

Coronavirus Vaccination in Devon

Briefing #3 – 22 January 2021

Key messages

- **All** Devon's GP practices are now offering vaccinations to patients in priority order, as set by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, after the final four GP-led centres opened last weekend.
- Patients will begin being vaccinated at **two new large-scale NHS Vaccination Centres** in Devon from Tuesday (26 January) – the sites are Home Park in Plymouth and Westpoint Exeter.
- The Government announced on Monday that vaccination centres could begin calling people in their 70s for vaccination if they have finished vaccinating people aged 80 and over. GP-led centres in Devon will vaccinate their over 80s before moving to their over-70s. Different centres are at different stages in vaccinating their over-80s due to differences in local demographics, capacity to vaccinate and the date the centres started operating.
- Weekly data showing the number of vaccinations by NHS system – in our case all of Devon, Plymouth and Torbay – are now available. The first data were published on 21 January and show that **86,349 people have received their first jab in the Devon CCG area**.
- A model for the delivery of the vaccine to housebound older people is being rapidly developed now that the portability of the Oxford vaccine has been confirmed, allowing it to be transported and administered in people's homes. Initially, over-80s will be prioritised and GPs will be working with local community nursing teams to put in place arrangements.
- We are making very significant progress towards the national vaccination target for all older people's care homes by 24 January.
- Vaccine supply in Devon is adequate. In coming days, the county will take delivery of tens of thousands more vaccines, and as soon as they get here, they are going straight in arms.
- Until the virus is under control, even those who have received a vaccine still need to follow social distancing guidance.
- A range of measures is being developed, including additional roving teams and day clinics, to bring vaccination facilities closer to people in more rural parts of the county.

Large-scale vaccination centres

- The NHS in Devon is making final preparations ready to welcome the first patients to two new Vaccination Centres from 26 January.
- The Mayflower Grandstand at **Plymouth Argyle Football Club's Home Park Stadium**, and exhibition and event venue **Westpoint Exeter** will be hosting their first booked appointments to people aged 80 and above from Tuesday.
- The sites mean thousands more vaccinations will be given every week in Devon and provide local people have a wider choice of options when they receive their invitation for an appointment.
- In the South West, Ashton Gate stadium in Bristol and Taunton Racecourse are up and running.

- People aged 80 or over in some parts of Devon have received an invitation to book a vaccination at the Taunton Racecourse centre, which opened on Monday.
- The booking system is run nationally, not by the NHS in Devon, and some areas of the county are within relatively easy range of the centre.
- This is good news for patients as it gives them more ways of getting vaccinated. It is their choice and patients can opt to either take up the offer to attend a large vaccination centre, or wait for their GP to contact them to have it more locally - it is up to them, but they should not attend both.
- If a patient receives a letter from a large-scale Vaccination Centre, it does not mean they have been taken off their GP list. Patients do not need to let their GP practice know if they get vaccinated at a large-scale centre.

Permission to vaccinate people in their 70s

- On Monday, the Government [wrote to the NHS](#) to confirm a more flexible approach to offering vaccinations to people in their 70s and people who are clinically extremely vulnerable ([cohorts 3 and 4](#)).
- The letter makes it clear that vaccination centres should continue to prioritise cohorts 1 and 2, who are residents in a care home for older adults and their carers, people aged 80 and over and frontline health and social care workers.
- Each GP practice and primary care network (PCN) in Devon continues to work through their patient lists according to these priorities, which are set by the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations.
- This means practices are vaccinating their over 80s before moving to their over-70s. Different centres are at different stages in vaccinating their over-80s because:
 - Some areas have a higher proportion of over-80s than other areas
 - Some vaccination sites started before others, meaning they have had longer to work through their list of patients
 - Capacity to vaccinate varies slightly between sites – this is influenced by vaccine supply, the size of the site and the number of staff available
- In light of the above, over-80s who hear of people in their 70s being vaccinated, either in Devon or further afield, need not worry that they have been missed. Practices are working through their own patient lists in priority order, as fast and as safely as possible, and will contact everyone in turn.
- Nationally, vaccine allocations for week commencing 25 January will be based on numbers of people remaining in the top priority cohorts in each area, taking account of allocations in week commencing 18 January. Some areas have made significant progress against the highest priority cohorts and in a number of cases have completed vaccinations for the majority of their 75 years and over population. To ensure vaccine uptake among those in the first four priority cohorts, vaccine will be allocated accordingly for the week commencing 25 January.

Vaccination data for Devon

- As of 21 January, [vaccination data published by NHS England and NHS Improvement](#) includes information for local NHS systems.
- In Devon, this is for the Devon Clinical Commissioning Group area, which includes the area covered by Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council.



- It shows that 86,349 people have received their first jab in the NHS Devon CCG area. The proportion of people aged over 80 in Devon is higher than the regional and national average.

How local people can play their part – updated

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.

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).
- Devon is making very significant progress towards the national vaccination target for all older people's care homes by 24 January. Every day, vaccination teams from the GP-led vaccination centres are going into care homes to vaccinate residents and staff.
- You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine. But it is possible that some people may catch COVID-19 shortly before being vaccinated and before developing any symptoms.
- It takes around 14 days to build immunity following vaccination. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.
- Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short term, and not everyone gets them. Common side effects include



having a painful or tender arm, tiredness, headache, general aches, or mild flu-like symptoms.

How local people are getting their vaccination 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 and are contacting patients in priority order. For a full list of sites, [click here](#).
3. GP-led facilities are delivering the vaccine to residents and staff in **care homes**
4. Large-scale **vaccination centres** (see above).

People attending vaccination appointments should not go early, to reduce the possibility of waiting outside in wintry weather.

... with pharmacy sites due to start soon

- NHS England is running the roll-out of community pharmacy sites offering vaccinations.
- In other parts of the country, high street pharmacies including a Boots and a Superdrug began delivering the jabs last week and another 65 pharmacy sites are joining the programme in coming days, with more to come.
- Further details on participating pharmacies in Devon will follow soon.
- Appointments at pharmacy sites are **bookable through a national service for people in priority groups who have received an invitation to book**

Recruiting volunteers

- 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/>

Other important information

- NHS staff nationwide are doing an incredible job to deliver what it is the largest vaccination programme in our history, at the same time as dealing with a new admission for Covid-19 every 30 seconds.
- 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.
- Nationwide, nearly 5 million people have already received their first dose.
- To avoid wastage, vaccination sites have been ensuring unfilled appointments are used to vaccinate health and social care staff wherever possible, using measures such as reserve lists of people they can call on at short notice. Vaccination beyond the [current cohorts \(1-4\)](#) can be [offered](#) if there is a risk that current vaccine stock will become unviable if not used.
- This is the biggest vaccination programme the NHS has ever undertaken. It is a huge challenge, and not everything will always go perfectly.

Further information and vaccination data

As of yesterday (21 January), [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

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