

ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES/LIMITING HEALTH CONDITIONS

Introduction

This document presents summary findings for adults with disabilities/limiting health conditions across Wales, indicating where there are differences and particularities compared to overall results. For quantitative results, differences are significant at the 95% confidence level, meaning that there is only a 5% possibility that the difference has occurred by chance; a commonly accepted confidence level. All differences are statistically significant unless stated otherwise. There is a separate report showing results across groups. The title of the overall report is: 'Evaluation of information resources' (produced by BMG Research on behalf of PHW). 143 adults with disabilities took part in the quantitative survey and seven individuals with disabilities took part in a qualitative focus group. Fieldwork took place between December 2022 and February 2023. Further information about sampling and methodology can be found on the main report cited above.

Recommendations and key take outs for this group are marked in **bold**.

The disabilities/limiting conditions of survey participants are shown in the table below. Please note that the counts below add up to more than the total number of survey respondents (143) because some had more than one disability/limiting condition.

Type of disability/limiting condition	Number of survey respondents
A longstanding illness or disease	64
Mobility impairment or difficulty moving around	58
Mental health condition or disorder	58
Partial or total loss of hearing	14
Partial or total loss of vision	10
Learning difficulty or learning disability	10
Other communication difficulty	3
Severe physical disfigurement	3
Speech impediment or impairment	2
Other	9
Prefer not to say	1

The disabilities/limiting conditions of participants in the qualitative focus group are shown in the table below. Please note that the counts below add up to more than the total number of focus group participants (seven) because some had more than one disability/limiting condition.

Type of disability/limiting condition	Number of focus group participants
Autism	3
Ehlers Danlos	1
PE	1
PTSD	1
Broken back	1
Asthma	1
Visually impaired	1

The term 'adult with disabilities' has been used throughout to refer to adults with disabilities/limiting conditions.

Awareness of publicity about immunisation

In line with overall results, the vast majority of adults with disabilities (91%) say that they have seen or heard something about immunisations for people in the past 12 months. Adults with disabilities who had seen or heard information about vaccination say that it was mostly related to COVID-19 (81%) and flu (62%), as is the case across other groups.

Most adults with disabilities say that the information about vaccination that they have seen or heard in the past 12 months was in favour of vaccinations (82%) and only a small minority say that the information was against vaccination (3%). These results are in line with overall results.

Doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals are the most common channel for adults with disabilities to receive information about vaccination in the past 12 months, with 41% of adults with disabilities who have seen/heard information on vaccination saying that healthcare professionals are who they heard this information from. This proportion is higher than average (cf. 32% overall), likely reflecting the fact that adults with disabilities tend to have more frequent contact with healthcare professionals than other adults to manage their disabilities. Other channels mentioned more often than average by adults with disabilities to find out about vaccinations are: TVs in pharmacies/GP surgeries/hospitals (17%, compared to 11% overall) and magazines (8%, compared to 4% overall). In contrast, adults with disabilities are less likely than average to say that they have heard information about vaccinations on the radio (7%, compared to 12% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Recommended channels for reaching out to adults with disabilities: doctors/nurses/healthcare professionals and healthcare settings (TVs in pharmacy/GP surgeries/hospitals)**
- **Less effective channel for reaching out to adults with disabilities: radio.**

Just under a quarter (24%) of adults with disabilities say that they have seen or heard something in the past 12 months that would make them worried or concerned about having vaccinations, a proportion that is line with the average result (cf. 21% overall). This suggests that there is some need for 'myth-busting' style information resources about vaccinations among adults with disabilities. Insights from the qualitative focus group show that a majority of adults with disabilities have seen misinformation about vaccination on social media.

"About the COVID one, that it causes blood clots and men being sterile...". Adult with disabilities

"[About COVID vaccine] People think Bill Gates is putting microchips in them or something". Adult with disabilities

In relation to this, there was agreement among adults with disabilities who took part in the focus group that there is a need for people to be taught how to differentiate reliable information from unreliable information, and some would like to be able to ask questions about vaccination face-to-face.

"I don't know the capacity of PHW but actually teaching people how to be critical of the information they find would be very beneficial for health services". Adult with disabilities

"Community coffee mornings to have your questions answered in a safe space". Adult with disabilities

Key take out:

- Just under one in four adults with disabilities have seen or heard misinformation about vaccines, which suggests that some 'myth-busting' style information resources about vaccinations may be beneficial for this group.
- Adults with disabilities may have a preference for personal contact when it comes to getting answers about vaccinations/understanding why misinformation is wrong. As such, PHW should ensure that community leaders and healthcare professionals are well equipped with information so as to be able to answer questions from adults with disabilities.
- Some adults with disabilities who took part in the focus group would like PHW to provide guidance to people on how to distinguish unreliable sources of information from reliable ones to combat misinformation.

