



# Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## Self-isolation removed for close contacts of those who are fully vaccinated - Attached

From Monday 16 August, people who have had two COVID vaccinations or aged under 18 will no longer be legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. With 75% of people having received both doses of the vaccine, the majority of adults will no longer need to self-isolate if they are contacts. Read more [here](#)

NHSE/I has distributed a system letter on how the government's changes to the requirements to self-isolate following a positive COVID-19 contact will impact staff and students working in the NHS.

The letter [can be found here](#).

Also **attached** is a Q&A guidance document from Freeths that might be useful to practices regarding the new close contact self-isolation exemption rules.

## COVID-19 vaccination programme data

[Three quarters of UK adults](#) have now received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and the data shows that two doses provide over 90% protection against hospitalisation from the Delta variant, which is the dominant strain in the UK. Dr Richard Vautrey, Chair of BMA GPC has commented about the amazing achievement of general practice teams and many others vaccinating so many so quickly [here](#).

## Mandatory requirement for vaccinations to enter care home

DHSC [has published guidance](#) on new [regulations which make COVID-19 vaccination a requirement for NHS staff entering care homes](#) in England. This includes all staff in NHS commissioned services going into care homes. The last date for a care home worker to get their first vaccination in time to be fully protected is 16 September as the regulations requiring two vaccinations will come into force on 11 November. Booster doses are not currently covered by the regulations but may be added in the future. There are only a limited number of exemptions, and we are currently discussing this with DHSC.

## COVID-19 pandemic recovery workload prioritisation guidance

As the COVID-19 restrictions are easing across the UK, and despite the success of the vaccination programme, the workload pressures caused by the pandemic remain at record levels.

The UK is currently moving through a third wave of infections, driven by the delta variant, leading to large numbers of COVID-19 cases, albeit often less severe than in previous waves, many of whom are managed by GPs and their teams. General practice not only continues to deliver the vaccination programme, but also provides routine acute and long-term care to patients and supports large numbers of individuals who are awaiting specialist assessment or treatment.





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In light of these workload pressures, GPC England and RCGP have updated their [joint COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Workload Prioritisation Guidance](#) for GP practices.

The LMC consortium has previously taken the line that practices should prioritise their workload based on their own professional clinical judgement. The LMC will support practices making these decisions during this continued challenging period.

## **BMA Infection control guidance**

The BMA has updated its [guidance on reducing risk in healthcare settings](#) following the easing of restrictions on 19 July, to reflect the fact that COVID-19 is still circulating in the community, and the need to continue to reduce the risk of infection in healthcare settings.

The report sets out a number of measures that need to be taken by employers and government to reduce the risk of infection in all healthcare settings, including, adequate workplace and individual staff risk assessments; providing staff facilities that support infection control; a greater focus on ventilation in healthcare environments; the provision of safe and sufficient PPE; and reporting and investigation of COVID-19 cases suspected to have arisen from work.

The government's [infection control guidance for healthcare settings](#) still applies following the lifting of the restrictions and as confirmed by the [government](#), healthcare settings should maintain face coverings among other IPC measures. Download the BMA's poster for practices to display, about the continued use of face coverings for healthcare settings, [here](#).

## **BMA survey reveals worrying levels of abuse against doctors and staff**

A [BMA survey](#) of doctors in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, published earlier this week, showed that more than half of GPs responding have faced recent verbal abuse from patients, or those close to them. The survey was widely reported in national and local media, including in [this powerful piece in the Guardian](#).

## **LMC job vacancy**

The LMC consortium is looking to recruit a Support Officer to provide admin support to the five LMCs in Lancashire and Cumbria. More information can be found [here](#).

