

CLMC Bulletin 451 – 16/02/21

COVID-19 vaccination programme

NHSEI have sent this [letter](#) to all practices outlining the next stage of the vaccination programme. It also contains information about an additional payment of £10 on top of the IoS fee for vaccinations given to all those in residential settings, such as care homes for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems, or hostel/hotel accommodation for the homeless, where it would not be possible for these patients to attend vaccination sites.

Whilst they are encouraging PCN-led sites to focus on cohort 6, and cohort 5 (those aged 65-69) will shortly start receiving an invitation from the national booking service (NBS) to attend a vaccination centre or community pharmacy setting, PCN sites may still vaccinate patients in this cohort and be paid for doing so should a patient request an appointment.

This NHS [paper](#) outlines details of the vaccine allocations for information.

[Eligible patients \(70 or over\) who have not yet heard from their practice or received a letter and have not yet taken up a vaccine offer](#), were invited to contact the [online booking service](#), call 119 or contact their GP practice directly. This national communication aims to catch patients who may have been missed by or not responded to previous communications.

While the focus continues to be to vaccinate JCVI groups 1-4 this week if this is complete vaccination sites are permitted to offer appointments to people in cohort 5 and 6 instead of risking wastage.

Practices have also been asked to contact their clinically extremely vulnerable patients, who are shielding, to ensure they have been offered the vaccine.

NENC ICS Vaccination Board - cohorts 5 & 6

The NENC ICS Vaccination Board discussed the confusion that has been caused by the multiple messages around Covid vaccination campaign given the national, regional and local messages. The Board recommended GPs do proactive message to patients where possible to counteract any confusion over national booking letter.

The regional strategic engagement and communications team pulled together the text below that practices can utilise on websites or bulletins and a short SMS message to sign post to the fuller text. Please feel free to utilise, top and tail as needed or change pronouns.

Who is being vaccinated next?

The NHS is prioritising vaccinating those experts have agreed will benefit from having it the most. From Monday 15th February, people in cohorts 5 and 6 are being invited by the NHS to have their vaccine.

These are:

- *Cohort 5 - all those 65 years of age and over*
- *Cohort 6 - all individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality*

Local GP vaccination services are focusing initially on the clinically vulnerable from cohort 6 because of the relationship between general practice and those with long term conditions, and continuity of care.

People may also receive a letter from the National Booking Service inviting them to book at a Large Vaccination Centre. In the North East this is Newcastle's Centre for Life and the NHS Nightingale Hospital North East, Sunderland with a third Large Vaccination Centre location opening in Durham opening soon.

People may wish to wait a little while until they receive an invitation from their own GP practice as this is likely to be closer to where they live and might be more convenient depending on individual circumstances.

We know people are very keen to have their vaccine but remember it might be more convenient to wait for your local vaccination service run by GPs to get in touch.

People should not be worried about travelling to a large vaccination centre, everyone in the priority cohorts who wants to have a vaccination can do so from their local GP vaccination service.

If you want to wait to be called by your local GP vaccination service then don't respond to the national booking service invitation.

The way the cohorts are being invited may result in a younger person with an underlying health condition being offered an appointment before someone in the over 65 year age group. This doesn't mean you have been missed so please wait until the NHS contacts you.

In the meantime the message remains the same - the NHS will be in contact with you when the time is right for you to be invited for your vaccine. Please do not contact the NHS, please wait for the NHS to contact you.

SMS

Over 65s & adults with conditions are vaccinated next. You can use national booking service or wait to be invited to local GP service. Do not telephone surgery. FIND OUT MORE ADD LINK TO WEBSITE

Vaccination of frontline health and social care workers

Protecting frontline health and social care workers from COVID-19 remains a priority, something that the BMA has been lobbying on, and NHSE/I has [written to commissioners](#) this week asking for reassurance that the offer of a vaccination frontline health and social care workers, as priority cohorts, has been fulfilled.

Practices are encouraged to liaise with local system partners to ensure that any staff who have not yet been offered a vaccine are offered one, including any locum GPs they are in regular contact with, as soon as practically possible.

[Social care workers](#) are now able to, for a limited period until 28 February, to self-book a vaccination at a vaccination centre or community pharmacy led local vaccination service [online](#)

Transport of Astra Zeneca vaccine to GP practices within the PCN Grouping

The NHSE/I has confirmed that the [SPS SOP](#) (Standard Operating Procedure) has been updated to make clear that the Astra Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine does not need to be used immediately after being transported within the PCN grouping. The SOP states:

1.1.2. The vaccine should be used as soon as it is received or immediately put in a refrigerator to be administered as soon as possible thereafter. *This has been defined as meaning within 24 hours or over the following days.*

Freeing up practices to support COVID-19 vaccination

NHSE/I has written to practices and commissioners providing further measures [on freeing up practices to support COVID-19 vaccinations](#), following their [letter of 7 January 2021](#). The letter sets out the arrangements for additional funding for PCN clinical directors, and income protection arrangements for the Minor Surgery DES and QOF (Quality and Outcomes Framework).

