

Coronavirus Vaccination in Devon

Briefing #7 – 19 February 2021

Key messages

- From this week, people who are 65 years and over will be able to book an appointment through the national booking system or will be contacted by their GP
- People aged 16-64 with underlying health conditions will be contacted by their GP practice. This is a large group of people and practices are urging their patients in this group **not to contact them** about an appointment.
- **342,397 people in Devon** received a first vaccine dose between 8 December and 14 February. It is estimated that at least 95% of over-70s in Devon have been vaccinated.
- [Figures](#) released at the weekend showed that across the UK, the NHS had vaccinated 15 million of the most vulnerable people, in line with the deadline set by the Government.
- If you are 70 or over, on the Shielded Patients List, or a frontline health and social care worker, it's not too late to come forward.
- Vaccines are the way out of this pandemic. Vaccines are the best way to protect people from coronavirus and will save thousands of lives. It is essential that everyone continues to stay at home if possible whether they have had the vaccine or not, to protect the NHS and save lives.

Vaccinating priority groups 1-4

- [JCVI Groups 1-4](#) are residents and staff in care homes, the over-70s, frontline health and care staff, and people who are clinically extremely vulnerable.
- [Figures](#) released at the weekend showed that across the UK, the NHS had vaccinated 15 million of the most vulnerable people, in line with the deadline set by the Government.
- This achievement belongs to the tens of thousands of frontline NHS staff, the volunteers, the warehouse operatives, delivery drivers and many more, who have all played their part to ensure that everyone in the most at-risk groups has now been offered this life-saving protection.
- The programme is a huge logistical challenge that required months of planning but also great agility.
- This would be a massive achievement in normal times, but to do so at the same time as the NHS has been dealing with the winter wave of infections which saw more than 100,000 patients with COVID-19 admitted to hospital last month alone is remarkable.
- Nationally, while the NHS has now given the vital first dose to the vast majority of those who, combined, account for 88% of all deaths from coronavirus complications, we remain determined to vaccinate more people as fast as supplies allow, while also needing to ensure people get their second dose.

Vaccinating priority groups 5 and 6

- [People aged 65 and over and those who are clinically vulnerable \(JCVI priority groups 5 and 6\)](#), together with an [expanded group](#) of clinically extremely vulnerable people, are now in line to receive the life-saving jab.
- **People aged 65 and over** (group 5) are invited to book a vaccination using the national booking service at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or call 119 (free, 7am-11pm, seven days a week) to choose from large scale vaccination centres or selected local pharmacy services. For people who are unable to travel to a large site, or who would prefer to be vaccinated by their local GP, they don't need to do anything - their practice will contact them directly to arrange an appointment.
- In this phase, GPs have been asked to offer jabs to those over the age of 65 and **people with underlying health conditions** that make them clinically vulnerable (group 6) – such as diabetes and respiratory, heart, kidney and liver disease.
- This is a **large group** of people and practices are urging their patients in this group **not to contact them about an appointment**. GP practices hold data about each of their patients who fall into these groups and will contact them directly to arrange an appointment.
- People with certain underlying health conditions are more vulnerable to illnesses and face an increased risk of severe illness or death from Coronavirus. For notes on how the JCVI defines clinically vulnerable people, see the list in [this article](#).
- NHS staff continue to do an incredible job to deliver what it is the largest vaccination programme in our history, at the same time as dealing with high levels of Covid-19 hospital patients, but we need the public to play their part too:
 - unless you are over 70 or on the Shielded Patient List, don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you when it is the right time
 - when we do contact you, attend your booked appointments at exactly the time you're asked to, so that we can avoid queues in this cold weather;
 - and whether you have had your vaccine or not, continue to follow all the guidance in place to control the virus and save lives.

Vaccination data for Devon

- **342,397 people in Devon** received a first vaccine dose between 8 December and 14 February, [vaccination data published by NHS England and NHS Improvement](#) shows, broken down as follows:

Age group	Number of first doses given	Approx % of age group received first dose*
80+	78,039	Estimated to be at least 95% for people aged 70 and above [#]
75-79	57,413	
70-74	73,108	
Under 70	133,837	17%

* Based on number of first doses given as a proportion of the 2019 ONS population estimates. Data sourced from NHS England and Improvement.

[#] Due to population growth since 2019, in some cases the tables show the number of vaccines given as higher than the 2019 population figures used. Using the data provided, the percentage of over-70s in Devon who have received a first dose is 97.5%.

[cont]

Vaccinations in care homes

- Preparations continue to begin second doses in care homes with a webinar taking place on 25 February for care homes and GPs.
- Nearly all older people's care homes have had visits and the last few homes are being visited.

Vaccinations for unpaid carers

- Unpaid carers will also be offered the chance to get vaccinated if they meet the national criteria set out by the Joint Committee for Vaccinations and Immunisations.
- Unpaid carers should wait to be called to book an appointment.
- Further details on arrangements and criteria are expected next week.


Vaccinating inpatients in hospitals

- Devon's acute hospitals are vaccinating inpatients who are eligible under the JCVI guidelines using the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, which is easier to administer at bedsides.
- Trusts have a process to check whether eligible inpatients have already had the vaccination.
- This should help allay worries people might have about missing a vaccination appointment while in hospital. Equally, eligible patients can book with their GP or the national booking service when discharged.

