

Coronavirus Vaccination in Devon

Briefing #2 – 15 January 2021

Key messages

- Thousands more doses of the Oxford Astra-Zeneca vaccine have been received from the national supply chain and given to priority groups in Devon this week.
- GP practices are prioritising use of the Oxford vaccine for use in older persons' care homes as it is easier to transport and store.
- The NHS has been asked to ensure everyone in care homes has been vaccinated by 24 January and it is our ambition to achieve this.
- A range of measures is being developed, including additional roving teams, to bring vaccination facilities closer to people in places where the location of the local vaccination centre makes it difficult for people to access it - but in the meantime, local people are strongly encouraged to do all they reasonably can to take up the offer of a vaccination appointment if they are offered one.
- The NHS in Devon has been under immense pressure to maintain services, treat COVID-19 patients and roll out the biggest vaccination programme in history.
- There is no doubt that vaccination is the single most important thing we can do to beat COVID-19 and help our hospitals over the coming weeks.
- We have already seen nationally that those who have been vaccinated have not needed hospitalisation.
- The NHS has a clear vaccine delivery plan and will contact local people when it's their turn to get the vaccine.
- People attending vaccination appointments should not go early to reduce the possibility of waiting outside in wintry weather.

Progress on vaccinations

- The focus now is on ensuring that we deliver to more people in priority cohorts and sooner, especially groups 1 and 2 with all those to group 4 offered a vaccine by the middle of February.
- The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised prioritising delivery of the first vaccine dose as this is highly likely to have a greater public health impact in the short term and reduce the number of preventable deaths from COVID-19.
- The COVID-19 Actuaries Response Group has conducted a review into the logic of the UK's vaccine priority ordering. This document shows the number needed to vaccinate in care homes is 20 vaccinations to prevent one death, compared with other groups in priority 1-4 of between 160 and 600 vaccinations to prevent one death.
- Anyone who has had the vaccine must continue to follow government guidance on social distancing and wearing a mask, as immunity takes weeks to develop.
- Both the Pfizer and Oxford vaccines have been through rigorous tests and approval processes to prove they are safe and effective. Therefore, patients

will not have a choice about the vaccine they receive when they are called for an appointment.

- Good progress is being made to vaccinate health and care staff. Thousands of staff members have already been vaccinated. Staff are being made aware of how to access a vaccine.
- The NHS was given clear guidance to stop providing **second doses** at the three-week interval after 4 January. Everyone will still receive their second dose and this will be within 12 weeks of their first, in line with national guidance.

COVID-19 vaccine: effectiveness timeline

Pfizer/Biontech vaccine



Oxford/Astrazeneca vaccine



How local people can play their part – updated

1. Stay at home

- The best thing they can do to help the NHS is 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.

2. When you get your call from the NHS for your vaccine, please take it up.

- The NHS will get in touch when it's your turn to be vaccinated. You must attend your appointment.
- Don't make things harder for the NHS by calling your local hospital or GP practice about getting the vaccine – the NHS will contact you when it's your turn. Blocking phonedlines with queries stops other people getting healthcare and diverts staff time, meaning the vaccine rollout will be slower.

3. Follow the government guidance:

- 'Hands, Face, Space'.
- Act as if you have COVID, even after you've been vaccinated

4. 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.

Vaccinations in care homes

- On 13 January, NHS England and NHS Improvement [wrote to the NHS](#) saying all GP-led local vaccination services are to administer the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to care home residents and staff by 24 January (instead of the original 31 January target).

- Care home residents and staff were set as the highest priority group by the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.
- GP-led and hospital vaccination services have made good progress in vaccinating staff and residents in care homes in Devon.

Increasing access to vaccination centres

- GP practices are working in groups to set up the local vaccination centres.
- The GP-led vaccination sites have to operate at scale and at pace. They are complex to set up and there are stringent quality assurance and safety requirements that each site needs to meet, which means that not every GP practice is suitable.
- Most centres in Devon are a convenient distance from where patients live but we recognise that in some locations, the distance is longer than we would want.
- **A range of measures is being developed, including additional roving teams, to bring vaccination facilities closer to people in more rural parts of the county, but in the meantime, local people who are offered a vaccination appointment are strongly encouraged to do all they reasonably can to attend it.**
- We also know that various organisations, including NHS Responders, the national volunteers, are actively working to recruit more volunteer drivers to help people make the journey.

Three main ways the vaccine is being delivered in Devon...

1. All four of the county's main **hospitals** – in Plymouth, Exeter, Torquay and Barnstaple – are giving the vaccination to priority groups in line with national guidance
2. **GP practices** are working together in groups to set up local vaccination centres. Across the county, 20 centres are now in operation, serving all of Devon practices.
3. GP-led facilities are delivering the vaccine to residents and staff in **care homes**

... and plans for two more types of vaccination provision

- On 11 January, NHS England and NHS Improvement, announced the next phase of the COVID-19 vaccination programme with the first seven sites nationwide operating the **Vaccination Centre** model. Ashton Gate stadium in Bristol was one of these sites.
- The announcement made clear that dozens more will be coming on stream across the country and in Devon, two are planned.
- Work is progressing well and as soon as assurance processes are complete, further details will be released.
- NHS England also announced that the first six **community pharmacy sites** for vaccination go live nationwide this week to test the model before further rollout.
- Nationally, 200 community pharmacies are due to come online over the next fortnight as more vaccine supplies come on stream by the end of the month
- Stores which are capable of delivering large volumes while allowing for social distancing are initially being selected to give the best geographical spread
- Anyone in the highest risk groups who does not want to travel there or to a large-scale vaccination centre can wait to be called forward by their local GP or hospital services by 15 February



- Further details of plans in Devon will be available in due course.
- Both of these types of service will be bookable through a national service. They will add extra capacity to the vaccination programme – alongside hospital hubs and GP-led local services - so that the NHS can protect all those who would benefit most as quickly as possible.

Recruiting volunteers

- Volunteers are being sought to be part of the biggest vaccination programme in NHS history
- The NHS needs volunteer marshals and stewards to support work to vaccinate local people
- Anyone interested can contact 'Our Plymouth', who are coordinating volunteers to help at Devon vaccination sites, to register interest and find out more at <https://ourplymouth.co.uk/volunteer-opportunity/covid-19-vaccination-program-volunteers-needed/>

GP-led local vaccination centres

- Four more GP-led vaccination centres will begin vaccinating on Friday and Saturday (15 and 16 January).
- This brings the total to **20** now established and will mean all the planned GP-led centres will have been established to offer patients from all practices in the county the vaccination.
- To minimise wastage, local vaccination sites are using unfilled appointments to vaccinate frontline healthcare workers, including pharmacy, dental and optometry teams.

A full list of the sites and the practices they serve will be updated on 16 January on the [Together for Devon website](#).

Further information and vaccination data

National data on vaccination is available [here](#) and will soon be available daily.

More local vaccination information will be released by NHS England and NHS Improvement in due course – details will follow.

For more information on vaccination and the health and care response to COVID-19, click on www.togetherfordevon.uk/priorities/coronavirus-covid-19

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