Green Book update in relation to Covid-19

An [update to the green book chapter on COVID -19](#) has been published, please use this version.

Vaccine hesitancy

Surveys have shown stark differences by ethnic group in attitudes to COVID vaccines, and a quarter of younger women fear it would affect fertility. The BMA has published [guidance and resources](#) on how to communicate with different groups about the vaccine.

The British Fertility Society and Association of Reproductive and Clinical Scientists has also published some [COVID-19 Vaccines FAQs](#) to help address some of the vaccine hesitancy relating to fertility.

Locally, we are also seeing some variation in terms of uptake based on deprivation. It could be that some of our populations in the most deprived areas are struggling to access the relevant national information or national booking systems which are predominantly online or the large vaccination sites which require a lot of travel. This is being considered regionally but practice may wish to give additional consideration to this group.

Read the GPC [guidance on the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) which includes information about what is expected of practices and the support available to enable practices to prioritise vaccine delivery.

Vaccine dose data

Over [13.5 million people in the UK](#) have received their first dose, and almost 525,000 have received their second dose. The latest [data report](#) show that as of 12 February a total of 12.3 million doses in total have been given in England.

In the 10 weeks since vaccinations against coronavirus began in the UK, a first dose has been given to more than 11.8 million people in England, more than 715,900 people in Wales, more than 1.1 million in Scotland and more than 373,400 in Northern Ireland. This is an incredible achievement and thank you to all those that have made this possible.

February 2021 Screening and Immunisation bulletin- North East and North Cumbria

Please see the February 2021 [bulletin](#) from the Regional PHE and NHSE screening and immunisation team .

Thank you from the Prime Minister

In his [daily statement on the Coronavirus](#) on 10 February, the Prime Minister thanking all those involved in delivering COVID vaccines in local GP sites, such as Alwoodley Medical Centre in Leeds:

“And I want to thank all of those involved for their heroic efforts: the doctors, nurses, military medics, local authorities, transport planners, warehouse operatives, delivery drivers, countless volunteers, often working through the night or even digging out snowed-in vaccination centres, like the community effort at Alwoodley Medical Centre in Leeds last Saturday so GPs, nurses and their teams could deliver 1,200 doses that day.”

Watch the clip [here](#) (24mins 46 seconds in)

Government White Paper on NHS reform and Integrated Care Systems

The Government has now published [‘Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all’](#) – its white paper on new plans to reform the NHS, including proposals to make ICSs statutory and make major changes to way services are procured.

Chaand Nagpaul, Chair of BMA council, has released a [strong statement on the white paper](#), stressing the need for clinicians to be at the heart of any changes. The BMA will be producing a summary of the white paper for members shortly. In January, the [BMA submitted a comprehensive response](#) to NHS England’s legislative proposals, on which the Government’s plans have been based, highlighting the importance of ensuring proper clinical, GP, and LMC representation. CLMC also submitted a lengthy response.

The proposals set out that GPs will be one of the few required members of the ICS leadership, and that there will be a lot of flexibility around how place level (former CCG) working is organised and works, so there is a key role for LMCs to engage in that to help shape it.

Assessments carried out for detention under the mental health to take place in person

Following a [ruling in case](#) brought by Devon Partnership NHS Trust against the Secretary of State, NHS England has issued directions to all mental health providers [not to carry out any assessments for the purposes of determining whether or not an individual should be detained under the act remotely](#) (by any medium). This applies to all members of a medical team involved in the decision and should be considered as the overriding guidance until further notice.

Amendments to European Health Insurance Cards (EHICs) and S1 forms (UK) Regulations

There have been some minor amendments to the GMS and PMS regulations relating to European Health Insurance Cards (EHICs) and S1 forms, to allow for reciprocal healthcare arrangements with EU member states.

The change has been made via the [Reciprocal and Cross-Border Healthcare \(Amendment etc.\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#) which support the process of EU exit. The amendments are within the contract regulations that govern *information relating to overseas visitors* (GMS regulation 74F and PMS regulation 67F) – where, if patients choose to provide EHIC, S1 or PRC details on registration, then GPs must forward those details to NHS Digital or NHS BSA.

The new wording allows for the possibility that, on registration, patients may in future submit other (unnamed) documents which are equivalent to EHICs or S1s, which could be required as part of a “listed healthcare arrangement” between the UK and an EU/EEA country (or the EU). However, at present, the UK government has not agreed any listed healthcare arrangements which establish EHIC or S1 equivalent documents, so for now there is no possibility of patients submitting them.

GP Assistants wave 2 of the GP Assistants Programme

This programme is being led by the West Yorkshire Primary Care Training hub on behalf of the whole North East and Yorkshire region and Robyn Knapping provided the following information.

The GP Assistant role, also known as Medical Assistants support Doctors in the smooth running of their surgery by handling the routine administration and some basic clinical duties enabling the GP to focus on the patient. Last year's pilot showed the role of GP Assistant did reduce the GP's work load significantly (detailed findings in this information [pack](#))

After the successful pilot run last year in the North East, Cumbria and Yorkshire, Health Education England has commissioned The West Yorkshire Training Hub another 40 places.

