

Patient Feedback on the Flu Vaccination Service Provided in Pharmacies

March 2016

Prepared by:

BEHAVIOUR&ATTITUDES

On behalf of:



AN RIALTÓIR CÓGAISÍOCHTA
THE PHARMACY REGULATOR

Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Introduction.....	3
Survey Procedure.....	3
Survey Scope	4
Adverse Events	4
Respondents Profile.....	5
Survey Findings.....	6
Summary	16

Executive Summary

Since 2011 trained pharmacists have been authorised in legislation to supply and administer the flu vaccination at registered retail pharmacy businesses.

The PSI commissioned a survey to gain feedback from a large number of patients on their experience of the seasonal influenza vaccination service in pharmacies across Ireland. The independent market research agency Behaviours & Attitudes' was identified from a mini-tender process to help carry out the research on behalf of PSI and report on the findings.

A random sample of 300 pharmacies participating in the flu vaccination service were selected from the pharmacy register. The supervising pharmacist from each of these pharmacies was contacted and asked to invite people who had been vaccinated in the pharmacy to provide feedback on their experience. If the person was willing to do so, they were asked to sign a consent form and provide their telephone number so that they could be contacted by Behaviours & Attitudes' for a short telephone interview.

A total of 571 patient consent forms were returned to Behaviours & Attitudes and from this a total of 374 patient telephone interviews were completed.

It was found that one in six respondents were receiving the flu vaccine for the first time and a third of respondents had not received the vaccine from a pharmacy before.

Satisfaction with the service is high: 79% of respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the pharmacy-delivered service as 10 out of 10, 93% as 9 or 10 out of 10, and 99% as 8, 9 or 10 out of 10.

Respondents stated that the primary motivation for attending a pharmacy for the flu vaccination in 2015 was the convenience and efficiency of availing of it there (longer opening hours, no need for appointments etc.) with the add-on benefit of perceived better value/lower expense.

Introduction

Since 2011 trained pharmacists have been authorised in legislation to supply and administer the flu vaccination at registered retail pharmacy businesses. Since this time pharmacists have participated in the HSE's Influenza Vaccination Campaign. The uptake of the flu vaccine provided in community pharmacy has increased year on year, figures from the HSE Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) state that during the 2014/2015 flu season, 53,047 people were vaccinated across 691 community pharmacies in Ireland.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI) published a report on the [Evaluation of the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Service in Pharmacy 2014/2015](#) which recommended that in order to ensure that this service is being carried out to a consistently high standard there was a need to get feedback from a larger number of patients who had used this service. In response to this recommendation the PSI commissioned a survey to gain feedback from a large number of patients on their experience of the seasonal influenza vaccination service in pharmacies across Ireland.

This report details the findings from research undertaken by the independent market research agency, Behaviour & Attitudes (B&A), on behalf of the PSI.

Survey Procedure

The PSI identified a random sample of 300 pharmacies participating in the flu vaccination service from the pharmacy register. The supervising pharmacist from each of these pharmacies was contacted and asked to invite people who had been vaccinated in the pharmacy to provide feedback on their experience. If the person was willing to do so, they were asked to sign a consent form and provide their telephone number so that they could be contacted by B&A.

A total of 66 pharmacies returned patient consent forms within the allotted response period, yielding 571 completed consent forms which were returned directly to B&A. Between 19 November and 12 December 2015 patients were contacted by researchers from B&A for a short telephone interview on their experience of receiving the flu vaccine in a pharmacy. 374 patient telephone interviews were completed. The remainder ultimately refused to take part (66) or were unavailable during the fieldwork period (30 overseas/wrong numbers, 85 answering machines/no answers and 15 asking for a later-than-workable interview.) The average interview was 10 minutes long and the extent of respondent co-operation very was high. Anecdotal

feedback from the individual researchers making the phone calls on this study were very positive by and large.

The identities of participating pharmacists and pharmacies was not requested at any point in the research. In order to ensure that patients were surveyed who had received this service from different parts of the country and a mixture of independent and chain pharmacies, pharmacists were asked to indicate on the consent form whether the pharmacy was in a city, a large town or a small rural area, and whether it was an independent pharmacy or part of a chain (of either 2-5 pharmacies or 6 or more pharmacies.)

Survey Scope

A short telephone survey was used to obtain patient feedback on their experience of the vaccination service, a copy of which is provided in Appendix 1. The survey covered the following topic areas:

1. Whether they had received the flu vaccine before or not.
2. Whether they had received the flu vaccine from a pharmacy before or not.
3. Reasons for attending a pharmacy to receive the flu vaccine in this instance.
4. Influences on the decision to attend a pharmacy (cost, trust in pharmacist, accessibility etc.)
5. Adequacy of information received from the pharmacist.
6. Likelihood of using a pharmacy for the flu vaccine again.
7. Overall satisfaction with the pharmacists' provision of the vaccine service.
8. Other services and vaccines they would like to see available from the pharmacy in the future.
9. Other comments on the service.

