

Briefing and Q&A for the COVID vaccination roll out

The announcement that Basildon University Hospital will start rolling out the COVID vaccination programme tomorrow (8 December) has generated some initial enquiries from the public and GP practices in the Basildon area. We hope that the following briefing and Q&A might help prepare you for any further enquiries.

Introduction from the NHS

The NHS will begin vaccinating patients against coronavirus at dozens of hospital hubs from this week at the start of the biggest immunisation programme in history.

People aged 80 and over as well as care home workers will be first to receive the jab, along with NHS workers who are at higher risk. NHS staff have been working through the weekend to prepare for the launch of the programme with the first vaccinations happening from Tuesday.

There are 50 hubs in the first wave and more hospitals will start vaccinating over the coming weeks and months as the programme ramps up. Patients aged 80 and above who are already attending hospital as an outpatient, and those who are being discharged home after a hospital stay, will be among the first to receive the life-saving jab. Hospitals will also begin inviting over 80s in for a jab and work with care home providers to book their staff in to vaccination clinics.

Any appointments not used for these groups will be used for healthcare workers who are at highest risk of serious illness from COVID. All those vaccinated will need a booster jab 21 days later.

GPs and other primary care staff are also being put on standby to start delivering the jab. A small number of GP-led primary care networks will begin doing so during the following week (week beginning 14 December) with more practices in more parts of the country joining in on a phased basis during December and in the coming months.

Vaccination centres treating large numbers of patients in sporting venues, conference centres and NHS sites will subsequently stand up when further supplies of vaccine come on stream.

Vaccination programme at Basildon University Hospital (BUH)

From Tuesday 8 December the first COVID vaccinations will be offered at the vaccination hub at Basildon Hospital. The first cohort of people who are eligible for the vaccine are those aged 80 or over who have been contacted via text message. People who have been contacted and offered the free vaccination can book online through the link provided within the text message or by calling a dedicated booking line on 0333 0153 478.

Some questions answered:

The below FAQs relate only to the initial acute site at Basildon University Hospital that is going live on Tuesday 8th December. Further FAQs will be published as the programme roles out.

Q. I have received a text message – is it a scam?

A. If you have received a text message from Basildon University Hospital it means that you are eligible to have the COVID-19 vaccine during the first wave of the vaccination programme. The text you have received will have clear NHS mid and south Essex (MSE) branding with a link that allows you to book an appointment and there will also be a telephone like option.

The Government has asked us to initially focus on those who are at highest risk of serious COVID complications – this principally being people who are over 80 years old, alongside people who work in care homes and some people who work in health and care who are classified as ‘high risk’.

Q. I have no transport to get to BUH what can I do?

A. If you are unable to get to the hospital you will still be offered the vaccination, possibly in your own home, on another date by your primary care provider. There are no patient transport services available for the vaccination programme.

Q. I don't want to travel to hospital for the vaccine as it's a COVID risk?

A. The hospital is safe and COVID secure. Any person needing to come to hospital should attend if they possibly can. Our vaccination hub is inside the main entrance to the hospital in a newly built vaccination centre. Those attending for their appointment must wear a mask and observe social distance guidelines.

Q. I am housebound – how can I get my jab?

A. You will still be offered the vaccination even if you cannot get to hospital or your local medical centre. Your primary care provider will arrange this for you, but it is likely to be in the New Year. The initial roll out of the vaccination programme is being undertaken from special vaccination facilities only.

Q. I have not been invited – should I have been?

A. All those who are eligible to be offered the COVID vaccine at this time would have received a text message inviting them to book an appointment. The Government has asked us to initially focus on those who are at highest risk of serious COVID complications. Everybody will be invited to have the vaccination but this programme will take several months.

Q. Should patients contact their medical practice about existing medicines clashing with the vaccination?

A. It is important that anyone unsure about taking a particular type of vaccine should discuss it with their GP. All those people over 80 attending for a vaccine will receive a pre-assessment review by a doctor prior to having the vaccine.

Further general information about the vaccination programme may be found here
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/12/hospitals-to-start-biggest-ever-nhs-vaccination-programme-this-week/>

Vaccination Q&A v1
071220