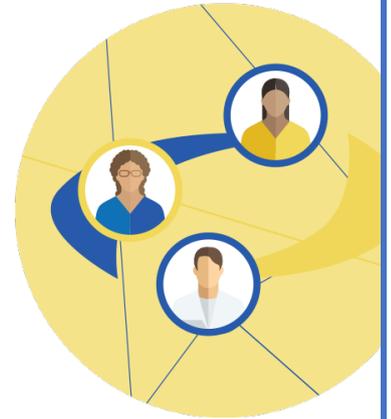


Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire LMC Ltd: Weekly Update for Practices, Additional Weekly Update 9th February 2021



After we had finalised our weekly update last Friday, we received some further information from GPC which we think we should circulate now rather than wait until the end of the week. There are some updates about the covid vaccination programme and some information about a FOI request about gift registers and conflicts of interest received by practices.

1. **COVID-19 vaccination programme**

a) Vaccination of JCVI cohorts 1-4

NHSE/I wrote a [letter to LVS sites](#) on 4th February, to remind them that everyone in JCVI cohorts 1-4 should be offered the opportunity to be vaccinated by *Monday 15 February*, and to try to minimise any inequalities in vaccine uptake between different patient groups in those cohort wherever possible. NHSE/I asked each PCN site to confirm that they have made an offer to all patients in cohorts 1-4 by the 15th by filling in the form by close on Monday.

If a vaccination site does not believe they have sufficient vaccine to complete this, they should contact NHSE/I through their local system as soon as possible so that additional supplies can be provided.

The letter also included details about a welcome additional supplement of £10 per visit to a housebound patient to administer the COVID-19 vaccinations. This supplement is on top of the £12.58 Item of Service fee. The supplement applies retrospectively to any first dose vaccinations since 14 December 2020, and second doses within the arrangement.

LMC comment – the letter also informed LVS sites that a public announcement would be made this week asking everyone over 70 who hadn't been vaccinated to contact a mass vaccination site or their GP

b) National call/recall letters to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people

As of 3 February, people aged 18 and over in the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) cohort (as identified through the [Shielded Patient List](#)) will receive letters from the national call/recall service informing them that they are now eligible to receive their COVID-19 vaccine. The letters make it clear that people have a choice of where to get vaccinated and can choose to wait for their GP services to contact them directly, if they haven't already, or book into a vaccination centre or community pharmacy. A [copy of the letter and a PCN letter template](#) are available in the letter pack on the [FutureNHS platform](#) (sign in required).

It is concerning that these letters are not directly linked to a patient's local GP vaccination service, nor the stage at which the local area has reached in terms of vaccination coverage, and we are continuing to discuss how to improve this with NHSE/I.

c) Movement of AstraZeneca vaccines

Moving the AstraZeneca/Oxford vaccine between locations across a single PCN grouping is both encouraged and legal if it will help minimise inequalities, maximise access and ensure timely vaccine usage. We believe the delivery of vaccination from local practices will enable more patients to access and receive the vaccine and would expect local systems to support this. The [Standard Operating Procedures](#), outlines the cold chain arrangements which need to be adhered to do this. See more information in [the NHSE/I letter of 7 January 2021](#).

NHSE/I has also published a [position statement for the vaccination of care home residents using COVID-19 Vaccine AstraZeneca \(AZ\)](#), recommending that when planning a vaccination session for local care homes, a risk assessment should be undertaken to identify the risk factors associated with the transfer of the vaccine for administration to remaining care home patients.

Annex B of the recent NHSE/I document [Mutual aid and the transfer of COVID-19 vaccines between Hospital Hubs, Vaccination Centres and Local Vaccination Services](#) sets out that as long as the relevant guidance is followed, local commissioners should be offering a supportive role in facilitating the movement of the AZ vaccine within a PCN grouping and do not need to seek formal approval for moving the vaccine in line with the arrangements set out in the letter. It also advises that once moved, the vaccine should either be administered or immediately put in a refrigerator at a practice site within the PCN grouping, and ideally administered within 24 hours or over the following days.

d) Second doses

[Chapter 14a \(on COVID-19\) of the 'The Green Book'](#) has been updated for patients due to start immunosuppressive treatment, so that for example, if prior to cancer the patient has had therapy or a solid organ transplant they could be offered a vaccine prior to starting treatment, if clinically recommended. This includes potentially having the second dose at 3 or 4 weeks after the first.

Last week, we raised with NHSE/I the need for practice sites to be able to start planning giving second doses by booking appointments. On Friday, LVS (Local Vaccination Service) sites were sent a message about the scheduling about preparing for the second dose vaccination clinics for cohorts 1-2 which should go live as of week commencing 1 March 2021. The allocated quantity of vaccines will be based on quantity of first dose delivered by site (full pack unless a pack-down option was provided). The second dose clinics will take place 11 weeks post first dose clinics so the 12 week lead time between doses is achieved. Practice sites should be provided with scheduled delivery day of second dose volumes by the end of this week, and are asked to schedule clinics up to the end of March once delivery schedule by day has been communicated.

We also believe it would be reasonable for GP sites to now give all those patients who have received the AstraZeneca vaccine an appointment for a second dose, and to do this for these patients when the first dose is given to reduce the workload involved in contacting patients at a separate time.

e) New vaccination information helpline and alternative point of care systems

A new COVID-19 vaccination information web resource and helpdesk has been set up for practice managers to help you find out answers to questions about records of vaccinations.

New assured point of care systems for recording COVID-19 vaccinations will also be available soon for practices which can be used as an alternative to Pinnacle. This provides greater choice and reduces reliance on any one supplier. As currently happens, all the data will flow into the GP record within 48 hours. These developments are in direct response to requests from GPC England on behalf of general practice.

Find out more information about your COVID-19 vaccination queries, how the vaccinations are recorded, common errors or difficulties and how to get help in these [FAQs by NHS Digital](#).

2. Freedom of Information requests for practices' Gift and Hospitality register

Practices were last week sent an email by St Andrew's University, asking for copies of their Gifts and Hospitality register and Declaration of Interests Register for 2019/20, following a [recommendation by NHS Employers](#) to request and annually publish declarations of interests in the NHS.

This caused significant concern when practices are so busy focusing on the pandemic and the COVID vaccination programme, and after we raised this issue urgently with the University they apologised for the concern caused and we were pleased that they immediately agreed to withdraw their request.

BHLMC Job Board Advertise your practice vacancies with us on our Job Board on the website [here](#). If you are interested in posting an advert please contact lmadmin@bhlmc.co.uk for more information.

If you have missed any of our regular bulletins for practices, please visit the [Weekly Updates](#) section of our website.

If you are a Locum and would like to receive mailings and updates from Beds & Herts LMC Ltd please register via the [online form](#) and we can add you to our database.

Wellbeing for GPs: [Visit our webpage](#).

Contact Us:
Beds & Herts LMC, Tel: 01438 880010
Email: lmadmin@bhlmc.co.uk
Website: www.bedshertslmcs.org.uk/contact_us

