

Delivering a COVID-19 vaccination programme for Somerset and how to get involved

Stakeholder update from mass vaccination programme in Somerset – week commencing 23 November 2020

A huge amount of work has taken place this week to prepare for the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Somerset and our thanks go to all partners who are working to deliver this complex programme.

While the NHS does not expect a COVID-19 vaccine to be widely available until 2021, the Government has asked that we are ready to deliver a vaccination programme for England from December. There are two COVID-19 vaccines currently progressing well and it is anticipated that these are the vaccines that will become available first.

Together we are working on a plan to make the vaccine available to the people of Somerset in a planned way and in line with national guidance. This includes delivering it in a number of locations to enable easier access for as many people as possible. This will include large county sites, community sites in locations across the county, hospital hubs, some GP surgeries and via teams of mobile vaccinators for those who cannot leave their homes. As our planning continues, we will share further detail with you.

Health and social care professionals are expected to be among the first groups to be offered the vaccine. This is because frontline health and social care workers are at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19, and ensuring they are kept safe and able to continue providing vital services is a priority. Please look out for further communications providing information on how to book your vaccine.

We have asked a clinical leadership group, with representation from our organisations, to provide us with advice and guidance about whether there are groups within our health and social care workforce that we should prioritise, taking into account their roles and other factors which may mean they are further at risk if they were to become ill with COVID-19. We will factor that into our planning.

The delivery of the vaccine across Somerset is a huge logistical challenge involving colleagues with logistical skills, IT skills, knowledge and expertise in clinical governance, estates, human resources and training. Without them, we would not be able to plan and deliver this programme.

An opportunity to contribute to the programme

Similarly, it is vital that we have the people we need to deliver the vaccine itself when one becomes available. Rolling out a vaccine is a major undertaking and will require significant numbers of colleagues to operate vaccination services 12 hours a day 7 days a week. Delivering the vaccine requires a combination of registered colleagues who are able to draw up and supervise vaccinations, non-registered colleagues who will be trained to administer the vaccination in line with the recent legislation and administrative colleagues who will support the logistics of the operation.

We have therefore launched a recruitment drive and are calling on people across Somerset to work with us to deliver the vaccine. Information about the roles that we are recruiting to is [here](#).

At the same time we are calling for expressions of interest from people to who have time and energy to commit and are encouraging our colleagues to discuss participation with their line managers initially. This is particularly important where colleagues are seeking to be released from their duties as there is equally important work to be done in keeping our current range of services fully operational and we do not wish to compromise this. Colleagues will also be able to participate by offering additional working hours which will of course be paid through either 12 or 6 ¼ hr shifts. To register your interest for the mass vaccination programme please email mvp.recruitment@somersetft.nhs.uk

We hope that many of you will wish to participate in what in years to come may be seen as a historic event. We look forward to providing you with further updates on the development and implementation programme in the days and weeks ahead,

With thanks and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,



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