

## COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

### Independent Care Sector briefing: 21 January

#### Roll out of the Independent Care Sector COVID-19 vaccination programme across Sussex

As we roll out the COVID-19 vaccine across Sussex, we are committed to making sure you are kept up to date. If you have missed any of our weekly updates on the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme last week, you can [read them here](#).

Please do share this update with your teams, especially regarding information about how they access their own vaccination.

#### Independent Care Sector vaccination programme update

**More than 300 care settings in Sussex have now been vaccinated** (as of 19 January 2021). This includes 6,368 residents and 8,075 staff<sup>1</sup>. Many more homes across our patch will be vaccinated this week, and we will update you on numbers again in the next briefing.

**We expect to have vaccinated all care homes with residents over the age of 65 years old, by the 24 January<sup>2</sup>, and all care homes in Sussex by mid-February 2021.** We will confirm details to each home individually. This will include the appropriate information sharing and consent forms required, including any additional considerations such as mental capacity (see below for more on this) and safeguarding.

Vaccination teams have plans in place as part of their operating procedures to cover those residents that are unwell, or were unable to have a vaccine, at the initial visit.

Vaccines are being delivered through the Sussex GP-led vaccination service, managed by the local Primary Care Networks (PCN). We expect this to cover the majority of the care homes in Sussex, with the remainder being served by Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT) vaccination teams.

If your care home is promoting their vaccinations on Twitter, don't forget to tag us <https://twitter.com/SussexHCP1> so we can share on the good news

#### Care staff vaccinations

---

<sup>1</sup> The source data for this summary is the National Capacity Tracker, recognised by NHSE and CQC as the nationally agreed reporting tool for care homes. On 19 January 2021 the number of homes reporting within the capacity tracker specifically for COVID-19 vaccinations was 86%

<sup>2</sup> care homes experiencing outbreaks may be subject to delay, depending on risk assessment

If a PCN or SCFT is visiting your care home, they will vaccinate staff when they visit, *depending on supply*. All residents in homes must take priority for vaccinations in homes, with the remaining vaccine supplies used for staff in the home on the day.

Because there is a limited number of vaccines, care home staff should look to utilise both vaccine team visits and appointments at the hospital hubs to ensure all staff are covered.

### Who sits under the priority group category of ‘frontline health and social care workers’?

To date, the hospital vaccination hubs have focused on NHS staff and care homes staff from homes with older adults.

Since bookings were opened up to all health and care workers in Sussex on 12 January, a new national approach for managing bookings for social care and care staff has been issued by the Department of Health and Social Care, Local Government Association, Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and NHS England. We also now have the ability to expand the access points for workers which means more people will get their vaccine quicker.

While this new approach is worked through with NHS and local authority partners, the wide promotion of the booking links has temporarily been paused. However, **the hubs do continue to vaccinate around 2,000 NHS frontline staff and staff from care homes for older people every day. Staff from these settings can continue to book in through the links they have been sent directly by the hubs.**

It is important that bookings are managed carefully to ensure that those most at risk of exposure to the virus can be vaccinated as soon as possible. As new booking processes are established over the coming days, they will be communicated to eligible staff groups and more appointment slots will be made available.

This will not impact on the timescales for delivering the vaccine to staff, although we recognise the pause is frustrating for those health and care workers who are waiting to book an appointment.

The vaccination programme has made rapid progress since it began with our first hospital hub site in December. We now have eight hospital hubs and 30 GP-led vaccination services, with more due to come online in the coming days alongside our first large-scale vaccination centre and pharmacy-led services. This means that we will be able to rapidly expand the number of appointments being made available to the health and care workforce.

We have already vaccinated significant numbers of health and care staff in Sussex and the ongoing expansion of the vaccination programme means we can continue to increase the number of appointments available every week.

We recognise the high interest and demand for the vaccination and appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to vaccinate all our health, social care and care workers as soon as possible.

We will provide further information on our website and through our NHS and local authority partners as soon as possible.

Care homes staff are encouraged to be vaccinated in homes, where possible.

## Why is it important to get your COVID-19 vaccination?

If you're a frontline worker working in social care, you are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 at work. Those working in care homes are at much higher risk of repeated exposure to the infection. Catching COVID-19 can be serious and may lead to long term complications. These are more common in older staff or those with underlying clinical risk factors. You can have COVID-19 without any symptoms and pass it on to family, friends and residents, many of whom may be at increased risk from coronavirus. Being healthy doesn't reduce your risk of catching COVID-19 or passing it on.

With high rates of COVID-19 across Sussex, it's more important than ever to help stop the spread of coronavirus, to avoid pressure on health and care services and to keep the health and social care workforce healthy.

If you have any questions about the vaccine, please refer to our [Frequently Asked Questions document for care homes](#).

People currently unwell and experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and who have tested positive should not receive the COVID-19 vaccine until 28 days after a positive test. If you have recently tested positive for coronavirus, even if you have no symptoms, you will be asked to *wait until 28 days after the date you tested positive* before getting the vaccine.

## COVID-19 vaccination programme Q&A sessions

Question and answer sessions have now been hosted in each of our local places (Brighton and Hove; East Sussex and West Sussex). If you missed it, or would like to watch again, you can

- [view the East Sussex event online now](#) (held on Wednesday 13 January)
- [view the West Sussex event online now](#) (held on Friday 15 January)
- the Brighton and Hove event was not recorded, but minutes are available for those who were unable to attend

## Healthwatch webinars on COVID-19 Vaccination Roll-out Programme in Care Homes

Our three Healthwatch organisations in Sussex are working together with Sussex CCGs to support families of residents in care settings during this time.

Sussex Healthwatch is hosting a COVID-19 vaccination roll-out in care homes online webinar for:

- [Brighton and Hove and East Sussex on Monday 25 January from 3 – 4 pm](#), and in
- [West Sussex on Wednesday 27 January from 5-6pm](#).

These events are the first in a series which come as one of the recommendations from a [report published last month](#).

### **Supporting those who lack mental capacity and the COVID-19 Vaccine**

The vaccine is not compulsory and therefore there is no overriding legislation forcing people to have it. Three separate forms have been developed to obtain informed consent or agreement for residents prior to the vaccine being administered. We will need your support in obtaining consent as soon as possible, preferably directly from residents, but where this is not possible from those who have power of attorney, or through agreement from relatives.

Please refer to the [full briefing](#) on mental capacity and the vaccine for more on this. All forms can be found [online](#).

### **Answering your questions**

We are responding to an unprecedented number of enquiries from care homes, the public and our stakeholders regarding the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine across Sussex. We will respond to everyone, but if you need more information, please do have a look at our frequently asked questions documents in the first instance, which may cover the queries you have. These may also help you to manage and support queries from families, and proactively talk to them about the vaccine.

- [Care homes FAQs](#)
- [General vaccine FAQs](#)

**If you have a question about the Sussex COVID-19 vaccination programme, which is not answered in our FAQ document, please do let us know using the dedicated mailbox [Sxccq.vaccineenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:Sxccq.vaccineenquiries@nhs.net)**