

## **Vaccination frequently asked questions (FAQs)**

### **How many people have been vaccinated so far as part of Wigan's community vaccination programme? And who does this include (e.g. over-80s, which health and social care staff)?**

As at Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021, over 4,000 vaccines had been delivered to priority groups and 3,000 to health and social care staff. The high priority is that over 80s group but there is national protocol – as set out by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) - in place for which priority groups will receive the vaccine in initial rollouts. We have over 14,000 patients aged 80 and over within the borough and we are focusing our attention on delivering vaccines to these groups as it becomes available, considering patients age, comorbidities and ethnicity when inviting patients for vaccination to ensure those most at risk from COVID-19 are vaccinated first.

### **How many vaccination centres are currently operational and where are they?**

There are currently two sites operational offering vaccinations for those with an appointment:

- Robin Park Leisure Centre, Wigan
- Leigh Leisure Centre, Leigh

This week, two more vaccination clinics are opening, again for pre-booked appointments only:

- St Peter's Pavillion, Hindley
- Golborne Parkside Sports and Community Centre, Golborne

They are staffed by GP Practices, Wigan Borough CCG, Wigan Council and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles staff who are all working together.

Only people with an appointment can get vaccinated at the clinics, so residents are being asked not to just turn up.

### **How many more vaccination centres are planned and where would they be located?**

There are no plans to open any further vaccination clinics at this time.

### **When is the CCG expecting all over-80s (including those who are housebound but not care home residents) in Wigan to have been contacted and be vaccinated by?**

We are unable to give specific numbers and projections but with 4,000 local people already vaccinated in 2 weeks, indications are by the end of January we hope to be in a strong position to hit the target the government has set us at a local level for our priority groups, including those in care homes.

Currently, under the guidance, we can't yet vaccinate housebound patients. This is because of the requirements of both vaccines. However, we anticipate new guidance and so hope to be able to start offering the vaccine to housebound patients soon.

## **If over-80s have not been contacted about a vaccination, what should they do?**

We understand how much people want to be vaccinated themselves or to have their loved one vaccinated. Currently we are asking all those people in that age group who have not heard from their GP to wait for their GP practice to invite them – the same process for them getting their annual flu jab. Please be assured that they are on our list and will get invited.

## **How much notice are people given when they are offered a vaccine? How many people have turned down appointments? What have been the main reasons for not accepting appointments?**

We are trying to give as much notice as possible, but sometimes people are being invited with only 48 hours notice, depending on when we know about deliveries.

We have received no feedback from practices about patients turning vaccine down, so we don't believe this to be an issue at this time.

## **Have patients been offered an appointment for a second dose?**

The first patients to be vaccinated in the Borough were automatically given a second appointment at 3 weeks, in line with the guidance at that time. These appointments were confirmed over the phone, in person and in writing in some cases. The change in guidance recommending a longer wait between vaccines came quite close to these pre-booked second appointments. Given that all the people were over the age of 80 and it could cause confusion and distress if the appointments were cancelled, it was agreed these second doses would be given.

All patients being offered a vaccine now are being booked for their second vaccine in 10-12 weeks in line with the latest guidance.

Health and social care staff second doses were all cancelled in line with the advice.

## **How will the rollout of the AstraZeneca vaccine change the Wigan's vaccination programme?**

The approval of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine should make the programme easier to deliver as it is a more stable vaccine that we are able to transport and store for longer.

This should bring a number of benefits in order for us to reach our priority groups, particularly care home residents and hopefully the housebound longer term.

## **Are there any issues with deliveries of vaccine to the Borough?**

There are no issues with deliveries of vaccine into the Borough and we haven't had any deliveries cancelled to date. Getting the vaccine into hundreds of locations is a huge task that is being organised nationally. We are notified when we are going to get a delivery and as soon as we know, we start booking patients into appointments. Now we have 4 sites live, we will get more deliveries in to the Borough.

Where possible we want to avoid confusion with residents and our GP staff want to work as efficiently as possible so only booking people in when we have clear delivery confirmation.

## **Have any appointments been moved or cancelled?**

We have moved a small number of vaccines due to changes in delivery times. No first vaccine appointments have been cancelled. Some second appointments have been cancelled inline with national guidance.

## **Why are patients being invited to the Etihad Tennis Centre in Manchester or other centres further away?**

In order to vaccinate people as quickly as possible, additional regional vaccination centres have been opened across the country, on top of the local vaccination sites. The local one to us in Manchester, which is still quite far away from most Wigan Borough residents.

Some residents within Wigan Borough will get invited to get vaccinated at these regional sites by NHS England. The vaccination programme in the Borough continues and all eligible patients will be invited as soon as possible, so patients who can't or don't want to go to Manchester shouldn't worry.

If patients already have an appointment at a local centre, they should ignore the letter and attend their booked appointment in the Borough.

## **What is the impact on other NHS services?**

COVID19 is having a huge impact on NHS and council services across health and social care, with the number of cases putting pressure on our local hospitals.

The COVID19 Vaccination Programme is an essential piece of work. However, GPs, nurses and pharmacists from local GP practices are staffing these clinics delivering vaccines. This puts GP practices under increased pressure. If you can seek help from pharmacy before contacting your GP practice, please do. If you are unsure what help you need, please contact NHS 111 either online or over the phone. If you do need help from your GP practice, they are still there for you, but please be patient if it takes a little longer than usual for them to get back to you.