

Oxfordshire Health and Care System COVID-19 Update for Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 March 2022

1. Introduction

This paper gives an update on the Oxfordshire COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Information about waiting lists and access to services is available in a separate paper on this agenda.

2. Oxfordshire COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The COVID-19 pandemic has spanned two years now and has led to profound and far-reaching changes to the way we all work and, as patients, to the way we access healthcare.

Since the first vaccine was delivered in Oxfordshire on 8 December 2020 at the Churchill Hospital, more than 1,605,000 vaccinations have been administered to residents of Oxfordshire.

Overall, we have one of the highest vaccine coverage rates in the country and the success of the 14-month campaign should be celebrated.

Continued thanks go to everyone who has worked so hard to deliver this life saving vaccine. Despite, the falling numbers of infections, cases remain, so the messages continue to be:

- Getting vaccinated and boosted remains the best thing you can do to protect yourself and your families against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.
- If you're unvaccinated it is never too late to come forward for a vaccine – all vaccination sites will welcome you.

2.1. COVID-19 booster vaccinations

Since the rapid expansion of the COVID booster vaccination programme on 13 December 2021, nearly 446,000 booster jabs have been delivered across Oxfordshire by our 20 GP-led local vaccination sites, the mass vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium, hospital hubs and our community pharmacies.

This equates to a near 81 per cent take up of the booster offer by all those people who are eligible. A record breaking 75,500+ booster jabs were administered across the county in the first week of rapid expansion of the programme, with more than 41,000 vaccines delivered during the pre-Christmas weekend (including Friday).

2.2. Targeted outreach

Anyone aged 16 and over who has not already had their first or second COVID-19 vaccination can still get vaccinated at a walk-in clinic or by booking through the [NHS booking service](#) (or call 119 free of charge, anytime between 7am and 11pm seven days a week). More information [here](#).

The latest data on uptake of vaccinations in Oxfordshire is available [here](#).

Despite the wide availability of vaccination opportunities and high vaccination rates across Oxfordshire, there remains nearly 120,000 eligible people across the county who have not been vaccinated

The Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West Vaccination Programme has developed an outreach and engagement plan 'No one left behind' to support access to the COVID-19 vaccine across the three counties and ensure vaccine equity across our communities.

The key objective of the outreach and engagement plan is to ensure the vaccine is targeted and uptake is maximised in those unvaccinated within our communities.

Oxford GPs have held outreach vaccine clinics in homeless shelters in the city and work is on-going with Turning Point in Banbury to ascertain the need for clinics in the town for homeless or rough sleepers.

The NHS and local authority colleagues have been working with the Margaret Clitherow Trust to make vaccines easily accessible to the Gypsy, Roma and Travelling communities in Oxfordshire and there has been good uptake of 1st and 2nd vaccinations on registered sites.

Work is also underway to establish an Oxfordshire based (OUH) maternity Champion to engage with women attending outpatient appointments and scanning during their pregnancy to discuss and/or provide them with the COVID-19 vaccination.

The NHS in partnership with Cherwell District Council to ensure access to the vaccine for asylum seekers and the migrant community (from different countries) to increase vaccine confidence and provide access to vaccination in nearby GP practice.

The NHS is also working with large employers in the county to support clinics and increase uptake of the booster vaccine.

Pop-up vaccine clinics have also been held on both the Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University campus' to enable access to resident students and those visiting from abroad who have yet to take up the offer of a vaccine.

2.3. Third primary dose and booster dose for the immunosuppressed

People who are immunosuppressed may have a reduced ability to fight infections and other diseases, including COVID-19. As such people in this group are eligible for a third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and then fourth dose – a booster. Third doses were available from October 2021 and fourth doses have been available from January 2022.

The third primary dose and fourth doses for those immunosuppressed are available via mass vaccination site at the Kassam Stadium in Oxfordshire.

