

Covid-19 Insight Report



A snapshot of views from people using the Covid-19 vaccination bus

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Introduction

During May and June 2021, Healthwatch Wiltshire attended the Covid-19 vaccination bus on three occasions. This specially adapted bus is a mobile vaccination clinic that has been touring areas of Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire. It aims to provide the vaccine to those who are eligible for it, but unable to travel or are hesitant and would like to speak to a medical professional about it.

Our aim was to gather a snapshot of the views of those using the bus. We wanted to find out their thoughts about the vaccination, why they had decided to use the vaccination bus and what their experience of this was. We also used this opportunity to ask about experiences of other health and social care services during the pandemic.

The locations we attended were Bemerton Heath, Salisbury and Longfield and Studley Green Estates, Trowbridge. In total, we carried out 36 interviews and gathered brief comments from a further 15, speaking to 51 people in total.

Location	Number of interviews	Number of comments
Bemerton Heath, Salisbury	19	6
Studley Green, Trowbridge	7	3
Longfield, Trowbridge	10	6

What did people tell us?

Reasons for deciding to have the vaccination

A range of reasons were mentioned for having the vaccination. The most common reason was that this was to protect the more vulnerable, particularly so when they had elderly family members with health conditions.

Some mentioned that they were having the vaccine to protect themselves, and some of these commented that they had jobs that led them to come into more contact with others.

Another reason mentioned was the belief this was the way to overcome Covid-19, and the associated restrictions. People also considered they had moral duty to society to have it. These reasons were commonly given by those who initially had reservations or concerns about having the vaccine.

Because I don't want to get Covid or die from it.

To protect my health as I'm asthmatic and have heart problems. I'd be silly if I didn't get it.

I want to travel so want to make sure that I am not in danger. I work in a restaurant so have more contact than some others.

I have family members with cancer so I want to see if I can get vaccinated and see vulnerable family members without putting them at risk.

Because I know I have to, to get us out of this.

To help see the end of this coronavirus.

I am doing it out of moral obligation.

I think it is a civic duty, although I was reluctant to start with.

Why did they use the vaccination bus?

We were given lots on different reasons for why the vaccination bus had been used, and these can be grouped into some main themes:

Location and travel – convenience, particularly for those who didn't drive or were unable to travel further for other reasons was one of the main reasons given for using the vaccination bus. Some said that they had tried to access the vaccine booking system online but had only been able to find locations quite a long way away. For others, even travelling relatively short distances presented challenges:

Because it is close to home and I've got 5 kids, so it's difficult to travel to other locations.

I have been online. I don't drive and I could only get Weston-super-Mare. I don't get much time off work so thought it better to come here.

Ease of access as it was close to home. I have health anxiety and using the bus is great for helping me feel I am in control.

I heard about it through the grapevine, via Wiltshire Council. I can't get to other venues. I don't drive and get bus sick, so it was great to be able to come here.

Booking and internet use – ease of use and not having to book or use the internet was frequently cited as a reason for using the vaccination bus. We spoke to several people who said that they never or rarely used the internet and did not feel confident using the online booking system. Others told us that they had decided to use the bus as they either were not good with 'admin', or not keen on it.

Accessing phone call and the internet is not easy for me. The normal way of getting the vaccine is not inclusive.

I'm not good with admin so coming to the bus is easier.

Word of mouth – another reason commonly given for using the bus was because they'd heard about it from others in the local area. This seemed to relate to those who may have previously had some doubts about having the vaccine or were ambivalent about it. Several people told us that family or friends who had already had the vaccine had told them about the bus and encouraged them to use it.

The first time I was approached by someone who knew where the bus was and came and had my first dose. The second time I just saw the bus here and thought I should get my second dose done.

Had first one done here. My relatives phoned me and told me it was here as I hadn't had time to get it done before.

My girlfriend persuaded me. I thought as it's down this way I may as well come down.

I saw people here so thought I would jump on it and get it. I am glad to have been able to get this done here.

Presence of the bus – We were told that either seeing or hearing about the bus has led some to decide to come and have the vaccine.

I have been worried about having it and have been thinking about it and talking to people about it. I have been hearing about all the work people have been doing. When I found out about the bus being here today, I thought that if health workers are going to all that effort, then I must go and have it to protect myself and the community.

