the answer is no, then not to take it any further. It is a big challenge, and the only advice is to model the correct behaviour. This may change as we go into the winter months and the normal coughs and colds are starting to be seen.

Julie Lowe, Sarah Austin, James Lowell, Chief Operating Officer South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and Sabrina Phillips, Living Well Network Alliance Lead all confirmed that mask wearing is compulsory for all staff and visitors within their sites and within all healthcare settings.

Public Forum 29 September 2021
Questions from members of the public

Question asked by Jude Ellis

I am particularly aware when talking about mental health and CAMHs that those services feel quite confident of their funding, but they are aware that the transformation funding will come to an end. Might this confidence be undermined by this money being withdrawn and when is this funding going to run out?

Andrew Eyres provided an initial response to this question and noted that the Government has made available funding through the Covid-19 system for immediate pressures within the system and we are expecting this to continue through the rest of this year. There was also an announcement regarding recovery funding throughout the autumn and winter months.

In terms of transformation funds, some of these have been committed around immediate covid responses, including new announcements for mental health recovery, but we wait to hear more detail on this.

Abi Onaboye, Director of Children's Commissioning and Community Safety noted that at the moment this is not something an identified risk. We have additional funding routed through South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. In Lambeth we are already looking at the longer-term funding and how we coordinate this for children and young peoples mental health, and we are confident in the offer we can provide over the next few years.

James Lowell also noted that South London and Maudsley are not concerned that the ICS will stop any investment and think that investment may actually increase. In Lambeth, we can consider how the Living Well Network Alliance model can be utilised for young people.

Question from Jenny Cobley

The service has been very good with PCR testing, where do the tests go?

Ruth Hutt responded to this question and noted that PCR tests go to a variety of laboratory locations.

Andre Eyres added that if you get your tests done within a local hospital, it will be tested at a hospital lab. If you complete your test within a community testing facility, it will be process within one of the Lighthouse labs. The testing is very well regulated and turnaround times have been very consistent in recent months.

Question from Cllr Jim Dickson

As we near the deadline of 16th November for staff working within Care homes to be fully vaccinated, do we face any issues with service continuity considering that there will be some staff who will no longer be able to work within these places?

Public Forum 29 September 2021
Questions from members of the public

Jane Bowie, Director of Integrated Commissioning (Adults) responded to this question and noted that this is being tracked very carefully. The team have been working in collaboration with care home providers and our partners to support continued operation. We do have one care home looking at holding capacity at just below full, in the lead up to the deadline and we have five care homes that we are monitoring and supporting with business continuity arrangements. This does sit within the context of a number of continuing pressures, particularly staffing and this mandated vaccination has come on top of high staff turnover within the social care sector, but as it stands at the moment, we feel that we have got operational capacity to support the system.

For further enquiries please contact hello@lambethtogether.net