

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 14 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,

As I write this update, news is coming in from Scotland about a change in approach to lockdown restrictions and we are awaiting an update from the Prime Minister. It certainly seems as though the need to do all we can as individuals and communities to stay safe has not diminished.

Vaccination update

More people eligible for vaccination this week

This week, appointments opened up to anyone aged 38 and 39. Everyone who is newly-eligible will either be contacted by their GP practice or can choose to ring 119 or go online through the [National Booking Service](#) to select from a range of vaccination sites across the county.

Walk-in vaccination clinics – continuing this weekend

Meanwhile, to make the best use of the available staff and supplies at our larger vaccination centres, drop-in AstraZeneca vaccination sessions are being offered this week for the first time to anyone aged 40 or over who hasn't yet been vaccinated. There has been a very positive response to this offer, which has made it even easier for people with unpredictable schedules to start to get protected against COVID-19. The drop-in sessions will continue over the weekend – find out more here: <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/vaccination-walk-times-40-year-olds-10-16-may-2021>

There are also plenty of appointments available for anyone who is eligible to get the vaccine and who'd prefer to book ahead - either directly with participating GP practices or by using the [National Booking Service](#).

Updates to the National Booking Service

The National Booking Service has been updated to offer appointments to those who are recommended to have an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine, in line with the latest JCVI guidance. This includes enabling pregnant women to book appointments at a site that offers the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine, following a series of screening questions.

Pregnant women will be able to have a conversation with a healthcare professional at their vaccination appointment or can speak to their maternity team or GP service.

Pop-up clinics in Watford and Hoddesdon

This Saturday (15 May) a pop-up vaccination clinic is being held at Wellspring Church, Watford between 10am – 1 pm. People who are eligible for the jab can book an appointment by calling 01923 278181. Lines are open until 7pm this evening (Friday 14 May).

On Sunday 16 May from 12-3pm, there is a pop-up clinic at Jackson Hall in Hoddesdon. Eligible people can book now by calling 07726 249713. Lines are open 9am - 6pm. When booking, it's easier if people have their NHS number to hand. They can find it here: <https://www.nhs.uk/find-nhs-number/what-is-your-name>

COVID vaccination status on the NHS App

From Monday 17 May, it will be possible for people to view and evidence their COVID-19 vaccination status through the free [NHS App](#).

You can download and use the app through mobile devices such as a smartphones or tablets. If people do not have access to the app and need to prove their vaccination status because, for example, they are travelling to a country that requires it, they can call the NHS helpline on 119 (from 17 May) and ask for a letter to be posted to them. This must be at least five working days after completing their course of a vaccine. The public have been asked not to contact their GP surgery about their COVID-19 vaccination status. GPs cannot provide letters showing whether or not people have had their vaccine, or answer questions about the NHS App.

National changes announced to GP services

You may have seen on the news today that from Monday 17 May, doors at GP practices will 're-open'. As you will know, our GP practices have been open throughout the pandemic, offering patients telephone and online appointments, with face to face consultations available for those who need them.

From Monday, GP practices will be encouraged to offer patients a choice of whether they would like a remote or face to face consultation. However, before they have more people coming into their surgeries to see them in person, they need a bit of time to put in place measures to keep everyone safe. As practices wait for further national guidance on doing that, we ask that patients continue to contact them by phone or through online consultation methods, as they have been doing. Our GP practices would like to thank their patients for their support to keep everyone safe.

New 'Managed Quarantine Service' hotel designated in St Albans

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) is expanding [Managed Quarantine Service \(MQS\) hotel accommodation](#) for travellers required to quarantine for a minimum of 10 days on return from 'red list' countries. Hertfordshire LRF partners, including the NHS, public health, St Albans and Hertfordshire councils, police, fire and rescue service, have worked closely with the DHSC to set up the first quarantine hotel of this sort in Hertfordshire.

The Mercure St Albans Noke Hotel, in Watford Road, St Albans, has all the required measures in place to support guests and safeguard the local community, including:

- 24-hour security staff and liaison officers to support hotel guests and staff
- 24-hour medical support
- Access to translation services to support guests for whom English is not their first language

Further support to be introduced includes:

- Access to a psychiatrist and telephone counselling
- Access to adult and child social worker support

Hotel guests will be required to quarantine for an initial 10 days in the hotel, undertaking COVID tests on Days 2 and 8. If guests test positive during the initial quarantine period they will have to stay for a further 10 days from the date of their positive test.

Severe penalties may apply for guests who do not comply with these requirements. The health, wellbeing and safeguarding of residents is of the highest priority and all partner organisations will work closely with the DHSC to ensure that this is maintained.

Supporting our communities

Policing update: From Monday 17 May lockdown eases further and [Step 3 restrictions](#) come into effect. Officers will continue to be out in communities - engaging, explaining and encouraging people to act responsibly and follow the rules. Enforcement action is a last resort.

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 the Force Communications Room via [online web chat](#) or call the non-emergency number 101.

Day of Action for Community Rapid Testing: Hertfordshire's Fire and Rescue Service is piloting a scheme this Saturday (15 May) for residents to collect home rapid test kits at central locations in Cheshunt, Hemel Hempstead, South Oxhey, St Albans and Stevenage.

Hertfordshire Volunteering and People Assistance Cell: Just over 300 COVID Information Champions have now been mobilised and are continuing to share weekly messages to their diverse communities. Alongside monthly focus groups to gather feedback, a recent survey was shared with all COVID Information Champions. The results of the survey will help to shape how our communications and engagement work can continue to support communities that might otherwise find it difficult to get the information they need.

A positive response was received to the question ‘how well do you feel your local community is responding to messages about the COVID-19 vaccine?’ This was mostly rated well (55%), followed by very well (40%), which a small minority rating this as poorly (5%). Key themes that emerged were around trust, with residents commenting that they were more likely to trust people within their local communities. The need for simple messaging and diverse imagery was highlighted, with a particular focus on vaccine ingredients and potential side effects.

Communities 1st: Communities 1st and partners have continued to recruit volunteers to provide crucial support with vaccination centres. Over 4,700 volunteers have now signed up, and have committed to providing over 84,000 hours of support for vaccination sites in a variety of roles, from stewarding to administration.

Living with COVID: Support available to Hertfordshire residents: The Hertfordshire Community Reassurance Cell (CRC) is hosting a webinar on Wednesday 26 May from 11am to 12pm that outlines the support available to Hertfordshire residents as we move into this new phase of recovery. The event will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss the impact the pandemic is having on the county’s most vulnerable residents, whilst also learning what support is available to them.

The webinar will be hosted by Cllr Linda Haysey, Leader of East Herts District Council and Chair of the CRC, and confirmed speakers include representatives from Herts MIND Network, Money Advice Unit, Herts Sports Partnership, and Carers in Herts. [Find out more and register to attend.](#)

Economic Recovery

Enterprise and Innovation: Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is continuing its ongoing support for the Queen’s Award for Enterprise, following this year’s success, when Hertfordshire had the largest number of winning entries in any non-metropolitan area. Mark Bretton, Hertfordshire LEP Chair, with HM Lord-Lieutenant took part in an event on Tuesday with Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce encouraging businesses to apply. More information can be found [here](#).

Thank you