GP registration – a few told us that they had been unable to access the vaccine previously because they were not registered with a GP.

Because I heard it was here. I am not registered with a GP, so could not get it online.

What had previously prevented or worried people about having the vaccination?

Most people we spoke to said that they were not worried about having the vaccine and that it had been practical issues that had prevented them getting it sooner. These included issues related to booking, travel, internet use, having a caring role, and shift working.

I just didn't get round to it because I'm not organised.

No, just finding time to get it. I work nights so it is awkward.

No, my only worry was not getting access to the vaccine as not having a GP. This meant I couldn't book it online.

I don't drive and am a carer so it would be difficult to travel further.

No, I would have had it done before but I am busy and had not got round to it.

A few people said they had not had the vaccine earlier due to worries about it. The most mentioned concern was the risk of blood clots, and others mentioned were other short-term side effects, the fear of unknown long term side effects and a general distrust. Many people told us that these concerns had reduced as they had seen more people, including family members, having the vaccine.

The blood clot scare initially put me off, and I am also worried as I had side effects from the first one.

I was unsure because we don't know the long-term effects and I don't trust this government.

I have been worried about clots, but it has not prevented me from having the vaccine.

When it first came out, I was against it. Since then, family and friends have had it and that has relaxed me to it.

What was their experience of having the vaccination?

We asked people to tell us their experience of having the vaccine on the vaccination bus. Responses to the question were generally brief but were overwhelmingly positive. We were told that they thought that it was well organised, straightforward, that the vaccine didn't hurt and that the staff were pleasant and kind.

They are doing a good job, thanks for bringing the bus.

It was really well run, I was OK.

It was all fine, straightforward, and easy.

Excellent getting the vaccine, no problems.

It was fine, no problem at all. They were nice ladies giving the jab.

Conclusions & recommendations

From the views gathered as part and our observations during this snapshot, the vaccination bus appears to be an effective way of providing the vaccine to people who have not previously taken it up for a variety of reasons. These reasons relate to both practical barriers, as well as feelings of ambivalence or hesitancy about the vaccine. Our findings indicate that the bus reached those who may be disadvantaged in terms of being able to access the vaccine through the usual booking system.

It was also evident that the bus was being used by those who could have accessed the vaccine earlier but had not due to initial doubts about it. As this group had seen more vaccine take-up, they told us this led to a change in their views and the bus then presented an opportunity for them to now access the vaccine.

From what we were told, we suggest the following recommendations:

- To continue to offer local walk-in options to those who are the less able to access it in other ways.
- To look at ways of reviewing those who have previously refused or not taken up the vaccine, to find out if their views have changed and they would now like to go ahead.

Thank you

Thank you to all the individuals who shared their views and experiences with us.

Responses

 Prof Kate Blackburn, Wiltshire's Director of Public Health 

During the rollout of the vaccination programme, there have been particular parts of the county where we have seen a lower uptake in some communities.

As a largely rural county, we also wanted to ensure that the vaccine has been accessible to everyone eligible. We have worked closely with our colleagues in the NHS and partners across Wiltshire, Swindon and Bath and North East Somerset to identify where extra support or targeted interventions and innovative approaches were needed.

Bringing the mobile bus vaccination clinic into the heart of these communities has helped encourage people to attend the clinic, and

 **The mobile bus... has offered a valuable space to discuss any concerns** 

has offered a valuable space to discuss any concerns people may have about the vaccine, to help them find the reassurance they were seeking and make the decision to go ahead.

The feedback we've received from the community has been extremely positive, and there have been many attendees who indicated that they would not have come forward for their vaccine had the bus not been in their local area.

 Gill May, Director of Nursing and Quality, Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group 

The mobile bus vaccination clinic has been key in helping us to reach communities where it has not been as easy for them to get their Covid vaccinations.

We have been working in partnership with our colleagues in the NHS and partners across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire to identify where we needed targeted interventions and the best methods of reaching communities.

 **Healthwatch feedback [will be] used for the ongoing bus vaccination programme** 

The mobile bus provided flexibility as people did not have to pre-book and some people opportunistically saw it and were able to have their vaccination. People who visited the vaccination bus were able to have additional time to ask their questions and be reassured about having their vaccination.

Feedback from the communities we have visited has been valuable. We have been reassured by comments from people saying they would not have had their Covid vaccination if it was not for the dedicated bus visiting their area.

