

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Support for enquiries

31 December 2020

This FAQ aims to set out the most common questions in relation to the COVID-19 vaccination programme to help you to respond to your communities.

A full FAQ is being regularly updated on the ICS website:

<https://www.sussexhealthandcare.uk/keepsussexsafe/sussex-covid-19-vaccination-programme/faqs-about-the-covid-19-vaccine/>

Question: I live in an area that has not started vaccinations yet, when will I receive it?

The NHS is working hard to get the vaccine to everyone who is eligible as quickly as possible.

In Sussex, GP practices are working with partners to identify and prepare sites suitable for this type of vaccination service. Some sites have been easier to prepare and so could go live more quickly, whilst other sites have needed more preparatory work to ensure teams can safely offer the vaccine in line with national guidance.

All teams are working at pace to make sure the preparations and checks take place as quickly as possible so that sites can go live as soon as possible for our population.

It is really positive to see the continued progress since the start of the vaccination programme. We now have three hospital hubs online, with another three expected to start next week, and 15 GP-led local vaccination services with another eight expected next week.

The NHS appreciates that there is a high level of interest in the vaccination programme and people are keen to understand when they will be offered the vaccine. They are reassuring everyone that the vaccination will be offered to everyone across Sussex in order of the priority groups as set out by the JVCI.

Currently, the NHS is working to make the vaccine available to:

- people aged 80 and over
- people who work in care homes
- health care workers at high risk.

People are asked to wait until you are contacted. You will be contacted by the first NHS service that can offer you the vaccine, whether that be at a hospital hub or a GP led vaccination service.

Please do not contact your GP or other NHS service to ask for the vaccine, you will be invited to receive it when it is your turn.

You can find out more about the vaccination programme and frequently asked questions on the Sussex Health and Care Partnership website:

<https://www.sussexhealthandcare.uk/keepsussexsafe/sussex-covid-19-vaccination-programme/>

Question: My GP practice has not signed up to the Enhanced Service, how will I receive my vaccination?

If a GP practice has not signed up to the NHS England Enhanced Service, we are working closely with them and their neighbouring GP practices to make arrangements for the vaccination of their patients.

Across Sussex, the approach we are taking is that practices (who have signed up) within Primary Care Networks are being asked in the first instance if they will take on the vaccination of these patients, with appropriate support from the Clinical Commissioning Group, and if not suitable alternative arrangements will be put in place.

The Enhanced Service was voluntary and the NHS recognises that at the current time with demand from winter pressure and increases in COVID-19 rates in the community, some GP practices felt they were unable to effectively support the programme at this time. It is however the priority of the NHS along with system partners, to ensure that our entire population has access to this vaccination and that people are being offered it fairly and equitably.

When arrangements are put in place, patients will be contacted as soon as possible when vaccine appointments are available. Please do not contact your GP practice in the meantime, and you will be contacted by the first NHS service to offer you the vaccine.

Can I propose my community venue as the site for a vaccination service?

The NHS is extremely grateful for the support of local communities and the many kind offers to use community centres and other venues to establish a vaccination service.

Sites are put forward by local GPs, working together through Primary Care Networks, as part of their wider proposals for staffing and delivering a local vaccination service. Sites need to meet a strict set of criteria covering a range of factors including security, IT infrastructure, power, access, and that the fabric of the facilities meet the required standards for infection prevention and control.

A large number of sites across Sussex are currently going through the process to ensure they are ready to start vaccinating and will be going live over the next few weeks subject to national approval and the availability of vaccine supplies. Once these are approved and operational, the NHS will be looking at whether there are any gaps across our communities and working with partners to identify any potential locations.

Question: What is the priority order for receiving the vaccine, and who decides this?

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises that the first priorities for the COVID-19 vaccination programme should be the prevention of COVID-19 mortality and the protection of health and social care staff and systems.

Currently, the NHS is working to make the vaccine available to:

- Residents and staff in care homes for older people
- People aged 80 and over
- Health care workers at high risk.

Question: Why do I have to wait to be vaccinated?

The COVID-19 vaccine is a remarkable scientific breakthrough but it will take time to get it to everyone who needs it. The NHS is asking people to be patient and await contact from the first NHS service who can offer you the vaccination.

Read more about the vaccine and why you may have to wait-

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-why-you-are-being-asked-to-wait/why-you-have-to-wait-for-your-covid-19-vaccine>

Over the coming weeks and months, we'll have more vaccination services up and running across Sussex as more sites are approved and we receive more vaccine, including in care homes and people's own homes if they can't get to a site.

Question: How are medical staff being vaccinated?

A priority for the NHS is to ensure that it is as easy as possible for people to get vaccinated when it is their turn.

The first groups being prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccine include people who work in care homes for older people and health care workers at high risk.

Planning is underway for wider NHS staff roll out as more vaccines become available, and also to deliver the vaccine more widely to other health and care workers.

Question: I am in Tier 4, can I travel for a vaccination appointment?

The list of reasons you can leave your home if you live in Tier 4 include visiting a hospital, your GP or for other medical appointments.

Travelling to receive a vaccination would meet the exemption criteria highlighted.

Every effort is being made to invite people to a vaccination site near to them but if you do need to travel or need someone to drive you to your appointment then this [guidance on car sharing](#) may be helpful.