Adverse Events

In the course of the research, three individuals made what could be classified as an 'adverse event' report to the researchers. In other words, they indicated that they had experienced a complication or a side effect, as they perceived, as a result of receiving the flu vaccine. The details of these individuals were passed on with their consent to the PSI and they were subsequently contacted by member of the PSI's Pharmacy Practice Development Unit.

Respondents Profile

374 respondents were interviewed in the course of this study. Figure 1 shows information gathered at the end of the telephone survey about the respondent's profile, the figures in brackets relate to the adult population of Ireland.

It can be seen that there were slightly more female than male respondents, and the median age was between 55 and 60. Respondents were interviewed from all over Ireland and there was almost a 50:50 mix of people that had attended an independent /small chain to those that had attended a large chain (classified as more than 5 pharmacies). Just over half of those interviewed were in an 'at risk group' for contracting the flu virus (e.g. over 65, those over 18 with a long term health condition, pregnant, working in the healthcare sector, residents of nursing homes and carers).

The characteristics of the group are a function of the pharmacies that participated in the research, and also of those patients who were willing to take part in the research.

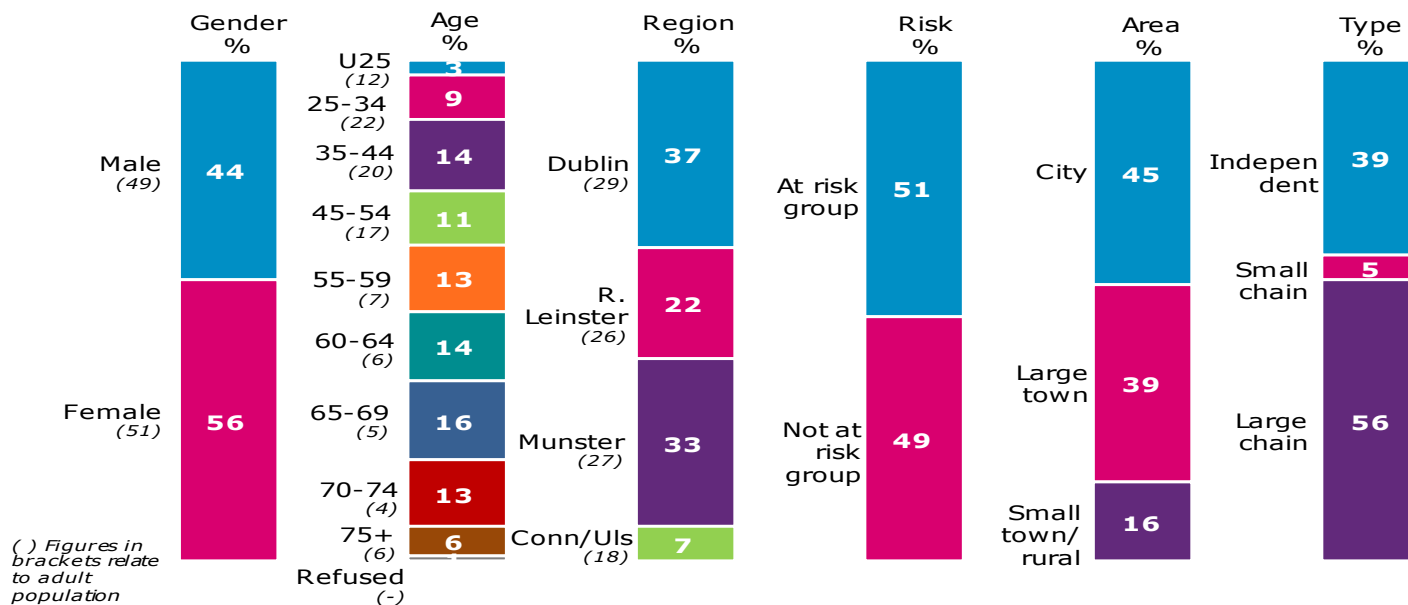


Figure 1: Profile of Respondents

Survey Findings

Below is a summary of the feedback received from the patient interviews.

Question: Is this your first year receiving the flu vaccine?

Question: Is this your first year receiving the flu vaccine in a pharmacy?

