



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER – 4th May 2021

EXTRAORDINARY COVID-19 UPDATE

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1. Invite to 40-year-olds

As of Friday, people aged 40 and over are eligible to book an appointment via the [NHS national booking service](#) to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Practice groups can invite these patients for their first vaccination if they have sufficient supplies alongside continuing with second vaccinations to those patients who are due to receive it.

NHSE state that this phased approach is being taken in line with supply as set out in the [operational note issued on 23 April 2021](#). Please also continue with the approach set out to vaccinate cohorts 1-9 including following the [detailed process that is in place](#) for people aged 29 and under who have yet to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, and/ or who have contraindications, and/ or are pregnant, to enable them to access the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.

For LVS PCN sites this is either by accessing excess Pfizer supply from 2nd dose clinics or requesting additional supply.

Please note that cohort 11 is not yet open



2. GP appointment figures and workload pressures

The latest [GP appointment figures](#) in England were published last week which show that practices delivered almost 5 million more appointments in March than they did the month before, and nearly 3 million more than they did in the same month two years ago, long before the onset of the pandemic.

These figures underline the immense efforts that practices are going to providing care to their communities and the intense workload pressures that staff are under as we continue to respond to the pandemic alongside patients' wider health needs.

GPs and their teams are consistently telling us they are busier now than they have ever been, and this data – which does not include a large proportion of the vaccine programme undertaken by practices, nor a vast amount of other daily tasks – backs this up.

Every day, more than a million patients in England had an appointment with their practices, whether this was the significant proportion seen face-to-face, on the phone, or via video call. With too few GPs and practice nurses, and a promise in 2015 of 5,000 extra family doctors within five years actually delivering a loss of almost 1,500 by September last year, individual doctors are taking on more and more as demand rises and the workforce diminishes.

So, for GPs and many others in practices working 11 or 12-hour days, often leading heroic efforts to protect as many people as possible in their communities against a disease that has had such a devastating impact on all of us, it is heart-breaking and completely demoralising to hear accusations that general practice is not open and that patients are not being seen.

This narrative, categorically proven wrong by this data, is extremely damaging at a time when morale is already reaching rock bottom and many GPs, practice managers and others practice staff are reaching breaking point. With the ongoing use of telephone triage advised by NHSE/I, changes put in place for the protection of staff and patients alike due to the limits of the size of most practice reception areas - general practice is open, and staff need support, patience and understanding as they work harder than ever before. Read Dr Vautrey's full statement [here](#)

3. Utilising the NHS Test and Trace Self-isolation Service Hub

Please [click here](#) to find details on how you can keep your workplace safe and support colleagues, patients and visitors with help from the NHS Test and Trace Self-Isolation Service Hub.

4. BMA COVID-19 guidance

For more information and guidance regarding the latest changes, including the arrangements for the second phase of the COVID vaccination programme and what practices need to do please see the updated [BMA guidance page about the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#).



5. **Coronavirus - Got Symptoms? Do not enter this building poster**

The '[Do not enter this building](#)' if you have symptoms of coronavirus poster has been updated and is available to download. This poster is for use at entrances to NHS facilities including hospitals, GP practices, pharmacies, and vaccination centres to provide information about the symptoms of coronavirus and to direct patients that have symptoms or a positive test result in the last 10 days not to enter the building.

6. **New photographs show the people behind the national vaccination effort**

To mark the start of World Immunisation Week 2021, a series of photographs documenting the vaccination programme has been published by the Government. The photo montage comes as a new campaign begins urging under-50s to get the jab. [Find out more here](#)

7. **Second dose of COVID vaccination for housebound patients – Solihull PCN Practices**

Patients at Solihull PCN practices, who are newly housebound, should still be referred to UHB Community via the usual route.

However, if the patient has previously been given the Pfizer vaccine, UHB Community will need [this form](#) completing by the referring GP. This will allow them to administer the AZ vaccine as a second dose.

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 can not accept patient identifiable data.

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 as we are currently remote working so would be grateful if all contact were made via the nhs.net email.



Helpful Links:

BMA COVID-19: toolkit for GPs and GP practices <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/gp-practices/covid-19-toolkit-for-gps-and-gp-practices> Comprehensive guidance for GPs, partners, and practice managers to manage employment and contractual issues and service provision during the coronavirus pandemic.

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

NHS ENGLAND: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/implementing-phase-3-of-the-nhs-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>