

Coronavirus Vaccination in Devon

Briefing #6 – 12 February 2021

Key messages

- The NHS in Devon is on target to have vaccinated all the eligible people in [priority groups 1-4](#) who wanted to take up a vaccine, by Sunday (February 14), in line with the Government's ambition.
- There is still time for people in Devon aged over 70, and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable, to book a coronavirus vaccination this weekend – details below
- An average of about 12,000 vaccinations are currently being given every day in Devon.
- GPs and their teams, local authorities and volunteers have worked tirelessly together to vaccinate people in the top four priority groups in recent weeks
- Thanks to their magnificent and selfless efforts in protecting vulnerable people, hundreds of thousands of people now rest safer from the threat of COVID-19.
- **271,603 people in Devon** received a first vaccine dose between 8 December and 7 February.

Progress on vaccinating priority groups

- There is still time for people in Devon aged over 70, and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable ([priority groups 1-4](#)), to book a coronavirus vaccination in the next few days, as below:
- **Use the national booking service at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination (anytime) or call 119 (free, 7am-11pm, seven days a week).**
 - The national booking service allows people to choose a time slot and location that suits them. **Appointments are currently available** and you don't need to have received a letter to use the service, as long as you are in an eligible group. The service offers appointments at large vaccination centres or the selected community pharmacies that are offering the jab:
 - Large vaccination centres at Westpoint Exeter and Home Park, Plymouth (or Taunton Racecourse in Somerset and the Royal Cornwall Showground, Wadebridge, if more convenient)
 - Pharmacy sites: Plymouth Cricket Ground, Devonport, run by Devonport Pharmacy; Lewis Pharmacy, Exeter Road, Exmouth; Westward Ho! Baptist Church, run by Arnolds Pharmacy, Westward Ho!
- **From today (12 February) until Sunday (14 February), people in JCVI groups 1-4 who haven't had the vaccine, can call a temporary phone number hosted by NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group on behalf of local vaccination services:**
 - The number is for people in JCVI groups 1-4 only - over-70s and people who have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable (which means they are on the shielding list)
 - You must live in Devon (although you do not have to be registered with a GP)

- **The number is 01626 204920. It will be open 9am-5pm on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 12-14 February ONLY. Calls are charged at your normal rates.**
- If all lines are busy, leave a voice message and you will be called back
- Call-handlers will work with you and the local vaccination centres and do their best to arrange an appointment at a vaccination centre convenient for you within the next few days wherever possible.
- **People can still choose to contact their practice directly if they wish, or wait for their GP to contact them.**
- Vaccination appointments will still be available to people in groups 1-4 after the weekend.
- More information on arrangements for the next groups in the JCVI priority list is expected on Monday, 15 February.
- On 8 February, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care [encouraged](#) anyone over 70 who has not yet been vaccinated to get in touch with the NHS about booking an appointment. However, it is anticipated that when the programme moves to the next cohort, over-65s be asked not to contact their GP to book a jab. For the moment this only applies to people aged 70 and over and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable. When the time comes to start vaccinating other priority groups, this will be by invitation only so that we can manage the supplies of vaccines available in the fairest possible way.
- NHS partners in Devon are working to make sure **supplies** are used for priority groups, while ensuring wastage is kept to an absolute minimum.
- 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.
- There are plans in place for Trusts to vaccinate **inpatients** who are eligible under the JCVI guidelines using the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, which is easier to administer at bedsides. Trusts will 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.
- Local and national teams are making follow up phone calls and sending reminder letters to people who have previously been contacted but not yet booked an appointment.
- Don't just turn up to a vaccination centre – make an appointment if you are eligible.

Vaccination data for Devon

- **271,603 people in Devon** received a first vaccine dose between 8 December and 7 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+	76,193	95.8%
75-79	54,074	98.3%
70-74	42,785	53.9%
Under 70 (includes health and care staff)	98,551	12.6%

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

Vaccinations in care homes

- Nearly all older people's care homes have had visits and the last few homes now have dates for vaccinations after outbreaks in those homes .
- Processes are in place to vaccinate any staff and residents who may have missed the first vaccination visits.
- This has been a truly collaborative effort across the whole health and care system in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.
- Planning is now underway for the second vaccination round for the older people's care homes.

