

Sussex COVID-19 Vaccinations – Independent Care Sector

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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If you have a question about the Sussex COVID-19 vaccination programme, which is not answered below, please do let us know using the dedicated mailbox Sxccg.vaccineenquiries@nhs.net

Care home staff vaccinations

If I am a care home worker, can I walk into a hospital hub/vaccination centre and get the vaccine?

- All independent care sector employed staff are being [invited](#) to attend a local hospital hub or vaccination centre to have the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Staff must book an appointment directly *before* attending. Hospital hubs cannot accommodate 'walk ins' and will have to turn away anyone that does not have an appointment and does not have identification to confirm that they are a health or care worker in Sussex.
- If staff do not possess a photographic staff ID, they should bring an alternative photo ID (e.g. valid passport, photo-card driving license, or a national ID card) with a payslip or formal employers letter.

I have tried to book my staff/myself into a hospital hub/vaccination centre to have my vaccination, but there are no slots showing/available?

- Slots are regularly added to the booking page so if you can't see a slot please refresh your screen or try again later.

Why are care home workers amongst the first groups to receive the vaccine?

- The Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations have put patient-facing health and social care staff into a priority group because of their heightened risk of exposure to the virus, and the risk of passing it on to vulnerable groups.

Will you pay care workers' costs for getting to vaccination centres?

- At the moment vaccinations for social care workers are being offered and arranged directly with employers at a local level, to make it as easy as possible for staff to receive the vaccine and minimise the need for extensive travel.
- The Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund states however that all providers should ensure that staff who need to attend work or another location for the purposes of being vaccinated or tested for Covid are paid their usual wages to do so, and any costs associated with reaching a vaccination or testing facility.

Can staff be vaccinated in care homes, or only in the hospital hubs/vaccination centres?

- The GP-led vaccination service and Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust are providing vaccinations to care homes. When this happens in your care home, staff can also be vaccinated as part of process, *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.

- In the meantime, staff can choose to use a hospital hub/vaccination centre as they may be able to get a vaccination sooner.

Homes are being contacted by both the PCNs and hubs/vaccination centres for staff vaccinations – which should they use?

- Care home staff can use either.
- If a PCN or SCFT is visiting your care home, they will be able to 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 hospital hubs/vaccination centres to ensure all staff are covered.
- If you are a member of staff working in health or care and have not yet had your COVID-19 vaccine, you can [book in](#) to a hospital hub/vaccination centre now.

Can staff go back to work after having the vaccine?

- Yes, you should be able to work as long as you feel well. If your arm is particularly sore, you may find heavy lifting difficult. If you feel unwell or very tired you should rest and avoid operating machinery or driving.
- The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and two doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. However, **you will need to continue to follow the guidance in your workplace, including wearing the correct personal protection equipment and taking part in any screening programmes.**

Can people under 18 years old have the vaccine if they work in a care setting?

- Young people age 16-18 years, who are employed in, studying or in training for health and social care work should be offered vaccination alongside their colleagues if a suitable vaccine is available.
- Younger people who are taking part in health and social care work as volunteers, interns or for the purposes of work experience, should make all efforts to avoid exposure to infection; vaccination would not normally be required.

How are you raising awareness of the vaccine with the health and care workforce?

- The Cabinet Office has developed a campaign to raise awareness of the vaccine with the public and health and social care staff. This includes specific engagement with BAME communities and workforce.
- In addition, we are working with our partners across Sussex to promote the availability of the vaccine to all health and care staff and the general public through a new dedicated campaign
- 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

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

- If you're a frontline health and care worker, you are more likely to be exposed to COVID-19 at work.
- Getting your COVID-19 vaccination as soon as you can, should protect you and may help to protect your family and those you care for. The COVID-19 vaccine should help reduce the rates of serious illness and save lives and will therefore reduce pressure on the NHS and social care services.

Care home vaccinations

What is the timeframe for getting homes vaccinated in Sussex?

- We are working in partnership with care homes and intend to vaccinate all care homes by mid-February 2021, subject to vaccine supply.
- We will confirm details to each home individually. This will include the appropriate information sharing and consents required, including any additional considerations such as mental capacity and safeguarding. Please refer to the [full briefing](#) on mental capacity and the vaccine for more on this. All forms can be found [online](#).
- Due to some exceptional circumstances, such as where a risk assessment has confirmed it is unsafe to vaccinate in a care home with a COVID-19 outbreak, some homes have been booked in for vaccination at a later date.
- 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 vaccination team's initial visit.
- Anyone who does have COVID-19, or symptoms of the illness, can be vaccinated 28 days following their positive test.
- Vaccines are being delivered through a GP-led vaccination service, managed by the local Primary Care Networks which we expect to cover the majority of the care homes in Sussex. The remainder will be served by Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust vaccination teams.
- On occasion, your provider of the vaccine may change from a PCN to SCFT, due to vaccine supply and availability

Can my care home be vaccinated if we have an outbreak?

- If there is a low number of cases, or cases are well-isolated within the home, then prompt vaccination of unaffected or recovered staff and residents can be planned.
- Whilst vaccination against COVID-19 may be temporarily deferred in some individuals e.g. acutely unwell or still within 28 days of onset of a COVID-19 positive test, all other staff and care home residents should receive prompt COVID-19 vaccination.
- A risk assessment must take place, considering whether the outbreak is emerging or resolving, the ability to isolate or cohort cases, and the practicalities of keeping vaccine teams to a separate, unaffected area.

How will the people who miss out on the vaccination within a care home setting due to testing positive or other reason, be vaccinated at a later date?

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

Will Extra Care / supported living settings be included in the vaccination schedule?

- With regards to Extra Care / supported living - the residents will be invited in to receive their vaccination during attendance at a local GP-led vaccination service, in line with the national [priority groups](#)
- Those residents that are housebound will have a home visit to receive the vaccine to make sure they can receive this vital protection.
- GP practices and Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust are working together to understand which residents need this level of service and will be making arrangements for appointments.
- Vaccinations have started and people will be contacted as soon as an appointment is available.
- Please do not contact your GP practice, you will be contacted as soon as possible.

General questions about the vaccine

Please refer to our [online FAQs](#) for general questions and queries about the vaccine, including allergies, fertility, efficacy and more.

Resources to support care home staff

Information is available on the nhs.uk website and this covers;

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

- Who can get the Covid-19 vaccine
- Advice if you're of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding.
- How safe is the Covid-19 vaccine
- How effective is the Covid-19 vaccine
- Side effects