

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 30 July 2021

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



Dear colleague,

This is my last LRF update, as I retire as Chief Fire Officer and Director of Community Protection today. Coordinating the county-wide response to COVID-19 as chair of Hertfordshire's Strategic Coordinating Group has been both a challenge and a privilege. The way in which our public sector organisations, businesses, communities and volunteers have pulled together to tackle COVID-19 has been inspiring. I hope that the partnerships and relationships we have built over the last 18 months will bring positive benefits to our county long after COVID-19 has ceased to dominate our day-to-day lives.

Next week's update will be brought to you by Assistant Chief Constable Genna Telfer from Hertfordshire Constabulary.

It's goodbye from me. Thank you for playing your part in the fight against COVID by continuing to share reliable advice and information with your friends, colleagues and networks.

Vaccination update

Outreach work reaps rewards

There's been some great work from Community Liaison Officers from Watford Borough Council and NHS teams to encourage people from Portuguese and Brazilian communities to come forward for their vaccine. The team has built strong relationships within the local community among people who were initially extremely reluctant to engage with the vaccine programme. By arranging local pop-up clinics with Portuguese-speaking interpreters, providing translated materials and communicating through trusted community and business leaders through WhatsApp groups and other channels, there's been a positive response to vaccine uptake. A recent clinic saw more than 60 people getting vaccinated and many registering with a local GP for the first time.

Bishop Paul McAleenan, the Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster who has pastoral responsibility for the deaneries of Hertfordshire, joined the vaccination effort this week. Bishop McAleenan visited Watling Street caravan site in St Albans and Three Cherry Trees Lane caravan site in Hemel Hempstead to help encourage Gypsy and Traveller communities to get their vaccine. He was warmly received at both locations and having been double vaccinated himself, was able to reassure residents about the vaccine and talk to them about other pastoral matters. The visit was such a success that more visits are planned, alongside mobile testing and vaccination sessions, soon.

Efforts to encourage pregnant women to get vaccinated continue

In a letter to midwives, obstetricians and GP practices, England's chief midwife Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent has now reminded all healthcare professionals that they have "a responsibility to proactively encourage pregnant women" to get vaccinated.

According to new figures from the UK Obstetric Surveillance System from the last three months, one in three pregnant women in hospital with COVID-19 in England required additional respiratory support (33%), with more than a third developing pneumonia (37%), and around one in seven needing intensive care (15%).

Data also shows that one in five women admitted to hospital with serious COVID symptoms went on to give birth prematurely, and one in five babies born to mothers with COVID symptoms were admitted to neonatal units.

In Hertfordshire, local work continues to ensure that every pregnant woman has access to reliable advice and information about the COVID-19 vaccinations available. A media release, videos featuring local maternity experts, letters to pregnant women living or working in our county and special vaccination sessions for pregnant women are all in progress.

You don't need to be a fertility expert to help to tackle the risk that COVID-19 poses to pregnant women and babies – please share this link to the comprehensive vaccination 'frequently asked questions' section of our website, which includes videos and weblinks, available [here](#).

Thank you.