

---

# Have you had your flu jab?

06 October 2015

Chair Jane Ramsey and David Wherrett, acting chief executive, were some of the first staff to get the flu vaccination this year.

For the first three weeks of the campaign, staff can get their flu jab at a central location in the hospital with pop-up clinics around the campus as well as visits to workplaces.

Jane Ramsey said: "Getting the flu vaccine is something we can all do to protect ourselves, our patients and the hospital. I had the jab — it was quick and easy, and the best time to have it is now.

"Flu can be serious and I don't want staff to run that risk if by having a simple and quick vaccination they could protect themselves. Every member of staff is vital to the Trust, but perhaps more so in winter when services are under pressure.

"Having a hospital that is fit and ready to face the winter is really important for the patients who depend on us for their care."

People can catch flu — short for influenza — all year round but the infectious viral illness spread by coughs and sneezes is especially common in winter. Complications of flu mostly affect people in high-risk groups, such as the elderly, pregnant women and those who have a long-term medical condition or weakened immune system with these groups advised to get the flu jab.

The first cases of flu were detected by the influenza research centre at Addenbrooke's last week. Dr Chris Smith, consultant virologist at CUH, said it was very early to have cases of flu reported in the county. He said: "While there are flu cases every winter and it's a certainty, it doesn't normally come until late October or early November. Addenbrooke's has a much more streamlined process of testing for flu, with results returned in a matter of hours rather than days.

Chris said: "We've got a very good mechanism for picking up cases both in the hospital and in GP surgeries. If you can identify cases quickly you can do something about them.

"Within the last 10 years we've introduced a system which is much more streamlined. CUH's microbiology department can test samples and look for genetic material in the viruses which

can be done in hours rather than days. It means GPs can send us samples from people who may have flu within a day and we can work out the diagnosis.

”This means they can isolate them and vaccinate them. All these things are really useful to slow down the spread and stop it getting to the vulnerable groups, We don’t want flu in the hospital or in care homes.”