Response:

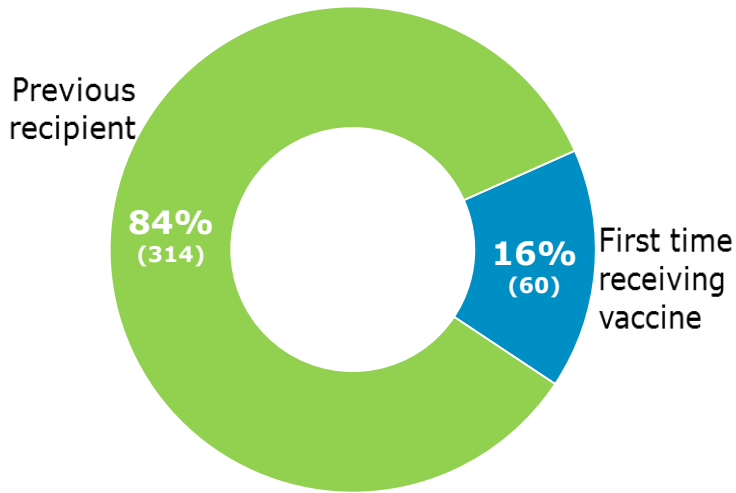


Figure 2: Flu Vaccine History

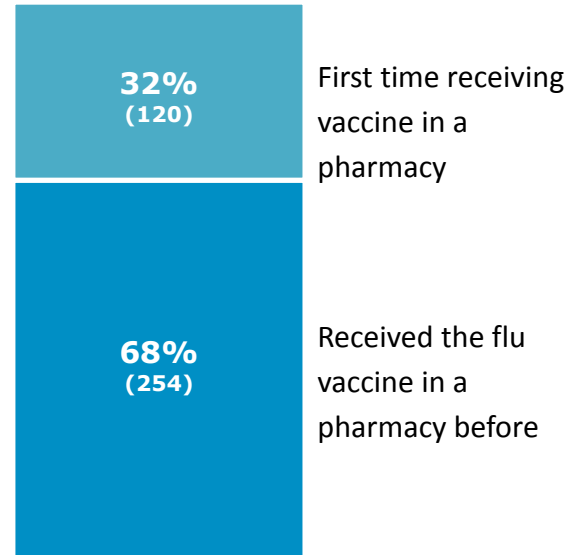


Figure 3: Flu Vaccine History

Of the 374 patients interviewed, Figure 2 shows that just over 1 in 6 had received the flu vaccination for the first time. Figure 3 illustrates that almost a third indicated that this is the first time that they received the flu vaccine in a pharmacy. 192 respondents indicated that they had received the vaccine free of charge and 93 that they were from an 'at risk' group.

Question: If you have received the flu vaccine before, where did you receive it?

Response:

Previous source of vaccine

Base: 314 who had received vaccine previously

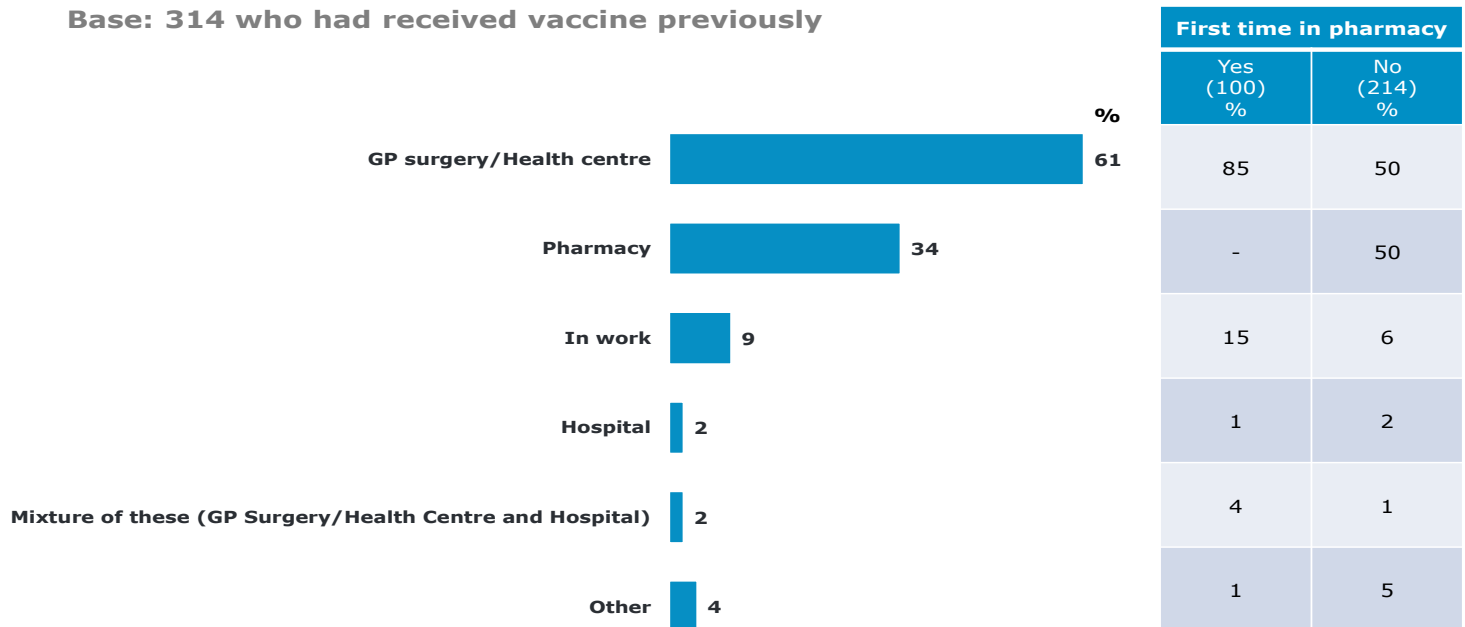


Figure 4: Previous Source of Flu Vaccine (and whether received in pharmacy before).

8

314 respondents (out of a total 374 interviewed) had received the flu vaccine before. Figure 4 shows that the majority of respondents had received it from a GP surgery or health centre (almost 3 in 5) with 34% stating that they had been vaccinated at a pharmacy prior to the 2015 flu season.

85% of those who received the vaccine from a pharmacy for the first time indicated that they had previously received the vaccine from a GP surgery or health centre and most of the remainder (15%) that they had previously received it at work.

Of those who stated that it was not their first time receiving the flu vaccine from a pharmacy it can be seen that half indicated that they had previously been administered it at a GP surgery or health centre, and a similar number had used the pharmacy before.

Question: Why did you decide to attend a pharmacy to receive the vaccine this year?

Response:

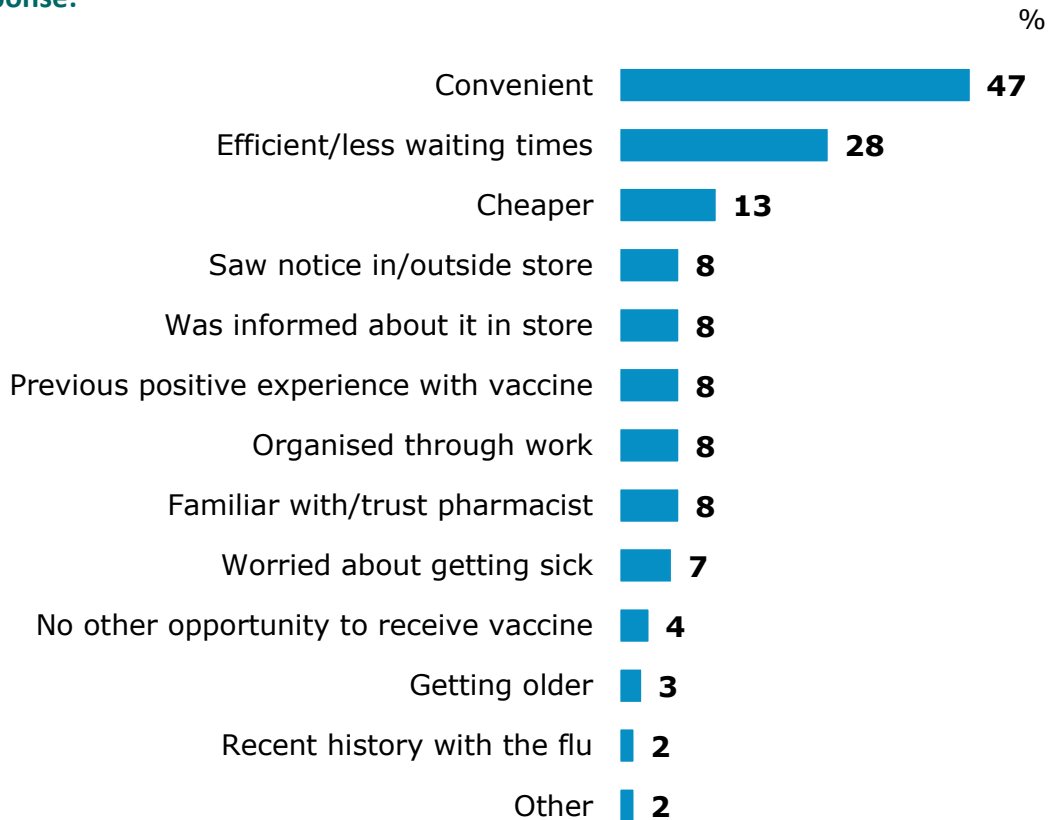


Figure 5: Reasons for Attending a Pharmacy for Flu Vaccine in 2015

When asked to indicate reasons for attending a pharmacy for the flu vaccination in 2015, Figure 5 shows that the majority of respondents indicated that their choice was driven by convenience. The second most common reason was greater efficiency or shorter waiting times and the third that the cost of the service provided in pharmacy was lower.

