

8th January 2021

COVID-19 vaccination programme in Dorset

Dear Patient,

Welcome to this update on the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Dorset. We hope you find this update helpful. We will share more updates as information becomes available. Here's a video of The Story So Far:

<https://youtu.be/Sb0tlqpV9o0>

Members across the health and care system in Dorset have been working extremely hard at immense speed over the last few weeks in order to be able to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination to local people. This is the biggest vaccination programme that the NHS has ever undertaken. A team across the Dorset health and care system is working together to coordinate and deliver the programme locally. GPs, nurses, pharmacists, support and logistical staff, other primary care staff, and those in the wider health and social care system have been working round the clock.

Dorset follows national JCVI guidance

They are delivering the vaccine in line with the national guidance issued by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) which means those people who are most at risk will be invited first.

See link here to the national advice:

[Priority groups for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination: advice from the JCVI, 30 December 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination)

The NHS will get in touch when it's your turn to be vaccinated

The NHS know that there is intense interest in the vaccination process and people want to know when they will get theirs. They are asking people to please be patient and not contact their GP practice or hospital to request a vaccine. They would be very grateful if you can share this message to help support the programme.

Dorset roll out in care settings

Rapid increase in vaccination sites across Dorset

More locations have added to the previous sites that have started vaccinating people across Dorset, with more on the way.

There are now 14 vaccination sites across Dorset, since the vaccine was first delivered at Dorset's initial hospital hub, Dorset County Hospital, on December 8th, 2020 - the first day of the vaccination programme in the country.

COVID-19 Vaccination sites in Dorset (correct as of 08/01/2021)

- Dorset County Hospital, Dorchester
- Royal Bournemouth Hospital - part of University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust
- Sturminster Newton Medical Centre (The Vale Network)
- The Digby Hall, Sherborne (Sherborne Area Network)
- Whitecliff Surgery, Blandford (Blandford Primary Care Network)
- St Albans Medical Centre, East Way, Bournemouth (Central Bournemouth Primary Care Network)
- Beaufort Road Practice, Bournemouth (Bournemouth East Collaborative Network)
- Westbourne Medical Centre, Bournemouth, (Poole Bay & Bournemouth Primary Care Network)
- Stour Surgery (Christchurch Primary Care Network)
- Talbot Medical Centre (North Bournemouth Primary Care Network)
- Heatherview Medical Centre (Shore Medical Primary Care Network)
- Saint Leonard's Hospital (Wimborne & Ferndown Primary Care Network and Crane Valley Primary Care Network)
- Weymouth Community Hospital (Weymouth & Portland Primary Care Network)
- Bridport Medical Centre (Jurassic Coast Primary Care Network)

In addition, Poole Hospital, part of University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust, is set to go live from the week of Jan 11.

More sites in addition to those above will be coming soon as part of the roll-out of local vaccination services.

Meanwhile, across the country, vaccination centres treating large numbers of patients in sporting venues and conference centres will subsequently stand up across the country when further supplies of vaccine become available. Details will be updated as new sites and services go live.

Recruitment – how you can help

To deliver the vaccine, it is needed to recruit people into new roles. We have been running a campaign to recruit to the programme and you may have seen advertising out on social media. We'd like to ask for help in spreading the word about the campaign. Do you know someone that would like to be part of this rewarding and significant programme to help stop COVID-19 in our local community? Maybe they are furloughed, working part time, or are retired?

Please encourage any of your family or friends who might be interested to find out more and contact NHS Dorset via the below website: <https://joinourdorset.nhs.uk/helpstopcovid/>

Frequently asked questions

Is the NHS confident the vaccines are safe?

Yes. The NHS will not offer any COVID-19 vaccinations to the public until independent experts have signed off that it is safe to do so. The MHRA, the official UK regulator, have said that both of these vaccines have good safety profiles and offer a high level of protection, and the NHS have full confidence in their expert judgement and processes. As with any medicine, vaccines are highly regulated products. There are checks at every stage in the development and manufacturing process, and continued monitoring once it has been authorised and is being used in the wider population.

Will the vaccines work with the new strain?

There is no evidence currently that the new strain will be resistant to the vaccines we have, so we are continuing to vaccinate people as normal. Scientists are looking now in detail at the characteristics of the virus in relation to the vaccines. Viruses, such as the winter flu virus, often branch into different strains but these small variations rarely render vaccines ineffective.

Why are you postponing second doses?

The UK Chief Medical Officers have agreed a longer timeframe between first and second doses so that more people can get their first dose quickly, and because the evidence shows that one dose still offers a high level of protection. This decision will allow us to get the maximum benefit for the most people in the shortest possible time and will help save lives.

Should people who have already had COVID get vaccinated?

Yes, if they are in a priority group identified by JCVI. The MHRA have looked at this and decided that getting vaccinated is just as important for those who have already had COVID19 as it is for those who haven't.

Can I get one privately?

No. Vaccinations will only be available through the NHS for the moment. Anyone who claims to be able to provide you with a vaccine for a fee is likely to be committing a crime and should be reported to the Police online or by calling 112.

Who gets the vaccine first?

The order in which people will be offered the vaccine is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), see here for more:

[Priority groups for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination: advice from the JCVI, 30 December 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination)

Who is getting vaccinated now?

Vaccinations in England started on 8 December, with Margaret Keenan becoming the first person to be vaccinated in Coventry. Across the country, care home staff, those aged 80 years of age and over, as well as NHS staff considered to be a risk will be offered vaccination in line with JCVI recommendations, and we are now rolling out vaccines in care homes. Figures on the number of people vaccinated are published weekly and can be found here: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/healthcare>

Is there a central source of information about the vaccine and programme?

Yes, please see the NHS COVID website, here is the link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirusvaccine/>

Shall I wait to be contacted?

Yes. The NHS will get in touch when it's your turn to be vaccinated.

What can I do to help support the programme?

We'd be grateful for your support in sharing these key messages:

- please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you;
- when we do contact you, please attend your booked appointments;
- and please continue to follow all the guidance to control the virus and save lives.