

COVID-19 vaccinations update

13 December 2021

Background

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 12 December about the booster programme we are working on expanding local capacity and will be updating information on our [website](#) and directly with key stakeholders as details are confirmed.

From Wednesday 15 December the booster vaccination programme is opening to all adults aged 18 and over. The aim is to offer every adult the chance to book a covid-19 booster vaccine by the end of the year to help protect against the Omicron variant. Vaccines continue to remain the best line of defence.

Many of our vaccination clinics run bookings through the National Booking Service. New appointments are being added regularly so please ask your constituents to keep checking if there is nothing available when they first look. Alternatively, patients will be contacted by their GP practices offering them an appointment for their booster vaccine.

GP teams are being asked to clinically prioritise their services to free up maximal capacity to support the COVID-19 vaccination programme, alongside delivering critical appointments such as cancer, urgent and emergency care. This might mean that for some people, routine appointments are postponed as part of the national mission to roll out boosters.

We will update you, as plans are confirmed for this phase of the vaccination programme but in the meantime, please help us by supporting the following messages with your constituents:

- Today, you can use the [National Booking Service](#) to pre-book a booster dose of the vaccine if it's been 2 months (61 days) since your 2nd dose and you're in one of these groups:
 - aged 30 years old and over
 - aged 16 years old and over with a health condition that puts you at high risk from COVID-19
 - frontline health and social care workers
- From Wednesday 15 December 18 year olds and above will be able to book via the [National Booking System](#)
- The NHS are working to increase the availability of appointments so that there are plenty of options for people to access a COVID-19 booster vaccine. Many of our GP led local vaccination services will re-open and contact patients directly for them to book appointments.
- There are a small number of vaccination sites in the region which are offering a walk-in service. These are listed on the [NHS website](#), with details of what types of vaccination they are offering, which vaccine is available, and opening times. However, please be aware that there is huge demand at these sites, with long waiting times. People are therefore strongly advised to book an appointment in

advance; the NHS is prioritising booked appointments for boosters. Appointments can be booked online [on the NHS website](#). Those who are not able to use the online booking system can call 119.

- Please do not attend a vaccination service without an appointment unless it is a specified walk-in clinic; patients who do not have an appointment will be turned away as priority will go to those who have booked.
- You can book your booster for 3 months from the date of second vaccine, and you can access the National Booking System to book the appointment from 2 months.
- Getting your booster is more important than ever to help increase your defences against all variants of COVID including Omicron. It will help protect you and those around you.
- It is critical that anyone with COVID-19 symptoms isolates and gets a PCR test immediately. Wear a mask in crowded places, including public transport and shops, to ensure we all help break the chains of transmission.