

UPDATE

Vaccination Programme

Recommendation: That the Committee note this report.

1. Coronavirus Vaccination in Devon

- 1.1. Thousands more doses of the Oxford Astra-Zeneca vaccine have been received from the national supply chain and given to priority groups in Devon.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. 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.

2. Progress on vaccinations

- 2.1. Currently there are three main ways the vaccine is being delivered in Devon-
 - i. 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
 - ii. **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.
 - iii. GP-led facilities are delivering the vaccine to residents and staff in **care homes**
- 2.2. On 11 January 2021, 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.
- 2.3. 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.

- 2.4. 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.
- 2.5. Both of these types of service will be bookable through a national booking portal. 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
- 2.6. Anyone in the highest risk groups who does not want to travel to pharmacy or to a large-scale vaccination centre can wait to be called forward by their local GP or hospital services by 15 February.
- 2.7. The system focus 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.
- 2.8. 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.
- 2.9. Further details of plans in Devon will be available in due course, highlighted in weekly briefings to members.

3. Vaccinations in care homes

- 3.1. 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).
- 3.2. 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.

4. Increasing access to vaccination centres

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. 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.

4.3. **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.**

4.4. 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.

5. Recruiting volunteers

5.1. 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.

5.2. 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/>

6. Vaccine Timing and Efficacy

6.1. 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.

6.2. 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.

6.3. 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.

6.4. 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.

6.5. 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.

How local people can play their part

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 phonelines 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.**

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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