More detailed information about the pilot and how to apply for a place is contained the information pack. If you are interested in applying then please complete this application [form](#) and return it to wy.traininghub@nhs.net by Friday 18th March 2021. In summary the key points for the pilot are as follows:

- *The practice frees up an existing employee (likely to suit an administrator or possibly an HCA) for 1 day per week for 6 months to complete the accredited competency framework – backfill funding for this is provided.*
- *The practice commits to provide a named GP mentor to guide the learner through the framework and sign them off as competent – there is funding towards this but it will need an element of commitment from the GP for success.*
- *A defined competency framework is accessed via a City and Guilds on line e-portfolio to track learning and confirm progress*

More information about the GP assistant role can be found here: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/gp-assistant>

This role will not suit all practices and the way in which you work, but if it is of interest and you can see how this new and innovative way of managing patients may suit your practice team and help support efficient GP working and thereby improve the patient care you are able to provide to your community then please give it some consideration!

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Robyn on Robyn.Knapping@bradford.nhs.uk

Contract agreement 2021/22 webinar

Following the recent [contract agreement for 2021/22](#), we will be holding two contract virtual roadshows/webinars on the following dates:

24th February – 19.30-20.30

25th February – 12.30-13.30

Register [here](#). A recording of the webinar will be available on the BMA website after the event.

GP Retention Scheme Webinar

A [webinar on the GP Retention Scheme](#) will be taking place on *Thursday 25 February* from 7pm – 8.15pm. GPC will be looking at how the GP Retention Scheme works for both employees and employers, tackling some of the common misconceptions about the scheme and hearing from GPs who are currently on the scheme. Speakers include:

Samira Anane, chair (GP and GPC policy lead for Education, training and workforce)
Naureen Bhatti (Health Education England)
Katie Bramall-Stainer (Retained GP)
Jonathan Rial (Retained GP)
Paula Wright (Sessional GPs Committee)
Tim Morton (GPC)

The session will be of interest to GPs who are considering applying to join the scheme or who would like to know more about it, GP employers and practice managers who would be interested in employing a retained GP and existing Retained GPs who have questions about the scheme or would like to hear some perspectives from other retained GPs and employers.

The webinar will be recorded and will be made available to view on the BMA website during the following week. There will be a Q&A session at the end and you can submit any questions in advance to cscott@bma.org.uk. Click [here](#) to sign up

Mental health and wellbeing – looking after you and your practice team

Leadership Support Circles (National Autumn Offer 2020-2021)

Leadership Support Circles are part of the National Health and Wellbeing response to Covid19 to support the wellbeing of #OurNHSPeople. They provide evidence-based guidance and tools in a series of short, themed and interactive online sessions based on 10 principles for leading compassionately. Leadership Support Circles are a reflective space for managers at all levels to come together in a multi-disciplinary setting to share their experiences and be heard. Further information and how to register click the link [here](#)

GP appraisal leads and GP tutors offer of telephone support conversations remain for any GP who feels they would like to talk through any aspect of their professional/personal life that has been affected by Covid. To organise a telephone support conversation, either with the appraisal lead or with a GP tutor, please contact the appraisal team, or email di.jelley@nhs.net

Crisis Coaching & Mentoring: [Coaching and mentoring sessions are available now](#) for all NHS and Health and Social Care leaders. Delivered by The Centre for Army Leadership and Meyler Campbell Coaching, these sessions are designed to support with the huge pressure on the ability of the NHS to deliver safe, high-quality care, sharpen focus on meeting the core needs of staff, ensuring wellbeing and sustained motivation to deal with this rapidly changing situation. The intervention will give leaders an understanding of crisis leadership that goes beyond what is necessary, and focused on engagement and motivation through Covid19. Further information and how to register [see link here](#)

CLMC continue to [offer wellbeing services via Validium](#) for **ALL working in general practice** within Tees (including locums). We understand that a number of staff have accessed this confidential service and it has been well received.

The BMA's report on the [mental health and wellbeing of the medical workforce](#) which sets out ten recommendations to be addressed to protect staff during the pandemic and in the future. The BMA continues to offer [wellbeing services](#) and **confidential 24/7 counselling and peer support** for all doctors and medical students, as well as their partners and dependents, on 0330 123 1245. For hard copies of the Wellbeing poster, please email wellbeingsupport@bma.org.uk

There is also a wealth of NHSE provided [support available](#) to you and your team including a **wellbeing support helpline, a 24/7 text alternative, [peer to peer, team and personal resilience support](#), free mindfulness apps and the [#LookingAfterYouToo coaching offer](#).**

BMA COVID-19 guidance

The BMA [COVID-19 toolkit for GPs and practices](#) includes updates in the COVID-19 vaccination programme section and protecting clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) patients section. There is also guidance on the following topics:

- [Model terms of engagement for a GP providing temporary COVID-19 services](#)
- [Terms and conditions for sessional GPs](#)
- [Risk assessments](#)

GPC GP Bulletin

Read the latest GP bulletin [here](#)