



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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1. Spring Booster - Eligibility and timing – NHSE Update

Eligible people (adults aged 75 years and over, residents in a care home for older adults, and individuals aged 12 years and over who are immunosuppressed) should not be turned away if they arrive as either a walk-in or via a booked appointment at a vaccine site provided, they have reached the 91 days from prior booster dose.

As per the Green Book, the preference is for vaccination at around six months to maximise efficacy, however, if an individual attends either as a walk-in or via an NBS booked appointment they should receive their vaccination if they have reached 91 days from their prior booster dose. They should not be turned away.

2. Spring Booster – Amendment to UKHSA ‘Guide to the spring booster for those aged 75 years and older residents in care homes’ – NHSE Update

A previously published version of [UKHSA’s ‘A guide to the spring booster for those aged 75 years and older residents in care homes’](#) has been amended to clarify that those who were severely immunosuppressed (as defined by JCVI) when they received their 1st and 2nd vaccination dose, receive a third primary dose before they receive a booster dose.

[We issued operational guidance on 21 March](#) to clinicians and vaccination teams with actions required, as well as a reminder of guidance on doses and eligibility for immunosuppressed and severely immunosuppressed people aged 12 years and above.



3. Vaccination Data Resolution Service posters now available – NHSE update

We are encouraging people registered with a GP practice in England to check that their vaccination records are up to date, and to contact the Vaccination Data Resolution Service (VDRS) or the Overseas Vaccines Validation Service if their record isn't showing correctly.

It's important that records are accurate so the NHS can invite the right people at the right time, if vaccinations are due. It might also mean a hassle-free journey for those planning to use an NHS COVID Pass to travel abroad.

[VDRS posters are now available for use in public areas in GP practices and pharmacies](#). They direct people to check their COVID-19 vaccination record and call 119 to inform the NHS if one or more of their vaccinations are incorrect or missing. If your workplace receives questions on the VDRS service, you may wish to download the poster and display it on a digital screen, or alternatively print out an A4 version to post on your noticeboards.

4. Pharmaceutical Provision West Midlands - Easter/May & Jubilee Bank Holiday 2022

Please find attached details of pharmaceutical provision across the West Midlands for Easter/May and Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday period 2022, for your information, which has kindly been shared by the Pharmaceutical Medical Committee.

Pharmacy premises must exhibit a notice, based on information provided by NHS England, at times when the premises are not open. Where practicable the notice should be legible from outside the pharmacy premises, specifying the addresses of other NHS pharmacies and the days on which and times at which drugs and appliances may be obtained from those addresses (The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services Regulations 2013 Schedule 4, Part 3 paragraph 23 (4) b).

The pharmacy opening hours across the Midlands region can also be accessed by patients and healthcare professionals at www.england.nhs.uk/midlands/nhs-england-and-nhs-improvement-midlands-work/bank-holiday-pharmacy-opening-times/ which will be available shortly.

Pharmacy contractors are expected to have updated their own NHS UK and DoS profiles. If DoS Profile has not been updated, pharmacies will need to request emergency profiling changes by the DoS team by phoning 0300 0200 363.

Please note If your pharmacy is not on the attached lists or some of the dates are blank, then either you are closed on the bank holiday dates or we have not been notified of your opening hours.

5. Patient access to medical records program - Update from GPC

Please note: The access to records program is **NOT ready to be launched in April** and there is no go live date. GPC are in discussions with NHSE/X teams to ensure the safe launch of this program.



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The LMC will keep you updated with this when further information is received.

6. National Data Opt-out Service - Update from GPC

Please Note: The National Data Opt-out service **will not be going live on 31st March 2022.**

The deadline for health and care organisations to comply with the national data opt-out policy is now 31 July 2022. It has been extended to enable health and care organisations to focus their resources on the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Use our [compliance implementation guide](#) to find out what you need to do within your organisation. Further information is available from this link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/services/national-data-opt-out/compliance-with-the-national-data-opt-out>

7. Living with COVID-19 – testing update from NHSEI

From 1 April, in line with UKHSA advice, the following updated arrangements for staff and patient testing will apply.

