

Friday 20 November 2020

COVID-19 vaccine & NHS staff testing



Matthew Kershaw SW London lead Covid-19 vaccination programme

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Tonia Michaelides SW London lead Covid-19 NHS staff testing Executive Locality Director Kingston and Richmond

As the South West London leads for NHS staff testing and Covid-19 vaccination planning we wanted to update you on how both programmes are progressing and what we are expecting in South West London. We attach an update from NHS England and Improvement, which has the latest information on the NHS approach on rolling out the Covid-19 vaccine. You may find it helpful to refer to this and the message below when talking about the vaccination programme; we will keep you updated as things change.

While we don't expect a Covid-19 vaccine to be widely available until 2021, detailed planning for the roll out of a Covid-19 vaccination programme is already underway. NHS plans will be finalised based on decisions made by national bodies, including when and what vaccines are approved and who should receive them. A vaccine will not be offered until it is approved as safe and effective.

In South West London, our plans will build on our expertise in delivering large-scale vaccination programmes such as the annual flu jab and routine immunisations for children and pregnant women. We have been working at pace with local authorities to scope potential fixed, mobile and roving vaccine delivery models within existing NHS estates or temporary standalone services as well as through primary care. When eligibility is extended to wider groups, we anticipate securing additional sites in easy and convenient locations where we can manage large volumes of vaccinations. For example, local GP practices are currently working together to operate flu clinics in the car parks at large retail stores, this could form part of our extensive plans to ensure that the vaccine is administered quickly, safely and conveniently. Building on what we have learned in delivering large scale flu campaigns for many years, we are also developing with our partners, a comprehensive communications and engagement plan to support a nationally-led campaign to let people know if they're eligible for a vaccine and how to get it.

The Independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has recently published updated advice on the priority groups to receive Covid-19 vaccine, advising that vaccines should first be given to care home residents and staff, followed by people aged over 80 and health and social care workers, before being rolled out to the rest of the

population in order of age and risk. The latest information can be found [here](#). The JCVI regularly reviews the latest information and updates its advice on the groups that should be prioritised for vaccination. This will in turn be reflected in national and our local plans

In other news, last week Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical Director for NHS England and NHS Improvement confirmed the asymptomatic testing of all patient-facing NHS staff using lateral flow testing. This builds on the extensive asymptomatic staff testing already occurring in parts of the country. The first 34 trusts, including Epsom and St Helier and Kingston, deployed these tests last week. It is anticipated that full roll out will be in place by the end of this week. Under this new system, staff will be asked to test themselves at home twice a week with results available before coming into work. This will also protect the NHS and ensure services are safe and accessible for people throughout the winter period and beyond.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Kershaw

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