

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 23 April 2021

**A message from Darryl Keen, Director of Community Protection,
Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the strategic coordination group of the LRF**



Dear colleagues,

As the vaccination programme continues, some changes are being made to the delivery plan. A number of locations currently being used as vaccination centres are being prepared to return to their original use and special clinics have now been established for those who need the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines.

After administering over 20,000 first and second doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to local health and social care staff, West Herts Hospital Trust's vaccination centre at Watford Football Club closes its doors today. This arrangement was a great example of Watford Football Club's community support and the sort of generous partnership working that I have been really heartened to observe throughout the pandemic.

Vaccination update

Arrangements are being made to ensure that as the vaccination programme progresses, everybody is able to get their vaccination when it's their turn. Phase two of the vaccine programme is progressing well, with over half of our newly-eligible 45-49 population already vaccinated with their first dose.

Pop-up vaccination clinics

New temporary vaccination clinics are helping to make it even easier for people to get protected. Pop-up clinics continue to reach communities where take-up has been lower, with a session due to take place on Sunday 25 April at St Teresa's Roman Catholic Church in Borehamwood, supported by the Afro GP Herts and Beds group. Plans are also underway to offer twilight vaccination sessions in mosques during Ramadan.

In a new development, on Wednesday 21 April, Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) piloted a walk-in vaccination service on a 'bendy bus', which parked up for the day at Tesco in Waltham Abbey. Seventy-one people 'got on board' the bus leased from Stansted Airport for their job, including people classed as clinically extremely vulnerable and health and social care workers. The pilot event was a great way to test out a mobile and flexible way to deliver the vaccine, which could be extended across our area in future.

COVID-19 vaccination and pregnancy – new advice

[New guidance](#) from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises that COVID-19 vaccines should be offered to pregnant women at the same time as the rest of the population, based on their age and clinical risk group. There have been no specific safety concerns identified with any brand of coronavirus vaccine in relation to pregnancy, and 90,000 pregnant women have been safely vaccinated in the United States.

As there is currently more data for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines in pregnancy, pregnant women will be offered these vaccines where they are available, after a conversation with a healthcare professional.

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust update

Welwyn Garden City Urgent Care Centre re-opens

The Urgent Care Centre at the New QEII Hospital in Welwyn Garden City has now reopened 24 hours a day, reverting back to its former opening hours after closing overnight for a period during the pandemic. People from across east and north Hertfordshire should attend the New QEII with minor injuries and illnesses, bearing in mind the following points:

- between midnight and 8am, children under 16 cannot be seen at the New QEII and should attend the Lister in Stevenage
- anyone needing an x-ray between 11pm and 8am should attend the Lister
- the Urgent Care Centre cannot care for children under the age of 1 with minor injuries – again please attend Lister.

Remember, if you feel unwell and need urgent health help, go online to www.111.nhs.uk to get the right help, first time. If you need an urgent appointment, NHS 111 will direct you to the best place for your symptoms and can even book some types of appointment if you need one, so you don't have to sit in a waiting room for a long time.

Hospital attendances continue to shift to 'business as usual' concerns

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust continues to see very low numbers of patients with COVID-19. Elective procedures continue to increase each week, prioritising patients by clinical need, alongside urgent and cancer treatments which did not stop during the pandemic.

The hospital vaccination hub at the Lister has now closed, with all second doses for patients and the public now complete. Staff continue to be offered the vaccination via the occupational health team.

A number of new measures have been implemented in the maternity unit to allow partners to attend more scans, and to support women further during labour and birth and in visiting the maternity wards. [More information about the easing of restrictions in maternity can be found here on the trust website.](#)

The trust is testing processes to allow some visiting for inpatients, and more information on this will be shared as soon as possible. Visiting for some patients (for example people nearing the end of their life, carers) continues. [More information about visiting inpatients can be found on the trust website here.](#)

West Herts Hospital Trust update

The trust has also made changes to its maternity visiting guidelines to allow partners more involvement in maternity care. All mothers and partners will need to be tested before antenatal

clinic appointments or during inpatient admission. The changes can be viewed here: www.westhertshospitals.nhs.uk/maternity/latestvisitingguidance.asp

Rapid COVID testing for people with no symptoms – no appointment needed

We know that around 1 in 3 people who catch COVID don't display any symptoms, which means that the virus can be spread to many people unknowingly. Rapid testing sites offering 'lateral flow test' are available across Hertfordshire and you now don't need an appointment – just walk in. You can have the test done on site or drop in to pick up a supply of home testing kits.

You can also [order rapid COVID testing kits to use at home](#) and either have them delivered to your door or pick them up from a local site, including most pharmacies in Hertfordshire. Enter a town, city or postcode into this website <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/> to find out where you can collect lateral flow kits. A national campaign has now begun to encourage all over 16s to test twice a week. Over 9,000 test kits have now been handed out to the public and small businesses across the county. Hertfordshire County Council began using roving testing this week, focusing on providing supervised testing and distributing test kits to vulnerable groups and high-risk communities, informed by local intelligence. Plans are also being made to make testing kits available from foodbanks and refuges.

Further information about COVID testing in your local area can be found on the [Hertfordshire County Council website](#).

Thank you.