

Covid Vaccination Update: A31 Primary Care Network – January 2021

The roll out of the vaccination programme will take place as quickly as supplies allow. Please note that so far, Covid vaccines have been very limited in terms of supplies, despite press and news coverage setting a different level of expectation. This is the case for both the Pfizer and the Astra Zeneca vaccines.

- 1. Please be patient and wait to be contacted:** Practice staff and NHS staff in a local contact centre will be handling appointment bookings for patients across North Hampshire, including patients registered at Bentley Village Surgery, Boundaries, Chawton Park Surgery and The Wilson Practice.
- 2. Please avoid calling your surgery for information:** Vaccine rollout is being planned and managed at scale across North Hampshire so that individual GP practices can continue to provide care in the normal way. Practice telephone lines need to remain open to patients for these services.
- 3. Please be reassured - YOU WILL BE CONTACTED when your appointment is due:**
 - Landline calls will be made to people without mobile phones. If contact cannot be established by mobile phone or landline, patients will receive a letter.
 - Within a priority group, patients will be called for vaccination in age order in accordance with guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).
- 4. Please turn up for your appointment:** Every vaccine shot is a precious commodity. Although few in number, there have already been missed appointments. If you are unable to make your appointment, please call the number provided as soon as possible so that your appointment and vaccine can be reallocated.
- 5. After your vaccination, please continue to follow all guidance to control the virus:** The large increase in cases hospitals are seeing and the emergence of a new variant of the virus shows us that we cannot let our guard down. Even those who have received a vaccine still need to follow social distancing and all other guidance relating to reducing the spread, for example continuing to wear masks.

Although this is the biggest vaccination programme the NHS has ever undertaken, it is important to remember the NHS is used to delivering millions of vaccines a year. In our local area we are off to an excellent start with the rollout programme at our Covid vaccination hub at Chineham. For example, patients who were invited to receive the Pfizer vaccine before Christmas have received their second dose as originally scheduled.

The vaccine clinics are at a dedicated hub in Chineham: While recognising the challenges for a number of patients in terms of getting to Chineham, please understand that having a dedicated hub is the most effective way to deliver a mass vaccination programme alongside provision of normal practice-based GP services. *The Covid vaccination programme is very different when compared to the annual local flu clinics that you may be familiar with.* The scale, the process, the stringent requirements and the speed at which this must be delivered, added to the need to maintain day-to-day GP services and be there when patients need help in what must be the most challenging winter health crisis we have ever faced, all point to the need for a shared service to ensure that the vaccine can be distributed with minimum disruption and in the shortest possible time, subject to supply.

The aim is to give protection to as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. The planning in our area has been GP-led and much thought has been given to balancing all the factors involved. Please be reassured vaccinations will be given locally to care-home residents and to patients who are house-bound.

For all other patients, please find ways to get yourself to Chineham, asking for support from relatives and support bubbles where necessary. Local Care Group Services and other volunteer groups may be able to help, depending on availability of drivers and Covid risk assessments.

Thank you for your patience, understanding and doing all you can to follow what is being asked of you here.