Other important information

- 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. All vaccination sites are continuing to receive deliveries as planned.
- Thanks to the generosity of local people in donating their time, the NHS currently has enough volunteers for the large-scale vaccination centres at Exeter and Plymouth - thank you to everyone who has stepped forward. NHS partners are working together to put in place processes to support GP-led sites which need more volunteers - details to follow in due course.
- NHS England and NHS Improvement has [produced videos](#) of clinicians recording messages in some of the most **commonly spoken languages** to help ensure messages about the importance of getting a COVID-19 vaccine are clear for all.

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](#).

The vaccines are safe and effective – useful general information

- The [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine](#) is safe and effective. It is the best way to protect your residents, your family and yourself from coronavirus.
- Both the [Pfizer](#) and [Oxford](#) vaccines have been through rigorous tests and approval processes to prove they are safe and effective.
- They do not contain any animal products or egg.
- You won't be able to choose which vaccine to have. Both are safe and effective, so it's important to have the one you are offered.

How the vaccine is given

- The COVID-19 vaccine is given as an injection into the upper arm in two doses.
- The first dose provides good protection from coronavirus, with the second giving longer lasting protection. The second dose is being given at about 12 weeks after the first.



- It takes a week or two for your body to build up some protection from the first dose of vaccine so it's important to continue to follow social distancing guidance even after you've been vaccinated.

Side effects

- Like all vaccines, both the Pfizer and the Oxford coronavirus vaccinations can cause [side effects](#), although not everybody gets them.
- Thousands of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine so far, and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported.
- Most side effects are mild and should not last longer than a week. They include a sore arm where the needle went in; feeling tired; a headache; feeling achy; feeling or being sick. You can take painkillers, such as paracetamol, if you need to.

Allergic reactions

- Tell healthcare staff before you are vaccinated if you've ever had a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).
- You should not have the vaccine if you've ever had a serious allergic reaction to:
 - a previous vaccine
 - a previous dose of the same COVID-19 vaccine
 - some medicines, household products or cosmetics
- Serious allergic reactions are rare. If you do have a reaction to the vaccine, it usually happens in minutes. Staff giving the vaccine are trained to deal with allergic reactions and treat them immediately

Pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility

- There's no evidence the COVID-19 vaccines are unsafe if you're pregnant.
- Care home staff who are pregnant are recommended to speak to a healthcare professional before having the vaccination.
- You do not need to avoid pregnancy after vaccination.
- The vaccine cannot give you or your baby COVID-19, so you can have the COVID-19 vaccine if you're breastfeeding.
- [Read the latest COVID-19 vaccine advice if you're pregnant, may get pregnant or are breastfeeding on GOV.UK](#)
- The Royal College of Midwives and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) issued a [joint statement](#) to confirm there is “no evidence to suggest that Covid-19 vaccines will affect fertility”.
- The professional bodies have also produced an [information sheet to help eligible pregnant women make an informed choice](#), as well as a [question and answer document](#) on COVID-19 vaccination, pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Several **videos** on the subject from leading national clinicians are also available:
 - [COVID-19 vaccines: can they affect my fertility?](#) - Dr. Gayatri Amirthalingam, consultant in the National Immunisation team at Public Health England
 - [COVID-19 vaccine: guide for women of childbearing age or are planning a pregnancy](#) - Dr. Gayatri Amirthalingam, consultant in the National Immunisation team at Public Health England
 - [COVID-19 vaccination: guide for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and pregnant healthcare staff](#) - Dr Shriti Pattani, GP and the occupational health lead for London North West University Healthcare



- [COVID-19 vaccine: can the mRNA inside the vaccine change people's DNA or affect their fertility?](#) - Dr. Kevin Brown, consultant medical virologist at Public Health England

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