Awareness of vaccination programme

Awareness of the vaccination programme in Wales among adults with disabilities is generally in line with overall results.

The vaccines that adults with disabilities are most aware of are: COVID-19 (85%, compared to 84% overall), flu (74%, compared to 76% overall) and MMR (64%, compared to 63% overall).

The vaccines that adults with disabilities are least aware of are: MenACWY (24%, compared to 22% overall), Pneumococcal (PCV) vaccine (24%, compared to 29% overall) and the Rotavirus vaccine (22%, compared to 16% overall). While these results are mostly in line with overall results, awareness of the Rotavirus vaccine is higher than average among adults with disabilities.

Key take out:

- Awareness of the following vaccines could improve among adults with disabilities: MenACWY, Pneumococcal (PCV) and Rotavirus

Attitudes towards vaccinations

Views in relation to the severity of the diseases the Welsh vaccine programme protects from are generally in line with overall results, with at least 41% of adults with disabilities saying that all diseases are serious. The diseases seen as most serious by adults with disabilities are: Head and neck cancer (90%, compared to 92%), Septicaemia (Blood poisoning) (90%, compared to 91% overall) and Tuberculosis (89%, compared to 88% overall). Nonetheless, adults with disabilities are less likely than average to say that Hepatitis is serious (74%, compared to 81% overall) and more likely to say that this disease is not serious (16%, compared to 11% overall). In spite of this, as with the average result, Rotavirus is the disease that the Welsh vaccine protects from seen as least serious among adults with disabilities (41% say this disease is serious, compared to 45% overall).

Adults with disabilities are less likely than average to say that all vaccines are a lower risk to them than the diseases they protect from (66%, compared to 73% overall) and more likely to say that all immunisations/vaccinations in general are a higher risk to them than the diseases they protect from (6%, compared to 3% overall). COVID-19 is seen as the riskiest vaccine, in line with the average result (8% of adults with disabilities say that the COVID-19 vaccine is worse for them than the actual illness). Moreover, while the proportion of adults with disabilities who consider the Rotavirus vaccine worse than the actual disease is low, this group are more likely than average to say that the Rotavirus vaccine is worse than the actual disease (3%, compared to 1% overall).

General attitudes towards vaccinations are generally positive among adults with disabilities, in line with the average result: 87% think that vaccines work (cf. 86% overall), 85% think vaccines are safe (cf. 84% overall), 83% trust vaccines (cf. 83% overall), 83% agree getting vaccinated is the right thing to do for society (cf. 82% overall) and for themselves (cf. 82% overall), 80% agree that it is normal for people their age to get vaccinated (cf. 81% overall), and 78% agree that vaccinations are properly tested (cf. 79% overall). Nonetheless, in line with the average result, 46% of adults with disabilities agree that they are worried about side effects from vaccines (cf. 46% overall) and 34% say that they are concerned about the ingredients of vaccines (cf. 36% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Information resources for adults with disabilities should contain information about the severity of diseases to encourage vaccine uptake, particularly when it comes to Hepatitis and Rotavirus.**
- **Information resources for adults with disabilities should contain information about vaccine safety, particularly in relation to the COVID-19 and Rotavirus vaccines.**
- **Information resources for adults with disabilities should address concerns about side effects and vaccination ingredients.**

Access to information and decision-making

In line with the average result, most adults with disabilities say that they have had enough information to make an informed decision about whether or not to have each of the vaccinations they have been offered so far (86%, compared to 86% overall). Additionally, also in line with overall results, most adults with disabilities say that they know where to find information on vaccinations (85%, compared to 85% overall) and that they know how vaccinations work (80%, compared to 81% overall).

When it comes to the sources of information used to find out about vaccinations, the most common sources of information for adults with disabilities are: doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals (56%), and the NHS website (46%). These results are in line with the average result. Nonetheless, adults with disabilities are more likely than average to have used the following sources to find out about vaccinations: Pharmacists or someone else at pharmacies (18%, compared to 12% overall), social media (15%, compared to 10% overall), health visitors/ school nurses/ practice nurses/ midwives (12%, compared to 8% overall), TVs in pharmacies/GP surgeries/hospitals (10%, compared to 6% overall), magazines (8%, compared to 4% overall), and other (non-NHS) leaflets (8%, compared to 4% overall).

In line with average results, the least used channels to find out about vaccinations among adults with disabilities are: YouTube (7%), Snapchat (3%), and WhatsApp (2%).

Trust in information sources among adults with disabilities is generally in line with the average result, with trust being highest for healthcare professionals and healthcare related sources of information.

In terms of decision-making, 63% of adults with disabilities say that they automatically have all the immunisations when they are due/offered. 22% of adults with disabilities say that they normally have all the vaccines offered to them but they like to check information before having vaccinations and a further 10% say they weigh up the pros and cons of different immunisations before deciding whether to have them. These results are in line with the trends seen at a total level across service users.

