

## Update on what the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is doing to respond to coronavirus (3 March 2021)

### Norfolk and Waveney's COVID-19 vaccine programme continues at pace with more choice for patients looking to book appointments

Norfolk and Waveney's COVID-19 vaccine programme continues to move at pace with a range of options and locations for appointments now available for local people.

It comes as the region's COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to make good progress, with 341,600 people, or 40.1% of our over 16 population, having received their first dose by 21 February, according to data published by NHS England and NHS Improvement. This places Norfolk and Waveney fourth out of 42 health systems in England. The national average is 32.8% and the regional average is 34.0%.

GP practices in Norfolk and Waveney continue to work incredibly hard to vaccinate priority groups and are currently focusing on those aged 16-64 with underlying health conditions. If you are in this group, please do not contact your GP directly, they will contact you as soon as it's your turn.

Patients aged 60-69 years old who have received a letter inviting them to book a vaccine appointment should do so through the national website [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination) or call [119](tel:119).

Appointments are available via the national booking system at a number of large vaccination centres in Norfolk and Waveney including, Hayden Chemist, Lowestoft; Castle Quarter Shopping Centre, Norwich; Connaught Hall, Attleborough; North Walsham Community Centre; Lowestoft old Law Courts and Norwich Community Hospital.

Appointments for large scale vaccination centres are released in line with vaccine supply, so some sites will come and go, depending on when the patient accesses the system, so the local NHS is urging those who are eligible for an appointment to be patient and keep checking.

GP practices will also be vaccinating people aged 60-69, so if you don't want to book an appointment via the national booking system, you should wait for your local GP practice to invite you for an appointment. Please do not contact your local GP practice or hospital; please wait to be invited.

Melanie Craig, Chief Executive of NHS Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to make great progress in Norfolk and Waveney and I would like to thank our fantastic NHS staff, volunteers and local communities who have rallied to support this unprecedented effort.

"Local people now have a range of options and locations for appointments available to them. People who have received a letter inviting them to book an appointment via the national booking service can look for an appointment at a time and location that's convenient to them.

"New appointments are regularly being added, so please be patient and keep checking if you don't immediately see an appointment in a suitable location for you.

"Alternatively, people can choose to wait to be contacted by their local GP services."

Once vaccinated people should continue to follow Covid safety rules including social distancing guidance and, if you can, wear something that covers your nose and mouth in places where it's hard to stay away from other people.

## COVID-19 vaccinations offered to unpaid carers of elderly and disabled people across Norfolk and Waveney

Local health and care organisations are urging 'unknown' carers to register their contact details in order to get an appointment at one of Norfolk and Waveney's 34 COVID-19 vaccination sites.

In line with national guidance, appointments for COVID-19 vaccination are now being offered to eligible, unpaid carers identified within cohort 6 by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). The JCVI defines carer eligibility as:

**Anyone who is the sole or primary carer of an older or disabled person who is clinically vulnerable to COVID-19.**

This definition of eligibility includes those who are:

- The parents or primary carers of children and young people who are disabled and are clinically vulnerable to COVID-19
- Young carers aged 16+ of people who are elderly or clinically vulnerable
- Caring for someone with severe mental illness

The NHS, county councils, and carer organisations want to identify carers who may not be registered or known to their GP practice or local council services. They are also calling on any paid carers who have not yet been offered the vaccine to get in touch.

Those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person but do not receive a carer allowance or related benefits are unlikely to be known to their local authority. And those who have not notified their GP of their caring responsibilities will not be flagged as a carer on their GP record. These 'unknown' carers are now asked to make contact with local health and care services so they can be invited for vaccination in the coming weeks.

Eligible carers of an elderly or disabled person who:

- are aged 16+ (there is currently no vaccine licensed for under-16s)
- have not already got an appointment booked for COVID-19 vaccination and
- have not already had their first vaccine

...can contact us between now and 31 March to register themselves as a carer. The easiest way to do this is online at: <http://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/carervax>.

A 24/7 telephone voicemail service is available for people to leave their contact details but only if they are unable to register as an eligible carer online 01603 257 256.

Paid care workers who have not yet received a vaccine or been identified via their employer should also contact Norfolk County Council via the same website address - <http://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/carervax>. This could include people working for a home care provider, a private agency, people paid as a personal assistant through Direct Payments or those working under a private arrangement.

If you are registered as a carer with your GP practice or are in receipt of regular carers allowance payments you should automatically receive an invite and do not need to contact us.

**If you are not eligible for vaccination as a carer, please do not contact your GP practice or try to register for a COVID-19 vaccination.** It is important these appointments are prioritised for those who are now eligible under this cohort to help protect them and those they care for.

