



Update

ICS update - 22 July 2021

This bulletin provides an update from the Integrated Care System (ICS) in the North East and North Cumbria regarding our latest information and plans to care for patients, staff and our communities. The Integrated Care System is led by Alan Foster, executive lead. If you have any questions or would like us to send vital information to partners through this bulletin, please contact us [here](#).

Message from Alan Foster



Care homes

The [CQC report](#) on the number of deaths in nursing and residential care settings that was published this week is a poignant reminder to us all of the devastating impact Covid-19 has had on our communities and our staff. As ever our thoughts continue to be with those who have lost loved ones and those affected by Covid-19, and our colleagues working in care homes.

Do your bit – wear a mask, wash your hands and socially distance

As restrictions were further eased this week we have reminded our communities that

our rules haven't changed. If they are visiting any healthcare setting we have asked people to keep doing their bit by wearing a face mask, washing their hands and socially distancing to keep staff and patients safe. I would like to express my thanks to our local and regional media for working with us to help share this and other important messages about the vaccine and choosing the right service.

You can watch some of the coverage on Tyne Tees [here](#) which includes interviews with our teams from across the region.

Listen to executive director of nursing Noel Scanlon from County Durham and Darlington Foundation NHS Foundation Trust on BBC Tees [here](#) (about 1:14 into the show).

Listen to an interview with medical director at North Tees, Deepak Dwarakanath, on BBC Radio Tees [here](#) (about 3.13 into the show).

Watch interviews with the critical care team at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, who are urging people to have the vaccine [here](#).

Covid-19 cases

Overall numbers of cases continue rise but we are seeing a drop in some areas such as South Tyneside and Newcastle. Clearly, we all hope that we will start to see a decline across other areas soon too. As yet, these cases are not translating into the same level of hospital admissions we have seen previously thanks to the vaccine programme – although we remain vigilant.

Like many other sectors we have been experiencing some workforce shortages as a result of rising cases of Covid-19 and the need to self-isolate. [National guidance](#) has now been published which allows NHS staff in exceptional circumstances to come to work and not self-isolate. This of course does not apply for staff that are Covid-19 positive. I hope this guidance, and the regional position we agreed, is helping to relieve some of the pressure for organisations at this very busy time.

Services remain busy across the region. I would like to thank everyone for all their hard work at this time. I know everyone is doing all they can to provide the very best care and we are working together across the region to support each other.

Flu vaccinations

We vaccinated record numbers of people against flu last winter which was no mean feat when you consider the challenges we faced. I would like reiterate my thanks to

everyone for all their hard work.

As more social mixing and contact returns we do expect to see the flu virus and other respiratory viruses circulating alongside Covid-19 this winter.

At the same time mask-wearing, physical and social distancing, and restricted international travel means that flu levels were extremely low last year and means we will have lower levels of immunity across our communities.

There are still some unknowns but mathematical modelling indicates the 2021 to 2022 influenza season in the UK [could be up to 50% larger than typically seen](#) and it is also possible that the 2021 to 2022 flu season will begin earlier than usual.

Our regional vaccination board and local flu boards have been working together over the past few months to ensure we have robust plans in place to deliver this year's flu immunisation programme. We have also received further national information about what the plans look like for autumn and winter this year - you can read the detail [here](#).

I know everyone will be pulling out all the stops to deliver what will be an even bigger and more challenging programme - with the aim of vaccinating 85% of those aged 65 and over (this was 75% last year).

The offer for 50 to 64 year olds will continue this year to protect this age group, as hospitalisation from Covid-19 also increases from the age of 50 years onwards. The programme will also be extended four additional cohorts in secondary school so that all those from years 7 to year 11 will be offered vaccination. That means all children aged 2 to 15 (but not 16 years or older) will now be eligible.

Lots to do. A key focus will be to ensure we reach our under-served communities and we would welcome support from all partners to help us share the message of how important it is for people to get their flu immunisation this year.

Finally

Thank you to everyone for all you are doing across health and care to look after our communities. I hope people are managing to get a much needed break over the summer and time with family and friends. Please stay safe.

Best wishes,

Alan

Alan Foster is the executive lead for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System

Other news and updates

The R number in the UK: The latest reproduction number (R) and growth rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK can be found here on [GOV.UK](#).

Public Health England dashboard: The Public Health England (PHE) dashboard can be found [here](#). Daily reporting includes deaths that have occurred in all settings where there has been a positive COVID-19 test, including hospitals, care homes and the wider community. The report also includes case rates per 100,000 resident population at lower-tier local authority level.

COVID-19 surveillance reports: A link to the weekly COVID-19 report, monitoring COVID-19 activity, and other seasonal respiratory illnesses can be found [here](#).

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage subscription](#)
North of England Commissioning Support Unit
NHC-TR.NENCCOVID19@NHS.net

MailPoet