Key take outs:

- **Three in 10 (32%) adults with disabilities say that they like to check information/weigh up pros and cons before deciding whether or not to have vaccinations. Information resources for this group, should, therefore, highlight the benefits of vaccinations to encourage uptake.**
- **Recommended channels for reaching out to adults with disabilities: healthcare professionals and settings, and social media**
- **Less effective channels for reaching out to adults with disabilities: Snapchat, WhatsApp and YouTube**

Vaccine uptake, barriers and motivations

Seven in 10 adults with disabilities say that they have had all the vaccinations offered to them so far (71%), in line with the total result.

In line with average results, protection of oneself is the most prominent motivation among adults with disabilities to get vaccinated. This theme was also captured via the qualitative focus groups:

"The wife of my friend didn't have the MMR vaccine ad she was left with a long-term disability... You can be against them but the jabs are there for a reason. They're there because millions have died over the centuries from these basic things [...] Jabs are preventative, they're important". Adult with disabilities

"I had COVID at Christmas the new strain and I was very ill... I don't know if there was a very bad strain going round where I'm based but it was just horrible. It's good I had a vaccine. If I hadn't had a vaccine, how bad would it have been really?" Adult with disabilities

Only a minority of adults with disabilities say that they have refused or delayed vaccinations: 16% say that they have refused one or more vaccines and 10% say that they have delayed one or more vaccines. These results are in line with average results.

The most prominent reason among adults with disabilities for refusing or delaying vaccinations is having been ill and recovering from that illness prior to having a vaccine, with this barrier being mentioned more often by adults with disabilities compared to other groups (25%, compared to 14% overall).

Key take outs:

- **Claimed vaccine uptake among adults with disabilities is in line with the average result, with protection of oneself being the most prominent motivation to get vaccinated. Information resources for this group should therefore draw on protection as a motivator to encourage vaccination uptake/draw attention to information resources.**
- **Being ill and recovering from the illness is seen as a bigger barrier to vaccine uptake among adults with disabilities compared to other groups. Information resources for adults with disabilities should explain why vaccines are important (despite the possibility of recovery without vaccines) to encourage vaccine uptake.**

Awareness and views of PHW publicity

Awareness of PHW publicity among adults with disabilities is in line with the average result (48%, compared to 41% overall). Awareness of the *Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau/Vaccination saves lives* logo is also in line with the average result (44%, compared to 39% overall).

GP surgeries (31%) and vaccination centres (21%) are the most common places where adults with disabilities have seen PHW publicity, in line with average results. While only a minority cite TV as a channel where they have or heard seen PHW publicity, adults with disabilities are more likely than average to say that they have seen or heard PHW publicity on TV (9%, compared to 4% overall). It is worth noting that while healthcare settings are the most common places where adults with disabilities have seen PHW publicity; when asked about the most effective channels to show information on vaccination at the qualitative focus group, healthcare setting were not mentioned, with a preference instead for TV, social media (TikTok and Twitter) and bus stops.

Views of PHW publicity are in line with average results, with 87% being satisfied with the materials overall, 88% being satisfied with the amount of information, 84% agreeing that the information is clear, 84% positively rating the design/layout, and 84% agreeing that the materials are relevant.

Further insights in relation to views of PHW publicity were provided in the qualitative focus group. In line with findings from other groups, there is a preference for simplified and concise information among adults with disabilities, with Easy Read formats being seen as helpful to simplify information. Images which clearly allow the target audience of information resources to identify themselves as such were also positively regarded:

"I think it covers everything but it seems to be a bit long". Adult with disabilities [Adult COVID and Flu leaflet]

"That's bang on, it's got the picture of a woman due to give birth who will need the information [...] it's not overwhelming". Adult with disabilities [Easy Read COVID Pregnancy Leaflet]

"I do find this one a lot easier than the others. I do have learning disabilities. This will actually draw me more than the other leaflets. It's less information in there. It's a simple leaflet and you've got the link if you want to see more". Adult with disabilities [Easy Read COVID Pregnancy Leaflet]

Interestingly, adults with disabilities who took part in the survey are no more likely than other groups to say that they would like information resources in accessible formats (27% of adults with disabilities say they would like resources in at least one accessible format, compared to 27% overall). Nonetheless, insights from the qualitative focus group with adults with disabilities show that the fact that resources are available in accessible formats is seen as positive:

"I think it's great they've got something in sign language. The more accessible the information is, the better". Adult with disabilities [Sign Language HPV leaflet]

Key take outs:

- **Information resources for adults with disabilities should be simple and concise (even more so than for other groups, with most adults with disabilities positively regarding the simplicity of Easy Read materials).**
- **As for other groups, information resources for adults with disabilities should clearly indicate the target audience.**
- **Recommended channels to reach adults with disabilities: TV, social media, bus stops.**