It is interesting to note that there was a sizeable level of feedback on seeing in-store signage and being informed about the vaccination service while in the pharmacy.

It is notable that 8% indicate that their in-pharmacy vaccine was organised through work: this may suggest that some employers are opting to fund off-site vaccination in pharmacies.

Question: On a scale of 0-10 (where 0 is not a factor and 10 is an important factor) to what extent did the following affect your decision to attend the pharmacy to receive the vaccine?

- Ease of getting an appointment or no need for an appointment
- Trust in Pharmacist
- Location of pharmacy
- Opening hours of pharmacy
- Good service received in previous years

Response:

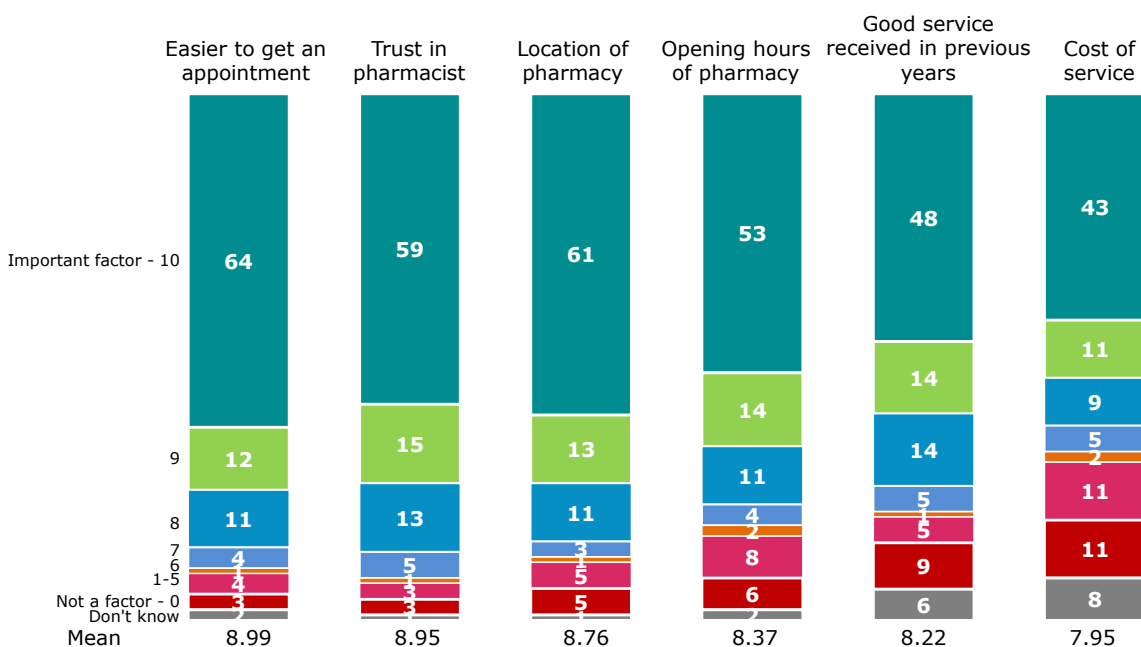


Figure 6: Influences on Decision to Attend Pharmacy for Flu Vaccine

When the respondents were prompted with factors that may have influenced their decision to attend a pharmacy Figure 6 shows that the primary factor cited was ease of getting an appointment or not needing an appointment. Next most important was the location of the pharmacy, followed by trust in pharmacist, the pharmacy opening hours and the good service received there in previous years. The cost of the service was ranked as less important, however given that many respondents were in the ‘at risk’ category where they received their vaccine for free, this may have depressed mention of cost. The average respondent indicated that slightly more than three of the factors listed above were of high importance. It can be seen that five of the six factors achieved an average rating of more than eight out of ten, showing that these

were all important factors in the respondents decision to attend a pharmacy, with the sixth getting a score of 7.95.

Question: During this visit, were you satisfied with the amount of information you received from the pharmacist about the flu vaccine service?