Patient facing staff should continue to test twice weekly when asymptomatic. LAMP testing (saliva tests) will no longer be available, but LFD tests for patient facing staff will continue to be available through the gov.uk portal.

All symptomatic staff should test using LFDs and continue to follow the current return to work guidance. In a change to testing policy, staff who are household contacts of a positive COVID-19 case will no longer be required to have a PCR test in order to return to work. Symptomatic staff can continue to access LFDs via the gov.uk portal.

Staff who are household contacts of a positive COVID-19 case will now be able to continue to work as normal if they remain asymptomatic and continue to test twice weekly. They will no longer be required to have a PCR test in order to return to work.

Although the general public will not be offered COVID-19 tests routinely if symptomatic, there may be some instances where a clinician will want to offer a COVID-19 test as part of a diagnostic pathway to support clinical decisions. In these cases, patients should be directed to the gov.uk website to order their tests, where they will be asked to confirm that their clinician has requested this.

High risk patients in the community identified for COVID-19 MAB / Antiviral treatment will continue to access tests from UKHSA – this will be communicated separately. Further information can be found in [our letter dated 30 March 2022](#).

8. BMA response to Government's changes to the COVID-19 testing for health and social care staff

Commenting on changes to COVID-19 testing, announced by the Department for Health and Social Care, the BMA Chair of Council, Dr Chaand Nagpaul said:

“Testing healthcare workers twice a week, whether or not they have symptoms, makes absolute sense. It is something the BMA has always argued for, and it is a relief that Ministers have abandoned plans to scrap testing for healthcare workers altogether at the end of this week. However, restricting



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testing to those in patient-facing roles ignores the reality of working life. Staff in patient-facing roles or otherwise, are not segregated, and therefore can easily spread infection between each other. By artificially making this distinction we also risk pushing up staff absence rates which are already impacting on services and patient care.

“We are also concerned that the guidance states free testing can occur when there is a ‘high prevalence’ of infection – but there is no clarity in the statement on the definition of a ‘high prevalence’. This needs to be made clear as soon as possible, given the current high infection rates across society. Although some clinical extremely vulnerable people will have access to free testing, this does not include elderly people, and it does not include provisions for those who come into contact with vulnerable people. Providing free testing for some clinically extremely vulnerable misses the point that, in order to protect them from infection, their close contacts need to have access to tests. Removing this preventative measure takes away people’s ability to act responsibly by testing themselves before they become a close contact.

“There is no provision for free tests based on affordability and this risks creating a two-tier society between those who can afford to pay for tests, and those who cannot, once again deepening the fault lines of inequality exposed by the last two years of the pandemic.

“The Government think that by ending free testing they will save money. However, at a time when hospitalisation rates are increasing daily, with over 17,000 people in hospital today compared to 11,000 a month ago, not providing free testing for all healthcare staff – and limiting access to free testing across society – will increase the spread of infection and add further stress to the NHS. The Government should do the right thing, making sure the funding for free testing does not come from existing NHS and social care budgets.”

9. Information sharing session - Clinical Safety and Practice Websites – LMC Session

As part of the Digital Primary Care Programme, Birmingham and Solihull Digital Team are hosting an online Lunch Time session with both Birmingham and Solihull LMC’s on **Friday 6th May, between 12pm-1pm**. There is no need to register for this event, please just click on the joining instructions below on the day.

The event will be split into two sections: **Clinical Safety** - The importance and the responsibilities of Clinical Safety for a Practice/PCN – each practice/PCN is required to complete a DCB 0160 for each digital piece of software they use, this session goes into this in more detail and the support the CCG provides. Presented by: Dr Damian Williams and Kate Thomas

Practice Websites - What the Digital Team are doing to support practices with their websites. The CCG currently have several support packages and tools in place for practice websites, these will be discussed in more details – Website, LIS, Digital Journey Planner and National Cyber Security Centre. Presented by: Kate Thomas

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+44 20 7660 6782,,537660676#](#) United Kingdom, London

Phone Conference ID: 537 660 676#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)



