

11 December 2020

## Together We're Better Stakeholder Update

It comes as no surprise this week that the COVID-19 vaccine is the talk of the town, not only here in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, but across the world. What a week it has been – one we will remember for a very long time and will certainly go down in the history books.

Margaret Keenan and May Parsons, two names that will not be forgotten in a hurry - their names will probably appear as pub quiz questions for the next decade.

On Wednesday you will have seen that UHNM opened as one of the first COVID-19 vaccination hubs in the UK and began vaccinations, focusing on patients who are aged 80 or over and care home workers first, as well as NHS staff who have been assessed as being at highest risk. The first patient to be vaccinated was great granddad Alan Stevenson, 81, from Blythe Bridge. It is clear that those who are receiving the vaccine feel privileged to be one of the first to receive it.

The NHS will contact those that are eligible for a vaccination to arrange an appointment. Please do not contact your local hospital to try and arrange an appointment until they have contacted you.

Huge congratulations to everyone who has been involved in the vaccination programme so far and to the team at UHNM who have been exceptionally well organised and effective within the first few days of delivery. You can watch a [short video](#) that's been produced by the team at UHNM documenting the momentous occasion.

A small number of our Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are gearing up to support the vaccination programme, as well as additional trust sites. This is will be subject to meeting national assurance and the delivery of vaccine supplies of course, but thanks to the efforts of so many colleagues, we are as ready as we can be to start protecting eligible citizens of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent from this awful virus when we are asked to do so.

Although the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire rates have been heading in the right direction recently, our local rates of infection remain higher than the national average. The latest figures show another reduction, with Stoke-on-Trent's seven-day average at 325 per 100,000 and Staffordshire at 179.5 per 100,000.

Work is being done in partnership with the local City and County Councils to identify areas across the county that are showing higher rates than others, 'hotspots' as they're known. This week the Newcastle-under-Lyme area has a number of hotspots and we are encouraging residents with or without symptoms to book a test online. Following the option "my council has asked me to book a test" if they don't have the main symptoms of COVID-19. You can find out about hotspots in Stoke-on-Trent

[here](#) and in the rest of Staffordshire, [here](#). You'll notice that you don't need to have symptoms to book a test through the local portal in these online pages.

More good news this week is that our latest flu uptake rates are at a record high. This is the first time ever that all our Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have achieved an uptake of 75% within the 65+ group. It has never been more important for people to get their flu vaccine this year, so this really is fantastic news and a great success. South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula CCG in particular has achieved over 80% uptake. Please remember to have your own flu vaccine this year – it's not too late.

With high rates of COVID-19, it's more important than ever to help stop the spread of coronavirus, to avoid further pressure on the NHS and to keep our workforce healthy. It is also important to remember the COVID-19 vaccine will not protect you against the flu, so please try to have your flu vaccine as soon as possible to help protect you and your family.



Between 23 and 27 December you can form an exclusive Christmas bubble of up to three households (including your own). You can visit the homes of people in your Christmas bubble and stay overnight. You can meet your Christmas bubble in private homes and gardens, places of worship and public outdoor spaces.

You must still follow the rules in the local area in which you are staying. This includes limits on seeing others socially, such as in pubs, shops, the theatre or restaurants.

It is also extremely important to stress that these relaxed 'Christmas Bubble' rules **do not** come into play until 23 December. Therefore, it's really important that everyone continues to follow the Local COVID Alert Level (tier) rules until this point.

Families will need to think carefully about the risks of forming a bubble with elderly relatives and the vulnerable. If a member of your Christmas bubble tests positive or develops symptoms during this period, or up to 48 hours after members of the bubble last met you should all self-isolate.

It is also important to remember, even if you have received the COVID-19 vaccination, that following the hands, face, space instruction is still vital to stop the spread of the virus.



### Wash hands

keep washing your hands regularly



### Cover face

wear a face covering in enclosed spaces



### Make space

stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

We're in incredibly testing times and have been for much of the year, but we must all keep fighting and stick together in order to beat this virus. If we all follow the rules and restrictions in place, we will drive down local rates, reduce the pressure on our local hospitals and help to lower restrictions and get back to the people and things that we love most far more quickly.

The local 'Do it For What Matters' campaign, promoting compliance across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, is gaining momentum and being supported by all partners within the Local Resilience Forum. Please join us in amplifying these messages by using the toolkit attached alongside this update in the email you will have received. You can view the latest campaign videos on this [YouTube playlist](#). We truly are in this together and it will take the support of each and every one of us to get back to some form of normality. The vaccine is fantastic news, but it does not mean that life can go back to normal straight away – far from it. So, we must continue to follow the rules. Do it for you. Do it for your family and friends. Do it for what matters.

Elsewhere, Stafford Borough Council recently presented a short series of webinars, to offer information, advice and guidance to community stakeholders on how you can help local residents to get the help they need. You can access these webinars via the links below:

In relation to people struggling with their bills, income and employment, the [Financial Distress and Hardship webinar](#) had guest speakers from Citizens Advice Bureau, National Careers Service and Warmer Homes Stafford.

For individuals needing help with their [mental health and wellbeing](#), there is information and advice from NHS Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust, Re-Solv, Support Staffordshire and Starfish Health and Wellbeing.

Staffordshire Connects, Support Staffordshire and Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services gave top tips and advice on volunteers, funding, training and other services to help with [Sustainability and Community Capacity Building](#).

## Useful Resources

National lockdown restriction resources can be found [here](#).

Materials are available for the following campaigns; please can we ask for your help to promote them across your networks:

- [Tiering](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [University end of term](#)
- [Local Alert Level resources](#)
- [Hands. Face. Space resources](#)

- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe](#): new youth messaging focusing on 'consequences' - social animations
- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe posters](#): White background easy print for face coverings and distance
- [NHS Test and Trace posters](#): White background easy print for drive through testing and self-isolate
- [Symptoms posters](#): Symptoms posters: White background easy print for taste and smell
- [NHS COVID-19 App resources](#)
- [Wearing a face mask – translations](#)  
(Arabic/French/Kurdish/Lithuanian/Pashto/  
Polish/Portuguese/Romanian/Russian/Spanish/Tigrinya)
- [Test and Trace materials](#) are available to use on the Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre. This includes BSL, easy read and large print formats [here](#).
- [Signposting materials](#) with useful information on how people can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions and manage wellbeing and existing conditions at home: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/nhs-resources-facilities/resources/health-at-home/>
- [Public Health England guide on how older adults can stay active at home during coronavirus to maintain strength and balance](#)
- [Translated information leaflets for parents with new-borns during coronavirus](#)
- [Mental wellbeing whilst staying at home](#)
- [North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust mental health support and advice guide](#)
- [Guidance on shielding](#)
- [Blood donation materials](#)

Public Health England has updated its coronavirus guidance in light of changes to the government's advice and continue to ensure guidance for the public is timely and up to date. All guidance for members of the public, as well as for people in clinical and non-clinical settings, is published and updated regularly on the GOV.UK collection page.

For the latest information on coronavirus, please visit the [NHS](#) and [government](#) websites.

**Together We're Better is the partnership of NHS and local government organisations, alongside independent and voluntary sector groups, that is working together to transform health and care services. You can find out more about us on our website: <https://www.twbstaffsandstoke.org.uk/>**