



COVID-19 Briefing



COVID-19 ICS update - 1 April 2021

This bulletin provides important information for people working in health and care across the North East and North Cumbria regarding guidance and actions being co-ordinated across our region to care for patients, staff and our communities in the light of COVID-19. We will do our best to keep you updated with the latest information and key decisions from the Health Co-ordinating Group. This group is led by Alan Foster, executive lead for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System. If you have any questions or would like us to send vital information to partners through this bulletin, please contact us [here](#).

Message from Alan Foster



Thank you, Professor Chris Gray

I would like to start today's message with a special mention to Professor Chris Gray who has retired today. As I mentioned a few weeks ago in this bulletin he has been a fantastic clinical lead for our ICS and we would all like to thank him for his outstanding contribution of more than 40 years to health and care across the region. To quote a comment from a colleague today 'a great and wise clinician...talented surfer, guitarist and all-round top bloke!'. I think we would all agree with that! Best of luck Chris, and enjoy your retirement!

Have a safe Easter

There is lots being communicated across the region to remind people to stay safe while socialising with friends and family outdoors over the Easter break. We have shared our own message on social media which you can see [here](#) and it reminds people to follow the rules if they are meeting up outdoors and to use our services sensibly.

Our colleagues at Northumberland County Council have also shared this [media release](#) urging people to act responsibly as it is anticipated that beauty spots across the county will be popular places to meet with friends and family.

Sadly, in recent months some of our staff have been on the receiving end of increasing frustration from patients. NHS staff in GP practices across Newcastle are asking local people to be kind and remember that they are people too. I am sure this is relevant to many staff across our region, so please do help to share this important message on your own channels and remind the public it's not ok to abuse staff. You can find out more [here](#).

Covid-19 vaccinations

We continue to be on target to have offered cohorts 1-9 their first dose of the vaccination by mid-April. Working with clinical commissioning groups and local authorities we are looking at the data to identify areas where uptake is lower to inform where we need to focus our efforts moving forward.

Figures [released today](#) show we have delivered more than 1.6 million vaccines. This remains the highest cumulative number of vaccines delivered in the country, a phenomenal achievement. Thank you to everyone involved.

Following the opening of the mass vaccination centre in Penrith last week, our colleagues at North Cumbria CCG have shared this informative walkthrough [video](#), showing a patients walkthrough of the site.

Integrated care systems now live across the whole of the NHS

Today the whole of the NHS is now covered by Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and NHS Chief Executive Sir Simon Stevens has shared this [video](#) discussing the importance of systems and the better care they provide. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone working across health and care in our region. By working together, we have achieved so much and that is thanks to a collective effort and commitment to system working.

Workforce transformation

Thank you to everyone who joined our virtual workforce stakeholder engagement event on Monday which was led by the workstream's senior responsible officer Ken Bremner and our director of workforce Jill Cassells.

Clearly the focus for the workstream over the past year has been to support the region's response to the pandemic where, despite the challenges, we were able to work collaboratively to deliver many important initiatives. These include enabling people to return back to the NHS to support our COVID efforts, enabling easier movement of staff across organisations and to support the vaccine programme, and the establishment of our regional staff wellbeing hub.

Monday's event was an opportunity for us all to reflect on the year gone and discuss how we keep moving forward to deliver our key priorities which are to grow our workforce, improve health and well-being, and equality, diversity and inclusion, and improve system leadership capacity and develop new ways of working.

Lots of great discussions and the outputs from the event will be informing workforce plans as part of our recovery and shared in more detail by Ken and Jill over the coming months.

Ambition to become England's greenest region

We were pleased to announce our support for the North East of England Climate Coalition (NEECCo) which this week launched a collective ambition for the North East to become England's greenest region. We know that climate change is already having a negative impact on people's health and wellbeing. It's therefore in the interests of the health system to get fully behind this initiative and to play our part in reducing carbon emissions, protecting and enhancing nature and providing positive impacts for all. You can read more about this [here](#).

Thank you

I would like to say thank you to everyone who will be working over the bank holiday, I know things continue to be very busy for everyone but your continued support is much appreciated.

Best wishes,

Alan

Alan Foster is the executive lead for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System

Other news and updates

The R number in the UK: The latest reproduction number (R) and growth rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK can be found here on [GOV.UK](#).

Public Health England dashboard: The Public Health England (PHE) dashboard can be found [here](#). Daily reporting includes deaths that have occurred in all settings where

there has been a positive COVID-19 test, including hospitals, care homes and the wider community. The report also includes case rates per 100,000 resident population at lower-tier local authority level.

National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports: A link to the weekly national flu and COVID-19 report, monitoring COVID-19 activity, seasonal flu and other seasonal respiratory illnesses can be found [here](#).

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