

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 30 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 colleague,

Over a [million doses](#) of the COVID-19 vaccine have now been given in Hertfordshire and west Essex (745,110 first doses and 276,820 second doses).

This marks a significant milestone as the programme extends to include everyone aged over 40 from today (30 April). It's important to remember that the offer of a vaccine isn't time-limited. If you know somebody who was unsure and didn't take up an offer to have their vaccination earlier in the year, a dose has been allocated to them and the health service would be delighted to support them to take up their vaccination.

Vaccination update

Expert online panel to answer public questions on fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding

One of the issues which people report as deterring them from having their COVID-19 vaccination is uncertainty about the vaccines and fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding.

To help to set minds at rest, a panel of experts from across our health and care system are coming together to help answer common questions about the jab. We're asking the public to submit questions they'd like answered by emailing communications.hvccg@nhs.net by 5pm on Thursday 6 May, or by commenting on the social media posts promoting the event.

The questions received will be addressed to a diverse online panel of experts who specialise in obstetrics, maternity, microbiology, infection control and pharmacy. The session will be recorded and shared so that people can watch at a time that suits them. We will share a link to the recording as soon as it is available.

Pop-up vaccination clinic, Stevenage

A pop-up clinic will run at Armstrong House in Stevenage this Saturday (1 May) from 10am-2pm. Run with the Afro GP Herts and Beds group, this is the latest in a series of targeted clinics encouraging people from all communities to get vaccinated. Plans are underway for a similar clinic to take place at Marychurch Catholic Church in Hatfield on Sunday 9 May.

Hospital updates

Visiting East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

The trust has this week launched a new online booking process for visiting inpatients at Lister Hospital. Visitors can book one-hour visiting slots, and patients must have the same person visiting each time. Families and friends are encouraged to discuss and agree who this should be.

Strict hygiene measures are in place, risk assessments are carried out on both the ward and for the visitor, and visitors are encouraged to carry out rapid lateral flow tests. [Click here to find out more about visiting at Lister Hospital.](#)

Improving the Lister emergency department

Work continues to improve the emergency department at Lister, including:

- Improving the “front door” to the emergency department, meaning patients are triaged better and treated in the best place
- More space to assess patients
- An expanded children’s emergency department
- A dedicated space for patients who need mental health support
- X-ray facilities much close to the emergency department.

The public are asked to follow signs for any diversions as the works are carried out – but any disruption to patients should be minimal.

Recovery and restart of services at West Herts Hospitals Trust

Further to national planning guidance on the restart of services, the majority of services and specialties at West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust have restarted in some shape or form. The trust is continuing with ways of working that have proved successful, for example, carrying out virtual or telephone consultations for some outpatient clinics. Other clinics have carefully restarted face to face appointments in a controlled way to allow for safe social distancing.

Policing update

Officers continue to be out in communities - engaging, explaining and encouraging people to act responsibly and follow coronavirus rules as lockdown eases. Enforcement action is a last resort.

The vast majority of people in Hertfordshire are behaving responsibly, understanding [Step 2 restrictions](#). On a few occasions, it has been necessary to issue fixed penalty notices, for example to a large group of people socialising together indoors.

While council environmental health and trading standards officers lead on investigating reported business breaches, Hertfordshire Constabulary works to support local authorities as necessary.

If you believe someone may be breaching the COVID-19 regulations, you can [report information online](#), speak to an operator in our Force Communications Room via our [online web chat](#) or call the non-emergency number 101.

COVID marshals

Director of Public Health for Hertfordshire County Council, Jim McManus, has issued a statement after a number of people contacted the county council to raise concerns about an open contract on the Government website for the county council to recruit a further 60 Covid Marshals from July 2021. [Read the full statement](#).

Hertfordshire Volunteering and People Assistance Cell

Over 300 COVID Information Champions have been recruited and are actively targeting thousands of residents with weekly key messages, using a range of communication channels such as social media, emails, leaflets and other local organisation mechanisms. Resources and messages continue to be available in different languages and formats for sharing to help target all communities.

A national survey completed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, shows that 21% of the clinically extremely vulnerable cohort indicated that they were likely to need support post-shielding. The Volunteering and People Assistance Cell are therefore continuing to support those who are vulnerable by developing robust plans to ensure residents are aware of the support that is available, such as through HertsHelp. HertsHelp are continuing to triage support needs across the voluntary and community sector.

Communities 1st: Communities 1st and partners have continued to recruit volunteers to provide crucial support to vaccination centres across Hertfordshire and West Essex. Over 4,700 volunteers have now signed up, and have committed to providing over 70,000 hours of support for vaccination sites in a variety of roles, from stewarding to administration.

Economic Recovery

UK Community Renewal Fund: Hertfordshire businesses (private, public and voluntary sector) are invited to bid for funds from the government's £220m UK Community Renewal Fund, to support projects helping people and businesses. The fund, announced in the budget in March 2021, will pave the way for the new Shared Prosperity Fund, due to launch next year. Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is working in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to manage the application, appraisal, contracting and delivery phases for the fund locally. More information is available [here](#).

Ten point checklist to support safe return to Hertfordshire high street: Hertfordshire Growth Board with the Institute of Place Management (IPM) has drawn up a ten-point checklist to help town centres re-open safely and recover quickly from COVID-19. The checklist gives guidance on how to safely reintroduce footfall and build back better post pandemic, enabling and empowering places to adapt to the 'new normal'. Read the full article and download the checklist [here](#).

Campaign attracts national recognition

Last year's *#Nantervention* campaign targeting 18-25 year-olds has been shortlisted in the national PR Moment Awards 2021. The awards are a celebration of the very best in public relations across the year and are dominated by big commercial brands and agencies. Our innovative approach to engaging with this age group sees Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum (and our campaign partners, Frank PR) line up against Facebook, Sony Playstation and others in the Best Community Engagement Campaign category.

#Nantervention is the only local public sector-led campaign to have been shortlisted in the awards' six main categories. It is a reflection of how the LRF has worked creatively across all agencies in response to the pandemic. You can see the full shortlist [here](#). Winners will be announced on 29 May.

Rapid Testing Update

A total of 230 pharmacies across Hertfordshire are now distributing home testing kits on request, for use by people with no COVID-19 symptoms. In addition, 23,000 kits have been distributed by Hertfordshire County Council to support testing in the workplace. All testing sites are now operating a walk-in system, with no requirement to book and minimal queues. Regular rapid testing is being promoted widely across our system, in order to detect cases of symptomless COVID-19 in the population.

Thank you.