Vaccinations in North Devon

- The vaccination site at Barnstaple Leisure Centre is administering thousands of doses each week.
- Like all GP practices in Devon, the practices in North Devon and Torridge are offering vaccinations to the people aged 65 and over, as well as those who are clinically vulnerable with underlying health conditions. They are contacting patients directly to invite them.
- People who are 65 or over can choose to book directly with the pharmacy site at Westward Ho! on the national booking system.
- GP practices in North Devon have already held a number of day clinics at other practice locations to help those who cannot travel. Further work on roving models continues.
- Vaccination of inpatients is taking place at North Devon District Hospital (see below) and vaccinations will be given to inpatients at South Molton Community Hospital from next week.


Children's nursery workers

- The vast majority of people working in school and early years settings are not classed as a frontline health or social care worker in the guidance published by Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI).
 - To qualify under this criteria people need to be providing face-to-face care or support to children or adults who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and therefore likely to become seriously ill or need to go to hospital if they get COVID-19.
 - In most cases people who are eligible (those who provide face-to-face care or support children or adults who are extremely vulnerable) should be contacted directly by their employer and be given a letter to say they are eligible.
 - Vaccination centres in Devon are being reminded of this guidance.
- 

Avoid vaccine scams

- Frontline healthcare workers and community-based social care workers in Local people have reported being the target of scams since the vaccination programme.
- Devon GP Dr Trevor Avis has issued the following reminder: *Please be cautious of potential scams and remember the most important message – the NHS will never ask you for your bank details. No one will show up at your home to vaccinate you without having contacted first. They will be wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (such as a mask and apron) and they will have ID to prove who they are.*
- The BBC Asian Network has created some content on vaccines scams and made it available on social media; containing videos in [Urdu](#), [Sylheti](#), [Punjabi](#), [Tamil](#) and [Gujarati](#) for Twitter, [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). You can also find these on the [BBC news website](#).

Other important information

- Frontline healthcare workers and community-based social care workers in priority group 2 [can now book](#) their vaccination appointments in a vaccination centre or community pharmacy through the national booking service until 28 February.
 - Don't just turn up to a vaccination centre – make an appointment if you are eligible.
 - As with all vaccinations, people attending for a Coronavirus vaccination do not have a choice over which vaccine they receive. Both the Pfizer and Oxford vaccines have been approved because they pass the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) tests on safety and efficacy, so people should be assured that whatever vaccine they get will be highly effective and protect them from Coronavirus. Local vaccination centres rely on the national supply chain and don't have a say on what they receive.
 - People who have already had COVID and those who are suffering from 'Long COVID' if they are in a JCVI priority group. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has decided that getting vaccinated is just as important for those who have already had COVID as it is for those who haven't, including those who have mild residual symptoms. Where people are suffering significant ongoing complications from COVID they should discuss whether or not to have a vaccine now with a clinician. If you've had COVID, or been in hospital with COVID, you will need to leave four weeks before having your vaccination.
 - Opening hours at all vaccination centres are flexed up and down in line with the supply of the vaccine. Supplies nationwide remain limited and are being distributed fairly across the UK to ensure that the most vulnerable are immunised first. As soon as supplies are received in Devon, they go in people's arms.
 - The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is effective against the COVID-19 variants currently dominant in the UK. In terms of other variants, even where a vaccine has reduced efficacy in preventing infection there may still be protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and death. This is key to protecting our NHS, and research is ongoing.
- 

How local people can play their part

1. **Stay at home:** The best thing the public can do to help the NHS is to stay at home as much as possible:
 - Every time you leave your home you risk coming into contact with an infected person or touching a surface or door handle or petrol pump which may be contaminated. Any one of these interactions could be a crucial link in the chain of transmission which could lead to someone becoming seriously ill or dying from COVID-19.
 - People in Devon have really helped by following the government guidance seriously. If everyone does as they are asked, our hospitals and other services will cope.
2. **When you get your call from the NHS for your vaccine, please take it up:**
 - The NHS will get in touch with you when it's your turn to be vaccinated.
 - Please attend your appointment.
 - You will not be offered a choice of which vaccination you receive – both approved vaccines are rigorously tested, safe and effective.
 - Please help us by not calling your local hospital or GP practice about getting the vaccine – the NHS will contact you when it's your turn.
 - Blocking phonelines with queries stops other people getting healthcare and diverts staff time, meaning the vaccine rollout will be slower.
3. **You may still transmit Covid after you have been vaccinated.**
 - Having the vaccine should protect you from becoming seriously ill from COVID-19, but you may still be a risk to others if you are exposed.
 - It is crucial that you continue to observe the 'stay at home' and 'hands, face, space' advice until advised that it is no longer necessary.
4. **Follow the government guidance: 'Hands, Face, Space'.**
5. **Use the NHS in the best way**
 - Think 111 first; or choose the right service for your needs: self-care, pharmacists, local minor injury services or your GP.

Further information and vaccination data

[Vaccination data published by NHS England and NHS Improvement](#) includes information by NHS system.

For more information on vaccination and the health and care response to COVID-19, click on www.togetherfordevon.uk/priorities/coronavirus-covid-19 or the [NHS website](#).

ENDS

