

**Hertfordshire Local Resilience Forum Stakeholder Update  
20 August 2021**

**A message from Genna Telfer, Assistant Chief Constable and  
Chair of the strategic coordination group of the LRF**



Dear colleague,

I am delighted to see another 'Super Sunday' vaccination event happening in Watford this weekend. Our county can be proud of the way organisations have risen to the ever-changing challenges of COVID-19, including our impressive vaccination programme.

Almost 2,000 people were vaccinated at Vicarage Road Stadium last time around and we hope to see similar numbers this time with residents including newly eligible 16- and 17-year-olds urged to get their first COVID-19 vaccine or get their second dose on Sunday 22 August.

You will probably have seen the latest change in that those who are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 no longer have to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. There's more on this and other updates below:

## **Vaccination roundup**

### **Younger people getting the vaccine**

As we announced last week, all of Hertfordshire's 16- and 17-year-olds can now have a dose of the Pfizer vaccine. And it seems many of them have already been taking up this offer with over 25% of them now vaccinated, as this age group only need one dose.

A single dose will provide 80% protection against hospitalisation and protection could be even higher as younger people generally respond better to vaccines. Some will have already had COVID-19, but this doesn't mean that they don't need to be vaccinated: it means that they will have an even better immune response to the vaccine. The JCVI will provide further guidance on whether a second vaccine should be offered to this age group in future.

All our large vaccination centres are now seeing 16- to 17-year-olds and they are operating a 'walk-in' service with details regularly updated on <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk>. 16- to 17-year-olds do not need the consent of their parents or guardians to have the vaccine, but they can bring a parent, carer or friend if they'd like. Anyone who is anxious will be well looked after and staff will be happy to help with any questions that a young person might have.

This group of young people will continue to be able to walk-in to the clinics, with no booking required, and at the same time they will receive a letter from the NHS in the coming days, inviting

them to attend a walk-in service or to wait to hear from their GP practice, inviting them to arrange an appointment. Walk-in vaccination services can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/>

We are also finalising arrangements for the eligible children in the **12- to 15-year-old** cohort to get their vaccine – and clinics start soon. Clinics will be run by the PCNs – groups of local GPs – and community children’s services team, and held in dedicated vaccination centres.

The at risk 12- to 15-year-olds to be offered the COVID-19 vaccine are those who live with someone who is immunosuppressed, and children who have a condition that means they are at high risk from COVID-19. These conditions are specified as:

- A severe problem with the brain or nerves, such as cerebral palsy
- Down’s syndrome
- Severe or multiple learning disabilities
- A condition that means they’re more likely to get infections.

Parents of eligible children will get a text or letter over the coming week, inviting them to bring their child to a clinic for their vaccination. Children who are attending special educational needs schools who have not been vaccinated in the next couple of weeks, are likely to be able to get their jab at a special clinic to be arranged in their school once term starts. We are asking parents **not** to contact their GP to find out when and where their child can get their vaccine; those parents will be contacted to arrange that.

### **Another ‘Super Sunday’ planned for Watford**

A super-sized ‘pop-up’ COVID-19 vaccination centre returns to Vicarage Road Stadium in Watford this Sunday (22 August). Pfizer jabs will be on offer to anyone aged 16 and over for first doses and for others to get second doses if they are due.

People can walk in anytime from 10am to 6pm and people were also given the opportunity to book an appointment before 3pm today (Friday) with around 800 people having done that.

The event, organised by the local NHS and Watford Council, will have multilingual volunteers on hand to help, as well as a midwife who will give advice for pregnant women between 12noon to 4pm. Women who are pregnant can be fast-tracked to the front of the queue, to allow them to have a private conversation with the midwife, if they’d like to, and also to make sure they are as comfortable as possible.

People who attend won’t need to provide ID and don’t need to be registered with a GP, nor be worried that their immigration details will be passed on. The stadium is fully wheelchair accessible and disabled parking is available. More information about Super Sunday, including travel advice can be found on Watford Council’s website <https://www.watford.gov.uk/supersunday>.

## **Self-isolation and vaccines**

From the start of this week (16 August), those who are fully vaccinated (meaning they've had both doses) and the under-18s no longer need to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID-19, by NHS Test and Trace. They are advised to [get a PCR test](#) as soon as possible to check if they have the virus. As fully vaccinated people are still at risk of being infected, people in this position are asked to consider other precautions such as using face-coverings and limiting contact with people who are clinically vulnerable. You are considered to be fully vaccinated if you had your second dose at least 14 days previously.

