

Covid-19 Vaccination Programme Update

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the development of the National Covid-19 vaccination programme and progress across Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland.

This report is high level as the vaccination programme is extremely dynamic and this report can only provide a snapshot of the current position as it stood on the date the report was produced (11/1/2021)

Current vaccination locations

Covid vaccinations in LLR commenced on 12 December with the opening of a vaccination Hospital Hub at Leicester General Hospital. The initial priorities were outpatients over 80 years of age and health care workers, consistent with the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI).

The following week vaccinations began in two Primary Care Networks in LLR.

By week ending 15 January all 25 Primary Care Networks in LLR will be providing a vaccination site for their patients known as Local Vaccination Sites (LVS). This means will be:

- 18 LVS covering all 133 GP Practices in LLR
- Two Hospital Hubs – Leicester General and Glenfield Hospital
- Commencement of Care home service
- Across England Seven mass vaccination centres available for the public as alternatives to the GP – led sites. On 11 January letters were sent to people over 80 years of age who had still not been booked for a vaccination through their GP practice and living within 45 minutes of one of these sites. One such site was in Birmingham. Patients retain the choice of whether to opt for this or their GP – led service through a PCN site.

Sites had to be rolled out in waves due to the limited availability of the vaccinatines and a rigorous assurance and approval process for venues.

Priority Groups

Members will be aware that the priorities are set by the JCVI. The JCVI has identified an order of priority based on those most at risk of becoming seriously ill with Covid and possibly dying. The list of cohorts, in priority order, is as follows:

1. **residents in a care home for older adults and their carers**
2. **all those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers**
3. all those 75 years of age and over
4. all those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals [more](#)
5. all those 65 years of age and over
6. all individuals aged 16 years [More](#) to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality [more](#)
7. all those 60 years of age and over
8. all those 55 years of age and over
9. all those 50 years of age and over

All regions are asked to deliver vaccinations to cohorts 1 and 2 as a priority; however as the Vaccine has a limited shelf live other cohorts may be vaccinated to avoid wastage. Vaccination sites are working through the priority groups as you will be aware the Prime minister has made a commitment to vaccinate all those within the first four cohorts by mid – February.

Vaccines

When the programme commenced there was just one vaccine available which, was the Pfizer/BionTec vaccine. This vaccine requires highly complex transportation and storage requirements which have limited initially the sites we could use. With only one vaccine, supply was also limited. As an example of the complexities with the Pfizer vaccine, it has to be used with 3.5 days of delivery to a vaccine site, so careful schedule of booking for patients is required.

On 30 December the Oxford/AstraZenica was approved for use in the UK and we have commenced roll out of this vaccine. This vaccine provides greater flexibility in terms of where it can be delivered for example from GP practices and pharmacies. The availability of this vaccine will support the acceleration of the vaccine programme generally and in care homes in particular.

On 8 January a third vaccine, Moderna was approved.

Vaccine delivery

One of the most challenging aspects of the programme is the vaccine delivery. This is nationally co-ordinated and given the initial limited supply has to be carefully scheduled throughout the UK.

Although there are planned deliveries of vaccine, the schedule can change at short notice. GPs will boom patients for vaccinations but may have to change this at short notice. Patients are booked in advance to minimise the time gap between the vaccine arriving and the actual vaccination itself.

This is likely to be less of a problem once the additional supply of vaccines begins

Second vaccine doses: change in policy on spacing

On 30 December the Government announced a change to the spacing of vaccine doses from 3 or 4 weeks (depending on the vaccine) to 12 weeks. For both Pfizer-BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines, a two-dose schedule is advised.

In the context of the epidemiology of COVID-19 in the UK in late 2020, the JCVI places a high priority on promoting rapid, high levels of vaccine uptake among vulnerable persons.

Therefore, given data indicating high efficacy from the first dose of both Pfizer-BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines, the JCVI advised that a first dose should be given to as many people in the priority groups as possible over delivery of a second vaccine dose. This should maximise the short-term impact of the programme. The second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine may be given up to 12 weeks following the first dose.

Priority groups for vaccination are as follows:

Next Steps

Sites

A larger scale vaccination centre is in progress and subject to regional and national sign off is due to go live 25th January 2021. This will be at the Peepul Centre. Other sites are being considered, including an additional Hospital Hub. All will be subject to the strict requirements on infection control requirements, security, storage and IT infrastructure.

Roving and Housebound Service

Vaccination of all care home residents and staff commenced in December 2020 and continues to gather pace.

Plans are in place to vaccinate all housebound patients, and the detained estate (prisoners and People detailed under the Mental Health Act)

Pharmacy Sites

We are waiting for confirmation of a number of Pharmacy vaccination sites.

Next Steps

As the roll out has been staggered across the patch, the CCG will be reviewing progress of vaccination of Cohorts 1 & 2 on a system wide basis. LLR has limited local control over the access to vaccines; it is contingent on national supplies. However, there is a regional commitment to support vaccination planning by 30 December ensuring vaccine supply is available to provide an equitable approach across the area