Healthwatch Wiltshire attending some of the venues has enabled more detailed feedback to be gathered and used for the ongoing bus vaccination programme.

Appendix



Share your experience of the Covid-19 vaccination and health, care and community services in Wiltshire.

Background

Healthwatch Wiltshire is the independent champion for people using health and care services in Wiltshire. We would like to hear your experiences of the Covid vaccination and of health, care and community services to help us identify how services are adapting and working. Please use this survey to share your experiences of services that you have used from January 2021 onwards.

The results will be collated and shared with those that plan and pay for health and care services. All responses are anonymous, and no individuals will be named. By completing this survey, you are agreeing to Healthwatch Wiltshire using your responses.

The Covid-19 Vaccination

1. Please tell us why you decided to be vaccinated against Covid-19?

(Please tick all that apply)

- To protect my friends and family from getting COVID-19
- To protect me against getting COVID-19
- To protect people who are vulnerable/at higher risk of getting COVID-19
- A family member/friend recommended it.
- I want to visit my older family members at home or in a care home and I need the vaccine to make sure it is safe for them.
- To help society get back to normal again.
- To help protect the NHS.
- It is the responsible thing to do.
- It will help the economy get going again.
- Other – Please say what:

.....

2. Is there anything that had previously prevented you, or worried you about having the vaccine?

3. What was it like getting the vaccine here today?

Using other health and care services

4. Which of the following services have you, or someone you care for, used from January 2021 onwards? (Please tick all that apply)

- Dentistry
- Hospital care e.g. inpatient care, outpatient clinics, accident and emergency
- GP services
- Mental health support
- Opticians
- Pharmacies
- Social care e.g. care homes, and home care
- Voluntary or community support services

Other (please specify):

We'd like to hear how these services worked for you. You can tell us about two different services.

Service 1

5. What is the name of the first service you, or someone you care for, used? (Please give detail e.g. name of GP Practice, or care agency or community group)

6. What was good about this service? (Please tell what worked well for you)

7. Is there anything you thought could have been improved? (Please tell us what didn't work so well for you.)

8. How easy was it to get the help and support that was needed? (Please tick box)

————— ————— ————— —————

Very Easy Fairly Easy OK Difficult Very difficult

9. How would you describe the quality of treatment or care you received?

————— ————— ————— —————

Very good Fairly good Average Poor Very poor

10. Is there anything else you would like to say about this service?

Service 2

**11. What is the name of the second service you, or someone you care for, used?
(Please give detail e.g. name of GP Practice, or care agency or community group)**

12. What was good about this service? (Please tell what worked well for you)

13. Is there anything you thought could have been improved? (Please tell us what didn't work so well for you.)

14. How easy was it to get the help and support that was needed? (Please tick box)

————— ————— ————— —————

Very Easy Fairly Easy OK Difficult Very difficult

15. How would you describe the quality of treatment or care you received?

————— ————— ————— —————

Very good Fairly good Average Poor Very poor

16. Is there anything else you would like to say about this service?

17. Please tell us about anything else that has supported your health, care and wellbeing during the coronavirus pandemic from August 2020 onwards and how this has helped you.(These might include people, other services, clubs, activities and hobbies)

Tell us a bit about you

By telling us more information about yourself, you will help us better understand how people's experiences may differ depending on their personal characteristics. However, if you do not wish to answer these questions you do not have to.

18. Your gender:

19. Your age:

20. Please tell us the town or village you live in?

21. How would you describe your ethnic group?

22. Do you consider yourself to have a health condition or disability?

- No
- Mental Health condition
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Learning Disability
- Physical or mobility disability
- Prefer not to say
- Other (Please specify)

23. Do you care for someone who needs extra support day to day?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

24. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please provide your email or postal address. Your details will be held securely and in compliance with data protection laws. They will only be used for the purposes of carrying out Healthwatch Wiltshire activity. Your details will not be shared with any other organisation. You may withdraw your consent to us holding your details at any time by emailing info@healthwatchchwiltshire.co.uk or calling 01225 434218.

healthwatch Wiltshire

Freepost RTZK-ZZZG-CCBX
Healthwatch Wiltshire
The Independent Living Centre
St. George's Road
Semington
Trowbridge
BA14 6JQ

www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

01225 434218

info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

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