Response:

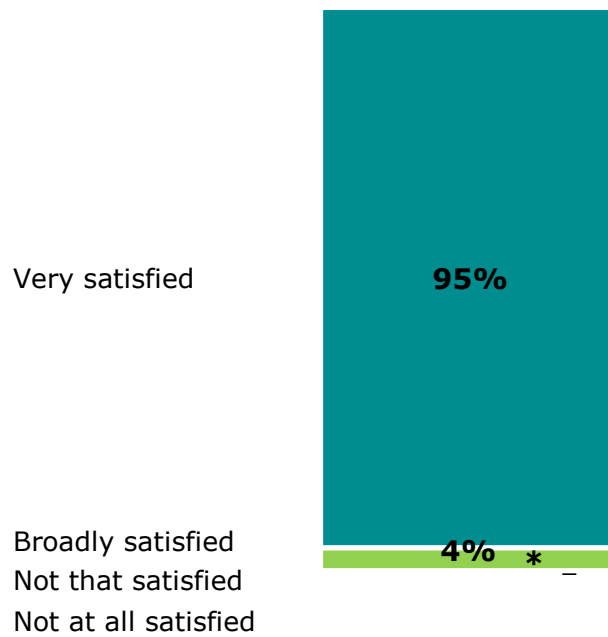


Figure 7: Satisfaction with Amount of Information Received

Figure 7 shows that 19 out of every 20 respondents indicated that they were very satisfied with the amount of information received, with less than 5% suggesting that there could be improvements in the context of the information imparted.

Question: Why were you not fully satisfied with the amount of information received?

Response:

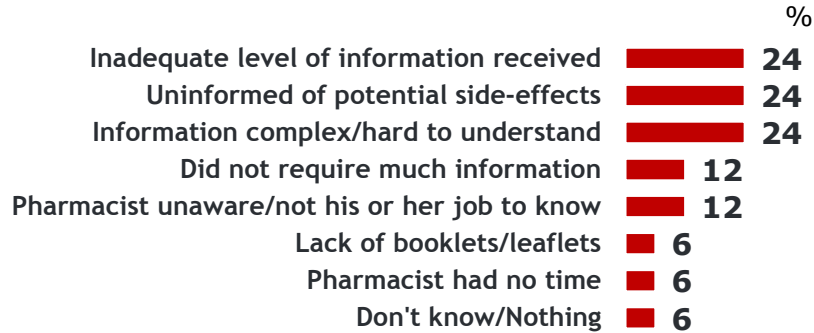


Figure 8: Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Information Received (Base: 17 not very satisfied)

Only 17 out of 374 respondents stated that they were not wholly satisfied with the information received. Figure 8 shows that the three main reasons given for this were a perceived inadequate level of information (24% or 4 out of 17), not being informed about potential side effects (again 24%) and finding the information provided complex or too hard to understand (24%).

Question: Based on your experience, would you attend a pharmacist for the flu vaccine next year?

Response:

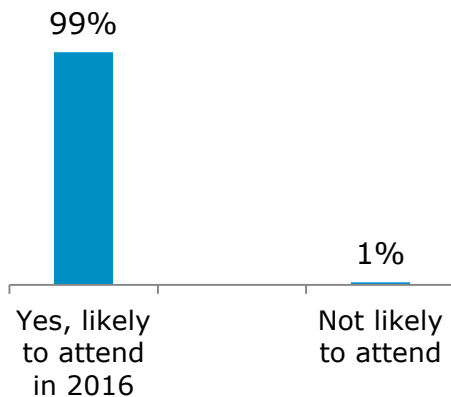


Figure 9: Likelihood of Attending a Pharmacist Again for the Flu Vaccine

Figure 9 shows that 99% (371) of respondents stated that they would be likely to attend a pharmacist for their flu vaccination again, with only 1% (3 people) suggesting that they would be unlikely to attend again.

Question: Using a scale of 0-10, where 0 is very dissatisfied and 10 is very satisfied, what number would you use to rate your overall experience of receiving the flu vaccine from your pharmacy this year?

Response:

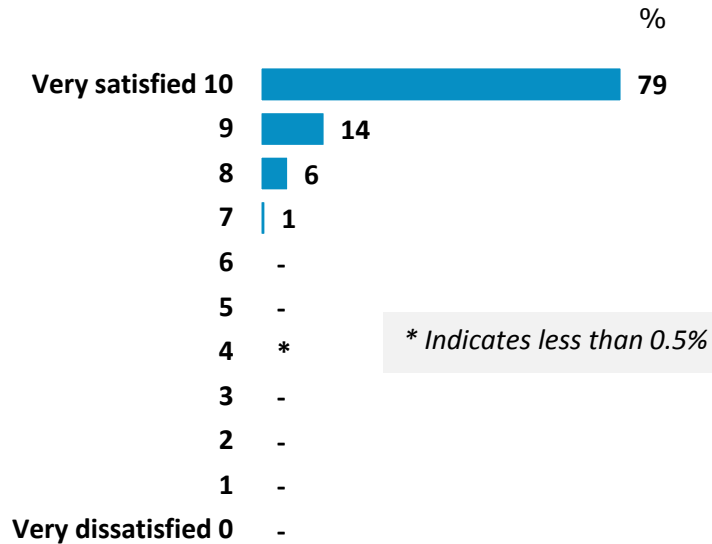


Figure 10: Overall Satisfaction with the Flu Vaccination Service

It can be seen from Figure 10 that almost 4 out of 5 respondents gave a satisfaction score of 10 out of 10 with the service they had received, with a mean score of 9.7 out of 10.

