

Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update – 7 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,

This week public servants and volunteers took great care to ensure that everyone registered to vote could do so in a COVID-safe way. I am really proud of the way in which our county continues to adapt to the challenges that COVID has posed. Seeing people attending polling stations yesterday was another sign of ‘normal’ life returning – even if we were encouraged to take our own pencils!

Vaccination update

Changes to some vaccination venues

As the vaccination programme continues, some changes are now being made to the delivery plan. A number of locations that are currently being used as vaccination centres are being prepared to return to their original use, so alternative venues are being secured. This means that some patients will be contacted and informed that their second jabs will be given at a different venue than their first. The national booking service will be updated with information about these new venues when they go live, so that everyone making an appointment for the first time will be clear about where they should attend.

At the same time, some of the networks of GP practices in our area are completing the vaccination of their priority patient list ([those in cohorts 1-9](#)) before stepping back from the vaccination programme. A mapping exercise has been undertaken to ensure that our population remain within reasonable travelling distance of a vaccination centre, and the phased roll-out of the vaccination programme is being carefully matched against the national and local availability of vaccine supplies. Where a GP led centre is not providing the service to cohorts 10-12, people will be directed to other GP led sites or the large vaccination centres or pharmacies, where there is sufficient capacity to ensure all eligible patients are able to receive the vaccination.

Those GP practices which have chosen to continue to deliver the vaccination programme have been given the option of being included on the national booking service website. This means that in future, appointments at some of our GP-led centres will be bookable by anybody eligible, not just their own patient list, offering additional choice to those living nearby.

Offering alternative vaccines to those aged under 40.

[Advice](#) from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on the AstraZeneca vaccine has been updated today. The JCVI now recommends that “*unvaccinated adults aged 30 to 39 years who are not in a clinical priority group at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease, should be preferentially offered an alternative to the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, where possible and only where no substantial delay or barrier in access to vaccination would arise*”.

In our area, clinics have been established for all those who have been advised to have the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines, rather than AstraZeneca. These can be accessed by a referral from a GP, via the national booking service website (for those people who are eligible), or in the case of health or social care workers, their employers.

Pop-up vaccination clinic this weekend in Hatfield

A pop-up clinic will run at Marychurch Catholic church in Hatfield, this Sunday (9 May) from 12-3pm. Hosted by 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. Appointments for the Hatfield session can be booked by calling 07341 109700 or eligible people can just come along on the day. More pop-up clinics are planned for Watford on 15 May and Hoddesdon on 16 May.

Our Hertfordshire and west Essex COVID-19 microsite at <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/> is kept updated with local information and questions and answers about the vaccination programme. It is a very useful source of advice for your local communities and networks.

Rapid COVID testing

The distribution of rapid COVID testing kits for people without symptoms (lateral flow tests) is continuing successfully across Hertfordshire. COVID Marshals have been handing out test kits in seven locations this week and more than 36,000 test kits have been handed out so far by Hertfordshire pharmacies. On 15 May, a 'Day of Action' by fire crews will take place in St Albans, Hemel Hempstead, Stevenage, Cheshunt and South Oxhey. Crews will distribute test kits and encourage people who don't have symptoms to test themselves regularly.

Thank you.