



Issue 112/Wednesday 15 December 2021

This is the latest round-up of information for GP practices, produced by South East London CCG. Should you have any questions or need advice, contact your local borough primary care team in the first instance; they will escalate anything they can't resolve to south east London's Coronavirus co-ordination centre.

Please check for any borough-specific information, which will be attached to this bulletin by your borough primary care commissioning team.

COVID-19

Next steps for the NHS COVID-19 vaccine deployment

Please see [letter](#) from the 13th December here, which outlines the next steps for the vaccine.

Suspension of the 15-minute wait for vaccination with mRNA vaccine for COVID-19: UK CMOs' opinion

Today, changes will be made to the Green Book Chapter 14a (available [here](#)) which temporarily remove the requirement for patients to wait 15 minutes in some circumstances after receiving an mRNA vaccination. Please see the UK Chief Medical Officers' opinion [here](#). The National Protocol and PGD for Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty ®) and Moderna (Spikevax ®) will be updated and will be available [here](#), most likely by the afternoon of Wednesday 15 December. Sites are asked to implement the change from Thursday 16th December. All vaccination sites should review their through-put models and increase the number of appointments available on NBS or via their LBS.

Current guidance - COVID-19 vaccination programme: update following the UKHSA announcement on vaccine efficacy against the Omicron variant

Further to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) announcement on vaccine efficacy against the Omicron variant (read [here](#)), sites are asked to note and implement the actions below.

In light of the announcement, it is likely that many sites will experience high demand this weekend particularly, for walk in appointments.

To support with this, sites offering walk in clinics this weekend can use their discretion and offer booster vaccinations to those aged 18 to 39 years old at the minimum three month (91 day) interval, subject to having capacity. As with recent guidance, both Moderna (Spikevax®) and Comirnaty ®/ Pfizer BioNTech boosters can be offered. No updates are required to the PGDs and National Protocols to enable this.

Eligible people in cohorts 1-10 can already book an appointment on NBS for their booster dose. From Monday 13 December, cohort 11 (30-39 year olds) will also be able to book a booster appointment on NBS. Please refer to the operational note circulated on 10 December for further details.

Please continue to increase your capacity as planned. All vaccination teams should continue to focus on vaccinating those at highest risk from COVID-19 and in particular residents and staff in care homes, the housebound and people who are severely immunosuppressed. Please also continue to focus on tackling health inequalities.

Lines to take

Please note: We do not encourage or expect promotion of the fact that sites have capacity to vaccinate people who turn up opportunistically for their booster out of cohort.

The JCVI is clear that the risk to younger people is lower than for those who are older or who have an underlying health condition. The NHS continues to vaccinate in descending age order and based upon clinical priority, as usual, so that those at greater risk are prioritised.

- The Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine was not recommended for people under the age of 40 who were not in priority cohorts 1-6. Therefore, we do not anticipate an overwhelming demand from people who are not yet eligible to book their booster.
- However, we recognise that in some areas of the country, rollout of booster vaccinations has been faster because of differences in population sizes and in order to avoid waste.
- For this reason, this weekend NHS England has asked sites to operate with flexibility. People in cohorts 11 and 12 who received their primary dose 91 days ago (3 months) or longer and who are not yet eligible for a booster may turn up to a walk-in centre. *Where there is capacity and it is operationally and clinically viable to do so*, sites are supported to take the opportunity to vaccinate those people.
- Where this is not operationally possible because of limited capacity, sites are fully supported to refer people to alternative sites or to ask them to visit NBS to book an appointment.
- Any abuse or threatening behaviour shown towards our staff and volunteers will not be tolerated.

The latest UKHSA information can be found in full [here](#).

Booster vaccination guidance as advised by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) can be found in full [here](#).

If you have questions contact england.vaccinecentresgroupsupport@nhs.net for Vaccination Centres Support or england.pccovidvaccine@nhs.net for Local Vaccination Centres (Primary Care Networks and Pharmacies).

