

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 21 May 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,

The easing of lockdown restrictions, coupled with the unseasonal weather we've been experiencing, mean that more people are now meeting and socialising indoors. It's more important than ever that we protect ourselves and each other by carrying out a regular rapid 'lateral flow' COVID-19 test, twice a week, in line with government guidance. A third of people who have COVID don't have any symptoms, so please test yourself regularly with a free 'lateral flow' test kit to ensure that you are not unknowingly spreading the virus.

Vaccination update

Health colleagues – supported as ever by LRF member organisations - have responded to the huge logistical challenges posed by the pace and complexity of the evolving vaccination programme this week, opening to new age cohorts (34+), bringing forward some second dose appointments for people at high risk, targeting supplies where they are needed most and helping to protect more people against COVID-19 as quickly as possible.

Walk in sessions – no need for an appointment

To make it even easier for eligible people to get protected against COVID-19, a number of walk-in vaccination sessions have opened up for people across Hertfordshire and nearby west Essex. This means people can turn up during walk-in sessions without the need for an appointment. A list of venues, their opening times and information about which vaccines are being offered at each location are available [here](#).

Pop-up clinics

Pop-up clinics are proving very popular and are a great way to target areas with a lower take-up. Sessions are coming up at Bushey Medical Centre (21 May), North Watford Mosque (22 and 29 May) and Wellspring Church in Watford (22 May). More details about opening times, booking options and vaccine details are available [here](#).

Second doses for over 50s and those at high-risk from COVID-19

Guidance around the timing of second doses changed on 14 May to help tackle rising cases of COVID-19 variants and provide the strongest possible protection from the virus at an earlier opportunity. Anyone over 50 or in the top nine priority groups will be contacted by the NHS and encouraged to get their second jab as soon as eight weeks have passed. Those who booked through www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or by ringing 119 will be contacted by the National Booking Service to book an earlier appointment. If people already have a second dose appointment that is coming

up soon, we would recommend them keeping that appointment. Please note that the online National Booking System does not allow anyone to view alternative options, **without** first cancelling their original second dose appointment.

If an individual booked and received their first dose of the vaccine through a local service and not through the National Booking Service or by ringing 119, their GP practice will contact them with details on booking their second dose.

Visiting arrangements at the Lister Hospital

The Lister Hospital in Stevenage's visiting appointment system has been a big success, with over 2,500 appointments booked since 28 April – allowing patients to see their loved ones.

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust is continuing to focus on reducing their waiting lists, and since the end of April the number of people waiting over 18 weeks has been reduced by 11%, and those waiting over a year by 10%.

And finally...

While you're out and about this weekend, please remember that no vaccine offers complete protection and we need to keep playing our part to protect each other. The 'hands, face, space and fresh air' message is as important as ever.

Thank you.