

# Community health update

1 July 2022

## **Covid-19 update**

We have heard some concerns from some communities about variants of covid-19 circulating. One of these being the lambda variant. The public health team in Sheffield have advised that although lambda is a covid variant, it isn't circulating in the UK and there is very little information on it in the UK from UKHSA or WHO.

However, cases of covid are circulating at a high level now and a lot of people are being re-infected. There are people that are ill enough with the virus to be hospitalised. Therefore, it is important that people continue to wash their hands regularly, cough/sneeze into a tissue and throw it away and stay home if feeling ill.

Although it is no longer mandatory to wear a face mask or covering, doing so can reduce the risk of spreading the virus. The best protection against the virus is still the covid vaccine. There are still people in the high-risk categories that haven't had their vaccines yet. It's not too late to be vaccinated. People can find a walk-in vaccination clinic or book online [here](#).

We would be grateful if you could share this message with your communities.

## **Revamped community newsletter**

As regular covid updates and messaging continue to slow down, we still wanted to update and connect with our community groups and organisations across the city. In this revamped monthly newsletter, we want to shout about the great work of different organisations in each edition – showcasing the work done for healthcare and services during the pandemic.

But we want to hear from you! This newsletter is shaped and tailored to you, and we want to know how best cater to you and maintain relationships. What would you like to see in this newsletter that would best help you? Please let us know by emailing [sheccg.comms@nhs.net](mailto:sheccg.comms@nhs.net) – we'd love to hear from you.

## **Interpretation and translation contract**

Following what we heard from patients and advocates via community engagement we carried out just before the start of the pandemic, NHS Sheffield CCG and Sheffield City Council has appointed a new company to run spoken and non-spoken interpretation and

translation services, and British sign language interpretation, for GP practices and some other services in the city.

| YOU SAID, WE DID   |   |
|--|---|
| You said:  | We did:   |
| <p>Wanted all spoken interpretations to be face to face due to issues of confidentiality and knowing the interpreter</p> | <p>While it isn't possible for all interpretation to be face to face, as there aren't enough staff and it isn't an effective use of NHS money, we now have remote interpretation available in practice where GP or nurse will have the interpreter on screen so patients can see the linguist if they are in clinic face to face.</p> |
| <p>Concern over the quality of interpretation particularly medical terms</p>   | <p>We added to the contract that interpreters must not interpret for a family member or a person who is known to them personally.</p> <p>All linguists employed by DA Languages must be trained in medical and care terminology.</p>  |
| <p>Concern over lack of recognition for dialects when supplying interpreters</p>   | <p>Interpreters must disclose immediately, at the point of interpretation to the patient's accompanying professional, if having difficulties with medical terminology.</p>  |
| <p>Concern over lack of recognition for dialects when supplying interpreters</p>   | <p>DA Languages offer 450 languages including many different dialects.</p> <p>The contract says linguists must: Disclose immediately, at the point of interpretation to the client's accompanying professional, if having difficulties with dialect or medical terminology</p>  |
| <p>Standard of spoken Mandarin and Cantonese during interpreting sessions was viewed as poor.</p>                        | <p>Telephone difficult as phone lines were sometimes poor, particularly when the interpreter was making the call from a car</p> <p>All interpreters and translators working with DA Languages must meet the highest standard of qualifications.</p>   |

We took on board all the feedback in developing a new specification and following a process where a number of organisations submitted proposals on how they would deliver this, we appointed DA Languages as they were by far the best company to meet patients' and practices' needs.

DA Languages are a dedicated language services agency with over 20 years of experience delivering first-class translation and interpreting services. Providing expert support to both private and public sectors, covering 450 languages and dialects, DA Languages also provide services for the trusts in the city.

Thanks to all those people and community groups who helped us with this. We know it's taken a while to deliver a new and improved contract and appreciate your support and patience.

Please let your communities know that they can request an interpreter for their appointments with their GP practice. We will have some posters to share with you in the coming weeks.

Please get in touch with Lucy Ettridge, [lucy.ettridge@nhs.net](mailto:lucy.ettridge@nhs.net), if you have any questions.

### African Women's Health Group

Earlier in the year, Halima from the African Women's Health Group spoke at a CCG celebration event to talk about the difference they've made within their community.

Alongside us, Halima and her team used their 30 years' experience of working with and learning about how BAME single parents, families, refugees and asylum-seekers traumatised from fleeing war zones, family violence and abuse, now cope and survive on the margins of our city.

In her own words, Halima added: "This opportunity to work with the CCG for the first time allowed us to channel the voices of hard-to-reach women who's needs we have never truly been able to log and represent to mainstream bodies shaping strategies to address their needs. The fact that mainstream media and institutions have also finally acknowledged over the pandemic the extent of inequality of health, economic and wellbeing experienced by our service-users as some of Britain's most excluded residents, has helped us develop networks we've never had before.

"It's worth noting that we founded our organisation as a team of volunteers trying to cope with desperate women showing up in our kitchens at night and that our team of volunteers worked informally round the clock over our first decade until we were able to source funds for two small part-time salaries." Thanks to African Women's Health Group for everything they do.

### **ICB update**

As you're probably already aware, NHS Sheffield CCG has become part of the new exciting NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB).

NHS South Yorkshire ICB is now responsible for commissioning and funding of health and care services locally. Please visit the new [website](#) for information about the work of the ICB and details about how to contact us.

Although this might seem like a big change, we are determined to ensure that we continue to work with you, our brilliant community organisations, to deliver the best possible care to all demographics, areas, and communities across Sheffield. Your work is vital, essential, and incredibly important and we vow to continue working with you throughout the ICB transition.

### **Other info**

- Government [website](#)