Second phase for children and young people aged 12 to 15: next steps for COVID-19 vaccine deployment

Please see [letter](#) on next steps on second dose vaccination for healthy 12- to 15- year-olds following the Government's acceptance of the updated advice from the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

COVID-19 testing and reporting

Regular antigen testing of all practice staff is critical to protect staff and patients and slow the spread of Covid-19. Staff testing is vital - even after vaccination. ALL test results regardless of outcome must be reported. Find out more [here](#) in our weekly update and below:

Staff testing: Reminder that all staff vaccinated or unvaccinated, should still be undertaking twice weekly asymptomatic testing using lateral flow test kits obtained from the .gov website (See below) and reporting ALL results on the government website. This is still needed to protect staff, colleagues, family member and patients within their care. It is advised when reporting to set up an account, this makes it quicker to report subsequent test results as previous information is pre-populated. You can also scan the QR code on the test cartridge in cases where the text is too small to read easily.

Lateral flow test kits for vaccination sites: Please note that staff and volunteers should be accessing test kits via the national government website and should be testing and reporting before attending site. Order: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> and Report: [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/report-a-covid-19-rapid-lateral-flow-test-result). However, sites are still encouraged to hold a small supply for emergency use in cases where staff or volunteers turn up without having tested. Please let the SEL CCG Testing Team selccg.covidtesting@nhs.net know if you need any small supplies for emergency use and we will support obtaining a small number of kits from our Local Authority Partners.

PCR kits in surgeries: Reminder that GP practices should have a small stock of PCR kits for use in emergencies for staff or patients who present with possible covid symptoms. Assistance in ordering these can be made via the Specialist Team via 119. Please follow the link for information. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-testing-in-general-practice>

Changes to collection of lateral flow kits from local sites and pharmacies: Many collection sites are now requiring a 'collection code' before issuing up to 2 lateral flow test kits (7 tests in each box). The code can be obtained by following the information on the government website <https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits> to obtain a collect code via text and email. Alternatively, some collection points are displaying a QR code which can be scanned to access a form which once completed will generate a collect code.

Lateral flow Instructions in other languages: SEL have successfully managed to petition for the 3 main languages used by Afghanistan's to support the many other translations already available. These can now be found on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-self-test-help>

Any testing questions please contact avril.satchwell@nhs.net Head of SEL CCG Covid Testing or the wider SEL Testing Team at selccg.covidtesting@nhs.net

GP updates

Controlled Drugs Newsletter - Winter Edition

Please find attached the [Winter 2021 newsletter](#) from the NHS England and Improvement London Region Controlled Drug Accountable Office (CDAO) team. The newsletter provides helpful information in relation to:

- CD destruction and authorised witnesses
- Safe management of prescription stationary
- Private prescribing and requisitioning of Schedule 2/3 CDs
- Patient safety errors

Please contact your pharmaceutical adviser if you have any further queries relating to the information included in this newsletter.

Mind in South East London and SLAM NHS Foundation Trust suicide bereavement service

The [service](#) provides emotional and practical support to people of all ages, with a focus on the recently bereaved, in Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. The service provides one-to-one support and bereavement counselling, and starting in the new year suicide bereavement groups. It also offers information and signposting. The service accepts self-referrals and referrals from professionals. A [poster](#) and [leaflet](#) are available for download.

Pathfinder projects to tackle London's health challenges using the power of data at scale

Clinical Effectiveness South East London (CESEL) has led a successful application for one of four pathfinder project bids, which will inform how the use of data at scale can improve health outcomes and support the delivery of the [London Health Data Strategy](#).

The projects will work in partnership with the NHS, the research community, and citizens in London over the next 12 months, to deliver measurable improvements in health, alongside developing the systems and trusted health data environments needed to link data safely and securely for service planning, improvement, and research. Selected following a London-wide application and interview process, the successful local bid will enhance identification of high-risk hypertensive patient groups and share best practice of tailored interventions to improve detection and control.