2.4. Vaccinations for 12-15 year olds

Oxford Health has continued its work to safeguard against COVID-19 by giving second dose vaccinations, and boosters where applicable, to children aged 12 – 15 in schools and mass vaccination centres including the Kassam Stadium in Oxford.

The offer of vaccinations in schools ran until half-term and will continue to be offered in mass vaccination centres throughout the coming months. Pupils have been invited through their school and parents asked to complete a health questionnaire for their child if they wish for them to have their vaccination at school. Parents could choose an out-of-school offer by booking an appointment via the [National Booking Service](#) or attending as a walk in.

Since COVID-19 vaccinations were made available to this group Oxford Health has administered 24,050 first doses and 13,446 second doses.

Oxfordshire parents can find out more about the 12-15 programme on a special Oxford Health website page [here](#), providing information about consents as well as a range of useful FAQs.

2.5.5-11 children at risk and close contacts of immunosuppressed

The NHS is offering vaccinations to at-risk 5 – 11-year-olds and those aged 5-11 who are close contacts of an immunosuppressed person. Oxford Health's Kassam Stadium site is one of a number giving the jabs. A dedicated phone number is available for parents to book their children in for a vaccination. Appointments can be made at vaccination centres by calling a specified number, lines are open from 8am - 8pm daily, including weekends. Calls are answered by a qualified nurse. Vaccination centres have specialist Paediatric areas and specially trained nurses offering appointments at the following times Monday to Friday 2pm-8pm, Saturday and Sunday 8am-8pm.

Following the Government's announcement that all children aged 5 to 11 will be offered the COVID-19 vaccination, NHS partners across Oxfordshire are now planning the best way to deliver the vaccine to this age group. Please note that in line with Government timelines this service may not be available until April 2022. Further information will be available in due course.

2.6. Vaccination as a condition of deployment (VCOD) for healthcare workers

On 31 January 2022, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced to the House of Commons that it was no longer proportionate for NHS staff to be required to have a full course of vaccinations against COVID-19. The Government announced that there would be a consultation on the matter and a vote in the House of Commons with the intention to revoke the amendments made to the 2014 Regulations. As a result the '[VCOD for healthcare workers: Phase 1 – Planning and preparation](#)' and '[Phase 2: VCOD Implementation guidance](#)' previously published by NHS England and NHS Improvement is currently paused, pending outcome of the Parliamentary consultation process.

However, as of 3 February 2022, 92.3% (13,280) of 14,386 staff working at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) have received both their first and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. A total of 82.3% (11,930) are confirmed to have received their COVID-19 booster vaccination.

The OUH has worked hard to engage with staff about the benefits of getting vaccinated, encouraging people to get jabbed via the OUH vaccine hub on the Churchill Hospital site, at local walk-in clinics or via the national NHS booking system.

To promote vaccination and combat mis/disinformation, the OUH held a Q&A session with Executives and vaccination experts, including Professor Sir Andrew Pollard, for staff to ask questions or raise concerns they had. Social media videos/posts and items in the Staff Bulletin and intranet pages have also been key in driving the number of vaccinations for OUH staff.

Although the OUH vaccine hub recently closed, The Trust will still encourage staff to get their COVID-19 vaccinations.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (Oxford Health) has reported that as of 23 February 2022, just over 91% of 7,330 staff working with Oxford Health have received both primary doses of a COVID-19 vaccine and 70% have been triple jabbed.

The organisation is committed to continuing the promotion of the benefits of vaccination to all staff members. Information on how to take up an evergreen offer of a jab at Oxford Health's vaccination centres in Oxford, Reading and Aylesbury is promoted each week in the staff Bulletin e-magazine, intranet, via posters, social media and payslip messaging.

At Oxford Health there is a robust recording procedure in place to evidence vaccination take up. Every manager in the organisation has been holding one-to-one conversations with the small number of unvaccinated colleagues so that there is assurance that they can be supported in making a decision, with access to clinicians who can provide evidence-based facts, dispelling concerns, anxiety, misconceptions and rumour.