Those who rated the service more highly tended to be women, those who had received it for free and those who are receiving it for the first time.

Question: Are there any other comments you would like to make on your experience of receiving the flu vaccine from your pharmacist?

Response:



Figure 11: Further Comments on Patient Experience (verbatim)

The majority of respondents made comments which were very supportive of the vaccination service and its manner of delivery. Figure 11 shows that a fifth of respondents stated that the pharmacist was friendly and helpful and 20% respondents reiterated that they were satisfied and had no problems. Respondents also stated that the pharmacist was very professional and it was an efficient and relaxed process.

The only tangible suggestions in relation to possible improvements relate to a faster service and having a larger private area/ consultation room within the pharmacy for provision of this service.

Question: Are there other vaccines that you would like a pharmacist to provide?

Response:

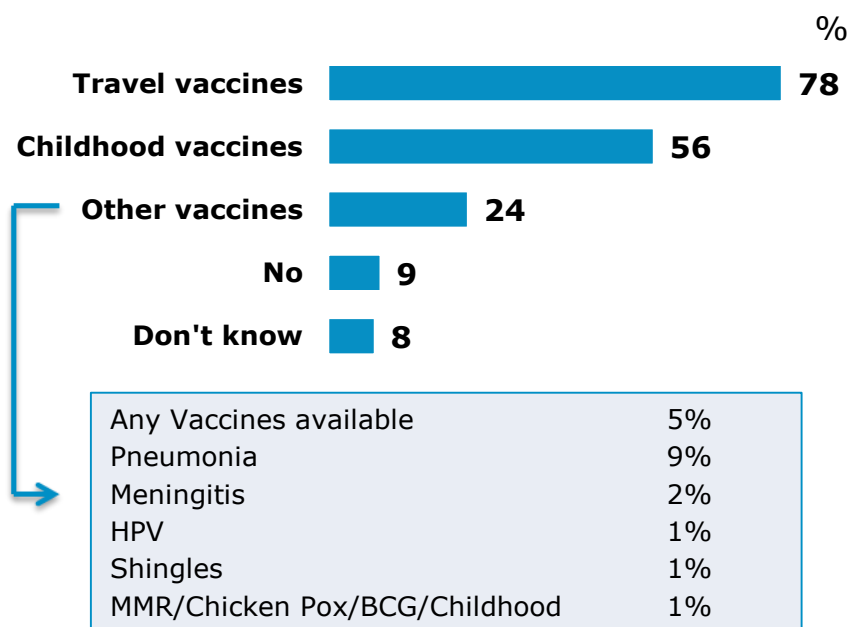


Figure 12: Support for other Vaccines that the Pharmacist could provide

At the end of the study respondents were asked whether there are other vaccines that they would like to have available from the pharmacist. In particular, respondents were asked whether they would like the pharmacist to provide travel vaccines or childhood vaccines. It can be seen from Figure 12 that 78% (292) of respondents stated that they would like the pharmacist to be able to provide travel vaccines, and 56% (209) stated childhood vaccines. A range of other vaccines were also suggested, with 9% of respondents suggesting the vaccine for pneumonia and 5% stating that pharmacists should be able to provide any vaccine that is available.

Question: Are there other services that you would like a pharmacist to provide?

Response:

