



News

ICS update - 20 May 2021

This bulletin provides an update from the Integrated Care System in the North East and North Cumbria regarding our latest information and plans to care for patients, staff and our communities. This Integrated Care System is led by Alan Foster, executive lead. 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



Surge testing

You will be aware that last night it was announced by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care that North Tyneside would become one of six new areas to start surge testing and ramp up Covid-19 vaccinations following a sharp rise in coronavirus cases and detection of a variant first identified in India. You can read the latest update [here](#).

This is of course a reminder to us all of the importance of remaining vigilant. Current evidence is that the vaccine is effective against this new variant and that it doesn't cause more serious illness - although it does appear to pass to others more easily. Our directors of public health in the north east's seven local authorities have also released this [statement](#) today.

Covid-19 vaccine

It's a testament to all our teams that we have made significant in-roads to vaccinating our communities - with more than 2.7 million doses of the vaccine given across the region.

I do hope this provides reassurances to our communities at this time – especially our most vulnerable. That said, we are all continuing to do what we can to encourage those that are eligible for a vaccine, who have not taken up the offer, to come forward for their vaccine across our region. And this week it was great to see the programme being extended to those aged 34 and over.

In line with government and JCVI guidance we are also now bringing forward second dose vaccine offers from 12 weeks to eight weeks for people in the highest priority groups (cohorts 1-9). We are asking people not to call their GP, or cancel their second dose, but to wait to be contacted. People are being encouraged to attend their original site for their second vaccine.

Those who have had a full course of the COVID-19 vaccine can now demonstrate their vaccination status for international travel and a range of resources can be accessed [here](#). This includes encouraging people to download the NHS App. These resources should help support those GP practices who are getting lots of people calling their surgeries to find out more.

The Moderna vaccine will soon be offered to primary care sites across the region. The Pfizer vaccine has also been authorised to be able to be stored for 30 days in a fridge by European Medicines Agency (EMA) and is now awaiting authorisation from Medicines Health Regulatory Authority (MHRA). As you will be aware this is the advised alternative to Astra Zeneca vaccine for those aged under 40s (1st dose).

Vaccine boosters

We are starting to model what a vaccine booster programme for those aged over 50 in the Autumn will look like for our region. Although we are awaiting details from NHS England, what we do know is that we will need to balance the delivery of the boosters and maintain access to primary care. It's a big ask which is why we are starting to think and plan this all through now. Supporting each other and working collaboratively where we can will be vital - as it has been throughout the pandemic.

Riverside stadium

Due to international matches the Riverside Large Vaccination Centre is temporarily closed for half term. More vaccination slots will be offered next week at the Riverside and extra capacity has been added for Darlington Arena during half term. The site will return to normal on the 9 June.

Thanks again to all the teams involved in the vaccination programme – there's a huge amount of work that goes on to make this all happen. Well done.

Workforce lateral flow testing

Across all our organisations we are encouraging our teams to do regular lateral flow tests and reporting, and this continues to be a key tool in preventing the transmission of Covid-19. In case you are not aware, there are a series of assets which can be used to support your own internal communications. Please [get in touch](#) if you would like to access these resources.

Using services sensibly

As restrictions eased further this week and with bank holidays and half term approaching we have been reminding local people to use emergency, hospital and primary care services sensibly. This message is being shared across social media accounts and in the media. You can read our release [here](#).

This week we also launched a new aspect of our #DoYourBit campaign reminding people if they are coming into hospital to bring their medicines with them. The campaign is now live on social media and the toolkit has been shared with communication leads across the patch. You can read more [here](#).

Health and wellbeing

It was great to see an exciting collaboration with the community and third sector to improve health in north Cumbria this month.

The North Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Mela, organised by Rotary and supported by the NHS and third sector groups, featured local people sharing information to help people living in their own community. The Sanskrit word mela means sharing of information and celebration. In total there are 20 short films looking at a range of issues from how to reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes or stroke to getting more active, and the support available from Citizen's Advice. You can view the films [here](#) or the full film can be viewed [here](#).

Reducing the risks of cancer for people with learning disabilities

A new campaign has been launched by people with learning disabilities – the Be Cancer Aware team - in collaboration with the Learning Disability Network and Northern Cancer Alliance to raise awareness of how people can reduce their risk of cancer.

Be Cancer Aware are seven teams of people with learning disabilities, based with self-advocacy organisations, who deliver cancer awareness messages to the learning disability community across the North East and Cumbria.

The new campaign introduces a [film](#) and message cards showing what can people with learning disabilities are doing to reduce their risk of cancer. The campaign is also asking people to share photos/stories on what they are doing to reduce their risk of cancer and delivering online training to our peers.

You can follow the campaign [social media](#) and on the [website](#) and on the Northern Cancer Alliance [Facebook page](#).

Thank you to all our health and care teams across the region for all they are doing to keep us all safe and well.

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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