



COVID-19 Briefing



COVID-19 ICS update - 22 April 2021

This bulletin provides important information for people working in health and care across the North East and North Cumbria regarding guidance and actions being co-ordinated across our region to care for patients, staff and our communities in the light of COVID-19. We will do our best to keep you updated with the latest information and key decisions from the Health Co-ordinating Group. This group is led by Alan Foster, executive lead for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System. 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



COVID-19 vaccination programme

Some good news to start today's update. This week our region delivered its [two millionth vaccine](#), an amazing achievement which is testament to the outstanding team work we continue to show across our region.

I have said it before and I will say it again, our ability to work together is a key strength of ours when it comes to combatting this virus, and it will continue to do so in the months ahead as we look to move forward together and bring some much-needed

normality back to our lives.

I would like to thank everyone involved who is helping to keep our communities safe and making access to vaccination services as easy as possible.

With that in mind, it was great to see our colleagues at North Tyneside CCG join forces with local charity North East Homeless to ensure that rough sleepers and those in temporary accommodation had access to a COVID-19 vaccine. You can read more on this [here](#) and watch a video from Dr Dave Tomson, PCN clinical director for North Shields, [here](#).

As reported, we are now calling 45 – 50 year olds forward via both primary care and the national booking service.

Now that we're starting to vaccinate younger age groups (as well as staff and people in group 6) all vaccination sites are offering screening to ensure that pregnant women are offered Pfizer BioNtech, where professionals will discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination.

As hospital hubs start to conclude their own vaccination programmes, four hubs will continue to deal with high risk vaccinations:

- County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tees NHS Foundation Trust
- RVI (Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)
- Cumberland Infirmary (North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust)

The next phase of the programme will be the further roll out of community hubs with 56 at present, which will increase as more come on board. Vaccinations will be bookable via the national booking service.

It is expected that a national campaign will go live next week supporting the vaccination efforts and encouraging those who have yet to be vaccinated to get vaccinated. Please do support the content of the campaign when they go live via social media.

Latest picture in the region

Further good news as the number of COVID patients in our hospitals continues to fall. Last week we brought you the news that the number of patients had fallen to below 100 for the first time since September, and this number has now fallen to 59 this week.

This is of course welcome news but we know we can't be complacent and we must remain proactive in reminding the public that virus is still very much among us; as well as the rules around hands, face, space and fresh air.

Volunteering network

Our volunteering network for the North East and North Cumbria, made up of hospital volunteering leads, representatives from workforce and the third sector held their first network meeting this week.

The group will bring together best practice, share solutions to challenges and be a voice for the importance of volunteering across our integrated care system.

Volunteering in hospitals offers opportunities into employment, helps us engage with our communities and has proved vital throughout the pandemic, whether through delivering prescriptions in the community or supporting the vaccine programme.

The group is chaired by Paul Wharton, volunteer co-ordinator at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. You can contact him [here](#).

Thanks for all you are doing.

Best wishes,

Alan

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

Other news and updates

Staff wellbeing - beyond the mask theatre shows: These interactive theatre shows are part of our staff wellbeing hub's programme to support staff to stay mentally well during COVID-19. They are targeted at staff in hospitals, care homes and other settings that have been most affected by dealing with the pandemic and will be recorded for a short film that celebrates the dedication of staff throughout the past year. You can find out more information [here](#).

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.

National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports: A link to the weekly national flu and COVID-19 report, monitoring COVID-19 activity, seasonal flu and other seasonal

respiratory illnesses can be found [here](#).

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