



Update from the Consortium of Lancashire & Cumbria LMCs

Tuesday 20th April 2021

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Those aged 45 and over in England are now eligible to book an appointment via the [NHS national booking service](#) to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Practice groups can now invite these patients for their first vaccination if they have sufficient supplies alongside continuing with second vaccinations to those patients who are due to receive it.

This follows a statement published by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on [phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#), which recommends that the most effective way to minimise hospitalisations and deaths is to continue to prioritise people by age.

BMA GPC and NHSE/I have agreed an extension to the existing enhanced service specification for practice sites to administer vaccinations to patients between the age of 18 and 50. The service specification arrangements for this second phase of the programme will mirror the arrangements for the first phase, and sites will still get the £12.58 item of service fee for each vaccine administered. Read more about the next phase of the vaccination programme [here](#).

JCVI have also advised that individuals aged 18 to 49 years, in particular males in certain black, Asian or ethnic minority (BAME) communities, those with a BMI of 30 or more (obese/morbidly obese), and those experiencing socio-economic deprivation, should take up the offer of vaccination, as data has indicated that there is an increased risk of hospitalisation for this group.

In addition, the [Moderna vaccine](#) has begun to be delivered across more than 20 vaccination sites in England, following use in Scotland and Wales, for those aged 18-29 who are eligible, providing another alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine in line with updated [MHRA guidance](#) last week.

Vaccinating during Ramadan

NHSE/I has published guidance on supporting [COVID-19 vaccine uptake during the Islamic month of Ramadan](#) which began on Monday 12 April 2021. The guidance aims to help vaccination sites build confidence, reduce barriers to access and support the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine amongst Muslim communities during the month of Ramadan.

PRINCIPLE trial on COVID treatment

Following the publication of findings from the Oxford-led [PRINCIPLE trial](#) on inhaled budesonide as a potential COVID treatment, NHSE/I has issued the following [advice](#) which states:





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Inhaled budesonide is **not** currently being recommended as standard of care but can be considered (off-label) on a case-by-case basis for symptomatic COVID-19 positive patients, aged 65 and over or those aged 50 or over with co-morbidities, in line with the published [Interim Position Statement](#). This Interim Position Statement clarifies that this includes co-morbidities that are 'consistent with a long-term health condition from the flu list'.

Flu vaccination programme 2021/21

BMA GPC have now received confirmation from NHSE/I that there will not be central procurement of flu vaccine for the coming year's scheme, but the at-risk group will be extended as it was this year. Practices should therefore, where this is possible due to the late notice, take this into account when placing orders. The annual flu reimbursement letter was updated on 1 April. A copy of the latest version can be found [here](#). The letter confirmed that those aged 50-64 year old will be included in the 21/22 flu programme and also confirmed the inclusion of a QIVr vaccine (Supemtek).

GP Career Support Hub

A new [GP Career Support Hub](#) has been launched this week on the [Future NHS platform](#), containing all of the information GPs need to support them throughout their career.

The GP Career Support Hub is a central information point with resources to support GPs at all stages of their career - from newly qualified doctors to those approaching the end of their career. It provides information, guidance and support on career development, learning, mentoring, appraisals, career options/flexibility, wellbeing, pay and pensions to enable GPs to realise fulfilling, rewarding and exciting careers in general practice.

Don't forget we also provide a similar service – find more information on our [website](#).

Call for swift action to remove GMC's power to appeal tribunal decisions

Thirteen leading healthcare organisations, including the BMA and five royal colleges, are [calling on the UK government to act to remove the General Medical Council's power to appeal against decisions by medical practitioners' tribunals](#). The government agreed in 2018 that the power, which duplicates similar powers held by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA), should be scrapped. Its abolition is included in draft legislation to reform the way healthcare professionals are regulated, on which the government is consulting. The healthcare bodies have told Matt Hancock, health and social care secretary for England, that the move is urgent and should be made now, by including it in the forthcoming health and social care bill.