Further details of all the successful pathfinder projects can be accessed [here](#).

A number of recently produced Clinical Effectiveness Hypertension Clinical Guides, designed to provide evidence-based best-practice to support primary care teams, are available [here](#).

Information from Acute Providers

User Survey for Consultant Connect Paediatric Dermatology Service

Please take a couple of minutes to complete this [short survey](#) on your experience of using the Consultant Connect Paediatric Dermatology Service.

Consultant Connect advice line for General Paediatrics – service extends hours

From 1 July 2021, the advice line at Guy's and St Thomas' will be available from 9:00 to 19:00, Monday to Friday. Please call for urgent advice. Non-urgent advice is available via ERS or through your PCN child health team.

Cancer updates

IMPORTANT: Significant waiting times and changes to referral process - 2WW Breast Services at Lewisham and Greenwich Trust

There are urgent pressures in 2WW Breast services at Lewisham and Greenwich Trust. Work is ongoing within the Trust to reduce the waiting times for referrals, but patients may experience longer waits than usual at present. **To offer immediate support the Trust is introducing a RAS (Referral Assessment Service) for LGT breast services starting from Tuesday 14 December 2021.** This will allow the Trust to prioritise on clinical risk and book them into the most appropriate clinics.

We recognise fully that pressures in primary care are immense, and this will only increase over the coming weeks, but there a number of areas that would support the 2WW breast services and the patients referred to them:

- GPs are asked to carefully consider the balance of risk for their patients before referring, and utilise services to seek specialist advice if possible and where available. *On eRS search for "Surgery – Breast" -> "Other Symptomatic Breast (2WW)" for a range of Breast Surgery services that offer advice.*
- When referring, please fully complete the referral form fully, to help triage based on clinical risk.
- Guidance and support for patients with isolated breast pain can be found here: [Breast pain: Causes, types and treatments | Breast Cancer Now](#) and here: [Understanding Breast Pain - YouTube](#)

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Use of Old Versions of 2WW Referral Forms

Recent audits across SEL Cancer Service providers have shown a large number of referrals using old versions of the Pan-London 2WW referral forms. It is important the most up to date versions are used as they are specifically designed to support virtual triage, straight-to-test, and one-stop models which aim to provide faster diagnosis for patients. Old versions of the forms may not support an optimal patient pathway.

The most recent forms can always be found using DXS, which is available to all practices in SEL boroughs. Bromley practices can find the most recent forms on Resource Publisher.

Updated - South East London Cancer Alliance

Please find below a link to the latest version of the update, which also includes FAQs for primary care on cancer services in south east London to support GPs and patients during the pandemic.

[Cancer updates for GPs \(1 November 2021\)](#)

Online seminars, webinars, and e-Learning

Covid Immunisation and BLS training in December

Covid Immunisation Training session for new vaccinators - Thursday 23 December - 9.30-12.30. Book [here](#).

Basic Life Support - Thursday 16 December - 15.15 - 16.15. Booking closes midday Thursday, book [here](#).

Basic Life Support - Wednesday 22 December - 15.15 – 16.15. Booking closes midday on 21 December. Book [here](#).

NHS and New Patient Health Checks training session

- **Thursday 7 April 2022 – 9.15 to 16.15.**

This will be on Zoom. Register [here](#).

National accelerated access to patient records - Data Protection Officer session

The next GP DPO session will be focusing on the national programme for accelerating patient access to their GP records. There will a chance to offer feedback and ask questions.

- **12 January 2022 at 12:30**

To attend or to share feedback on the patient access programme, please email nelcsu.dpo@nhs.net.

Further information on the patient access programme can be found [here](#).

Resources

Public messaging for booster campaign

We have put together a short [toolkit](#) to use for social media for the booster campaign. This includes some messaging around walk-in waits and queues.

You can find the latest PHE social media resources [here](#).

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