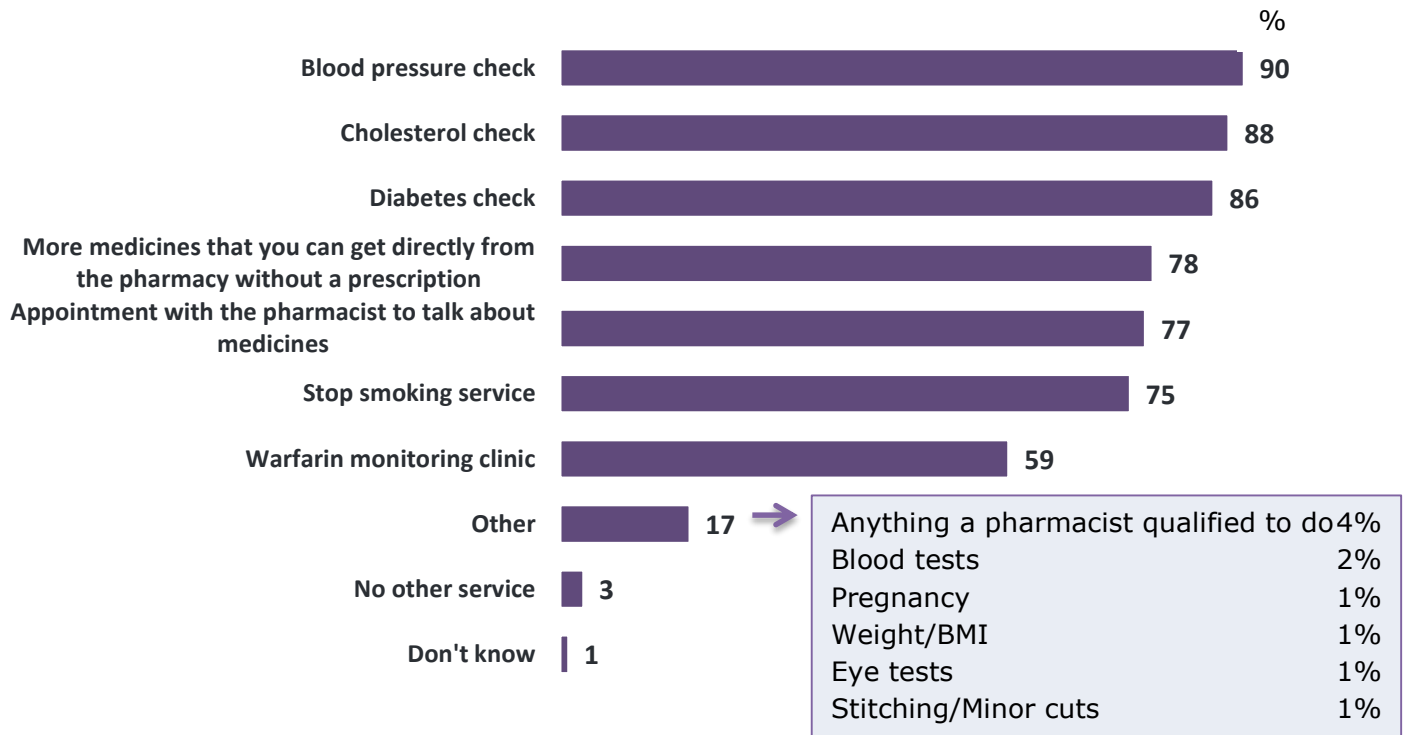


Figure 13: Support for Other Services that the Pharmacist could provide

Respondents were also asked what other services that they would like the pharmacist to provide from the pharmacy, with examples of potential services outlined. It can be seen from Figure 13 that there was a positive response to the suggestion of expanding the range of services available in the pharmacy. Many of the verbatim comments made indicate that pharmacy customers are very comfortable with the idea of being able to talk informally to the pharmacist about their medical needs, where practicable.

Compared to the response to pharmacists providing other vaccines, for the most part, the scores in respect of expansion of other services tend to be higher, this may be because people can identify with these to a greater extent than they can with vaccines. (Only about half of adults travel abroad each year while about a quarter of all adults have a dependent child living with them. The relative market for these other vaccines is thus smaller).

Summary

Out of a total of 374 interviews with patients who had received the flu vaccine from a pharmacy, one in six respondents were receiving the flu vaccine for the first time.

A third of respondents had not received the vaccine from a pharmacy before. This indicates that activity to alert potential recipients to the availability of the vaccine from pharmacies, much of this by pharmacists themselves, has been effective in increasing vaccine uptake.

79% of respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the pharmacy-delivered service as 10 out of 10, 93% as 9 or 10 out of 10, and 99% as 8, 9 or 10 out of 10. This is a very high level of satisfaction.

The primary motivation to have attended a pharmacy for vaccination in 2015 was the convenience and efficiency of availing of it there (longer opening hours, no need for appointments etc.) with the add-on benefit of perceived better value/lower expense.

When asked to rate the various components of the pharmacy service provided, many of the facets assessed stand out as significantly in its favour: ease of access, trust, location, opening hours. Cost of service is indicated as a relatively lower priority in this context, but was still rated as an important factor (10, 9 or 8 out of 10) by almost two out of three respondents, and particularly by those who personally paid for the vaccination.

Nineteen out of 20 respondents stated that they were very satisfied with the information and explanation they received about the flu vaccine before and during administration.

99% of respondents stated that they would attend a pharmacy again for the flu vaccine, with only three respondents indicating that they would not attend the pharmacy again for the flu vaccine.

Most respondents are keen to access other services from pharmacies and this underscores the level and extent of satisfaction with the flu vaccine service.