Younger adults in long-stay in-patient, nursing, and residential care settings are also eligible for vaccination under cohort 6, but will be vaccinated by 'roving' vaccination teams who will be in touch with homes directly to book in their vaccinations.

If any carer feels they will have challenges getting to their appointment, including with transport or due to leaving the person they look after, free support is available from Caring Together. Please visit: [www.caringtogether.org](http://www.caringtogether.org) for more information.



## Are you the MAIN CARER of an older or disabled person who is clinically vulnerable to COVID-19?

This includes carers who are:

- Parent / primary carer of children and young people who are disabled / clinically vulnerable to COVID-19
- Young Carers aged 16+ of people who are elderly or clinically vulnerable
- Caring for someone with severe mental illness



We need your contact details so we can invite you for a vaccine visit [apps.norfolk.gov.uk/carervax](https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/carervax) or call **01603 257 256**

### Other updates on the COVID-19 vaccination programme

#### Latest information published about the vaccination programme for people aged 50-65

An updated letter to all patients aged 50-65 is now available on NHS Norfolk and Waveney CCG's website. It explains all about the vaccination programme, including the different options available for people to get vaccinated, such as local GP hubs, community pharmacies, large vaccination centres and more. If you are 50-65, please don't call your GP practice to ask for an appointment.

Read the letter [here](#).

#### New vaccination centre opens in Harleston

The NHS opened a new large scale COVID-19 vaccination centre at the old Paddock Road Surgery in Harleston on Sunday, 28 February 2021. The centre provides an additional option to the large scale vaccination centres already delivering vaccines in Kings Lynn, Norwich, Attleborough, North Walsham and Lowestoft; and the hubs already successfully delivering vaccinations in local hospitals and by GPs across the county.

Find out more [here](#).

#### Vaccinating people with learning disabilities, autism and severe mental illness

We are now prioritising vaccinating people with learning disabilities, autism and severe mental illness. We know that these people can struggle in noisy or busy environments, so going to a large vaccination centre, even where people are socially distanced, can be daunting and difficult.

This is why the JPUH has opened an accessible vaccination clinic for people with LD and autism. All the screening questions are done in advance before the patient gets there and at the appointment it is just the vaccinator and the patient, who can be accompanied by a family member or carer.

Watch nurse Rebecca Crossle talk about the clinic [here](#).

## People from BAME communities encouraged to have COVID-19 vaccine

Dr Davis Nwaka, a microbiology consultant at the James Paget Hospital, has described why it's important for people from BAME communities have the COVID-19 vaccine.

Watch his video [here](#).

## Information about the vaccination programme published in other languages

Updated information about the vaccination programme is now available in the following languages:

Swahili (Kiswahili)	Slovakian (Slovensky)
Romanian (Română)	Lithuanian (Lietuvis)
Portuguese (Português)	Latvian (Latvietis)
Kurdish Sorani (Kurdî)	Farsi Persian (فارسی)
Chinese Mandarin (中國人)	Russian (русский)

Find out more [here](#).

## Good news for NNUH oncology patients

Members of staff in the NNUH Colney Centre are being thanked this week after recent figures showed they have kept services for patients running with minimal interruption during the second wave of the pandemic.

Overall activity within oncology increased by 2.1% from April 2020 – December 2020, when compared with the same period of the previous year. Additionally overall activity within oncology for the same period was 63.2% higher than the activity targets set by NHSE as a result of Covid-19.

Dr Gaurav Kapur, Service Director for Oncology, said: "This is very reassuring and welcome news both for us and our patients. It shows that we continued to function at the same level as we did in 2019, before the pandemic, in terms of providing non-surgical cancer care to patients in our region."

Not only has normal service been maintained the department has also rolled out the new mobile cancer care unit during this period, allowing patients to receive chemotherapy closer to their homes and avoiding having to come into the hospital.

Medical Director Professor Erika Denton, said: "This is fantastic for our patients, and a significant achievement for our oncology team. It really shows the dedication they have for our patients in ensuring that the pandemic had minimal impact on the delivery of their care."

## Mental health support available for the public

- It's important that we look after our mental wellbeing during this time – for tips and advice visit [www.everymindmatters.co.uk](http://www.everymindmatters.co.uk).
- If you are worried about your own mental health and wellbeing call First Response, a free 24/7 helpline offering immediate support, on 0808 196 3494.
- 11 to 25 year olds in Norfolk and Waveney can get support and online counselling via [www.Kooth.com](http://www.Kooth.com). The service provides support or advice on any topic, including managing your feelings during the pandemic.
- JustOneNorfolk has a wealth of information and links to support the health and wellbeing of your family: [www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk](http://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk).