

Coronavirus - LMC Update December 22nd 2020

COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2): New Virus Variant

Information about the new virus variant can be found at:

- [COVID-19 \(SARS-CoV-2\): information about the new virus variant](#) – short summary from gov.uk, 20 December
- [Investigation of novel SARS-COV-2 variant: Variant of Concern 202012/01](#) - Technical briefing document on novel SARS-COV-2 variant, published by Public Health England, 21 December.

Lateral Flow Testing

There have been a number of new documents released regarding regular testing of asymptomatic patient-facing NHS staff. This guidance is for primary care workers around using lateral flow assay devices on nasal swab samples.

Visit the NHS website page [Coronavirus » Asymptomatic staff testing for COVID-19 for primary care staff \(england.nhs.uk\)](#) for resources including:

- [Lateral flow antigen test frequently asked questions: roll out in primary care. Published 18 December 2020 \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Rollout of lateral flow testing devices for COVID-19 testing of asymptomatic patient-facing staff delivering NHS services in primary care. Published 16 December 2020 \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [A standard operating procedure for rollout of lateral flow devices for asymptomatic staff testing for COVID-19 in primary care. Published 11 December 2020. \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

PCSE issued an [update on ordering Covid-19 self-testing kits](#) (18 December).

Vaccine Priority Communication

Practices may like to use this statement on vaccination priority, agreed with NHSE, for their websites or when responding to patient queries. Thanks to NHS Hull for sharing.

“The UK vaccination programme is being rolled out in phases and over the next few weeks and months many more clinics will be established to provide vaccinations.

The national Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has determined the priority order for people receiving vaccinations and in this initial phase we are focusing on the over 80s, care home residents and care home staff. Vaccinations of the over 80s and care home staff are underway and the vaccination of care home residents will also begin soon. Everyone in the UK will be offered a vaccination, however the whole programme of work will take months to complete due to its scale and complexity.

We appreciate that many people are enthusiastic about having a vaccination and in the Humber, Coast and Vale region we are working hard to vaccinate people as quickly as we can in line with the JCVI prioritisation.”

NHSE/ Primary Care Bulletins

All NHSEI bulletins, plus sign up link, can be found on the NHSE website [here](#).

Recent editions and summary of contents:

- [20/12/2020](#) : COVID vaccination in care homes; 6th dose of the COVID vaccine; National vaccine protocol; Reintroduction of shielding advice in Tier 4 areas.
- [17/12/2020](#): Lateral flow antigen testing; Reimbursement of additional PPE costs; New digital systems to support COVID-19 vaccinations; Flu and the COVID-19 vaccine; CAS alert issued for use of Azithromycin in COVID-19 patients; Commissioners requested to review support for university practices.
- [15/12/2020](#): COVID-19 local vaccination services deployment in community settings; Accessing extra workforce for COVID-19 vaccination; Flu vaccination for those in at-risk groups; Developing rapid outreach this winter for people with Severe Mental Illness; Innovative new learning programme launched to develop and embed Shared Decision-Making Skills for pharmacists.

LMC Support Available Over Christmas

We'd like to wish everyone a happy Christmas, and we hope you manage to enjoy some downtime over Christmas and the New Year. The LMC will be operating a reduced service throughout the Christmas and New Year period to respond to urgent queries. We recognise that Covid vaccinations and some primary care services will be running during this time, and constituents may need our help.

We have therefore arranged for staffing cover each day from 25 December to 3 January (inclusive) to respond to urgent requests from practices for advice. If you need our help during this time please [contact us](#) in the usual ways. Our normal level of service will resume on Monday 4 January.

Visit our website where you will find lots of information and resources including on our [support page](#) and our new [Covid-19 vaccination programme page](#).