If the PCR tests shows a positive result, you will need to self-isolate, regardless of your vaccination status.

The new rules apply to everyone but it is a bit different for health and care workers. Most will be able to return to work if they are a close contact of a positive case - but they do need a negative PCR test before they do so and they need to take lateral flow tests for 10 days as a precaution. People working with extremely vulnerable patients or service users, will need a risk assessment to be carried out before they return to work.

People who don't have COVID-19 symptoms should still take a rapid (LFT) test twice a week, even when they have been double-vaccinated, to help prevent the spread of infection. You can visit one of Hertfordshire's test sites (no appointment needed) or use a home testing kit. [You can get these for free here.](#)

## **Vaccination performance**

We continue to see an increase in the numbers of residents in all age groups getting their COVID-19 vaccine. We now have around 70% of our over 18s fully vaccinated and 80% have received a first dose.

Even in the short time that we have been offering the vaccine to 16- and 17-year-olds we have now achieved more than 25% coverage with that age group.

In other groups, take-up is levelling off with the older people having such high rates that we don't expect them to increase much further. We continue to pay particular attention to urging the younger groups – the under 40s – to get their jab, so as to get as much COVID-19 protection for them as there is among older residents.

## **Work to vaccinate people experiencing health inequalities entering a new phase**

In recent months the vaccination programme has had considerable success in reaching out to people experiencing health inequalities. The local NHS, working with district, borough and county council colleagues and with support from the voluntary sector, has held one-off clinics in a variety of venues, including mosques, churches and traveller sites as well as drop-in services for people who are homeless or living in refuges. There have also been tailored vaccination sessions for people

with learning difficulties. The vaccination programme has been boosted with funding from the county council's health protection board and from NHS Charities money to pay for health inequalities engagement officers working at district and borough level.

To date this health inequalities work has been coordinated at county level by teams focusing on improving access to vaccinations for particular groups. Work is now starting to plan programmes at a more local level through vaccination plans developed by district and borough councils that will cover both COVID-19 and flu. We will update you on these plans as they develop.

### **NHS here for you this bank holiday**

With the August bank holiday on the horizon, local health organisations are working to make people aware of how best to access help and to remind people to make sure they're fully covered for essential medication.

While normal GP services are not available on bank holiday Monday, people are encouraged to seek help from local pharmacists for advice on minor illnesses or to contact NHS111 for urgent care needs. By visiting [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or calling 111 people will be signposted to the most appropriate service and will be booked into an appointment if needed. People needing urgent mental health support can call 111 and select option 2 to speak to specially trained staff.

All NHS services continue to be extremely busy and by raising awareness of what's available we aim to support people to use services wisely and to get any help they need as quickly and efficiently as possible.

People are also reminded to take sensible precautions to help limit the spread of COVID-19 this bank holiday, such as wearing face masks in crowded places, washing hands with soap often and testing regularly. To find out more about COVID-19 testing in Hertfordshire, including the availability of testing sites across the long weekend, visit: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/coronavirus-tests.aspx>.

COVID-19 vaccination appointments that have already been scheduled across the bank holiday weekend will still go ahead. Opening times of vaccination walk-in centres are here: <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/>.

### **Supporting our communities**

**Hertfordshire Volunteering and People Assistance Cell (VPAC):** Funding has been provided from the Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) to support local groups and organisations to address COVID-19 vaccine inequalities and to encourage further take-up, across all age groups. Following a robust assessment process, grants of up to £5,000 will be available to 21 of the 34

organisations which applied and were suitable for funding. The types of support which will be provided are:

- Community engagement events:
  - Trusted leaders and health officials discussing receiving the vaccine
  - Events at community centres, leisure centres youth clubs, churches etc
  - Online network events and webinars
  
- Communications from trusted sources to targeted groups (e.g. youth clubs) through:
  - Posters
  - Leaflets
  - Noticeboards
  - Websites
  - Social media
  - Telephone advisors
  - Translations
  
- Transportation support:
  - Using relevant group links to provide transportation to those unable to attend vaccination sites

**Communities 1st:** Recruiting volunteers to assist with the local vaccination effort continues in centres across Hertfordshire, West Essex, Luton, Bedford, and Milton Keynes. Communities 1st volunteers have now provided over 145,000 hours of support, in stewarding and front of house roles. Volunteering can be a wonderful way to get out and about, make friends and gain experience. If you or someone you know would like to sign up, they can visit: [communities1st.org.uk/sign-up](https://communities1st.org.uk/sign-up), call 020 3940 4865, or email [volunteer@communities1st.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@communities1st.org.uk).

Thank you.