10. Introduction to the Primary Care Network Additional Roles and the Reimbursement Scheme in 2022/2023 5th April 2022

Birmingham and Solihull ICS and the BSol Training Hub would like to invite you to attend this event to understand the benefits that the ARRS roles can bring to your PCNs and Practices, and have the opportunity to ask further questions:

Meet the dedicated Training Hub Co-ordinators, Learning and Development Team and Role Ambassadors for:

- Physician's Associates
- Pharmacists
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Paramedics
- First Contact Practitioners
- Practice Nurses
- Health Care Assistants
- Personalised Care Roles (Health and Wellbeing Coach, Social Prescribing Link Worker, Care Coordinators).

Your locality Training Hub Coordinators will also be available to offer guidance and information on how we can help you identify, recruit, and develop staff in these new roles.

The session will run drop-in sessions between **11:00 and 15:00 on Tuesday 5th April 2022**. If you would like to attend, please click [here](#) and we will send you the time slots, agenda, and meeting link. If there are roles that you know you will be specifically interested in, please let us know in your email.

We hope to follow this event with a face-to-face session later in Quarter One, where you can meet individuals who have worked in these roles withing BSol and hear some real-life case studies about the different that these roles can make both to our patients and to Primary Care.

11. Rebuild General Practice: General Practice is in Crisis. Patient Safety is at Risk.

GPs and their teams faced an extremely challenging time during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, general practice in England continues to face a worsening workforce crisis. BMA research published last year showed that the NHS has lost nearly 2,000 full-time equivalent GPs in England since 2015.

In response, working in partnership, the BMA and GPDF have launched the [Rebuild General Practice](#) campaign with a clear call to action: to rebuild general practice or put patient safety at increasing risk.

This builds on last year's *Support Your Surgery* campaign, which saw nearly 30,000 GPs and patients join our call for the urgent funding needed for GP practices across England. The Government still haven't met their commitments to general practice, which is why we will continue to campaign for change, and act on your behalf.

To launch the campaign, Dr Kieran Sharrock gave a [keynote speech](#) at an event held this morning at 11 Cavendish Square in London. He was joined by Jeremy Hunt MP, Dr Brian McGregor, and Dr Rachel



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Ward in speaking to an audience of GPs, stakeholders and media to outline the impact on patients that the workforce crisis is having.

The campaign has also released the findings of a survey of GPs in England, Wales, and Scotland, which showed that:

- Nearly nine in 10 GPs fear patients aren't always safe at their surgeries

- Seven out of 10 GPs feel the risk to 'patient safety' is increasing

- GPs cited staff shortages and too little time for appointments as the main factors putting patients at risk

- 86% of GPs stated they didn't have enough time with patients

- 77% of GPs said GP shortages were putting patient safety at risk

You can find a copy of the press release [here](#) as well as extensive coverage across this morning's news including in the [Guardian](#), [Daily Mirror](#) and [Pulse](#) amongst others.

The *Rebuild General Practice* campaign was created with GPs for GPs. Your support to amplify these messages will help us to raise the alarm and ultimately secure a better working environment for both GPs and patients. It is vital that we build as much for support for the campaign as possible. You can find more information on the campaign website – www.rebuildgp.co.uk

You can also follow and share content, news, and updates on the campaign Twitter account -- <https://twitter.com/rebuildgp> For more campaign materials and information on how to get involved in the campaign contact your LMC in your area.

Please note our office contact times remain 10:00-16:00 and any queries on the day should be directed to birmingham.lmc@nhs.net. If you do call the offices, then please leave a message as this will be transferred direct to our emails and we can respond quicker.

Please note that the LMC are unable to accept calls or hold communications with patients, we are GP representatives, and we would respectfully ask that Practices do not advise patients to contact us. Could we also remind Practices that any copies of patient related correspondence MUST be anonymised as the LMC cannot accept patient identifiable data.

Helpful Links:

BMA Website: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices>

GOVERNMENT Website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for recent and upcoming changes, guidance & support.

NHS ENGLAND Website: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/>