



# COVID-19 Briefing



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## COVID-19 ICS update - 25 February 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](#).

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## Message from Alan Foster



## COVID-19 vaccination programme

Our Covid-19 vaccination programme continues at pace with more good news this week with the [opening](#) of a vaccination centre at Durham's Arnison Centre and the [announcement](#) that we will open one at the Darlington Arena on Monday 1st March 2021.

Figures [released today](#) show that we have now delivered 877,414 vaccines across the ICS – the highest cumulative number in the country and this is now even higher at about 900,000. What a phenomenal achievement which is keeping our communities

safe and saving lives. Fantastic!

Ensuring that we reach all parts of our communities and encourage them to come forward for their vaccine is very important and this week we have been working with Spice FM to get the message out to some of our BAME communities. The piece was broadcast on Wednesday, and we will be sharing it on our social media channels. Everyone on GP practice learning disability registers has now been added to cohort 6 and will be prioritised for a vaccination as part of this group following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

We are working across the region with our CCGs to plan sustainable models for future COVID-19 vaccination programmes and will keep you updated.

## **Roadmap**

This week the Prime Minister outlined his roadmap for the country and a journey which we all hope will get us back to some sort of normality.

The number of community cases in our region are continuing to decline, as are the numbers of patients with Covid-19 in our hospitals (sitting at about 700 across the region's hospitals). There have also been significant reductions across care homes which is such welcome news.

It goes without saying that it still remains really important that we all continue to follow the rules at home and at work. Thank you to Dr Jeremy Rushmer, executive medical director at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, who spoke with ITV Tyne Tees on Monday on behalf of the region. While things are going in the right direction, Jeremy reminded people that we must all remain vigilant. You can watch the piece [here](#).

In terms of our own roadmap, we are continuing to work together across the region to develop and take forward our plans for recovery and we have a number of workstreams now working on this, with a key focus on ensuring we address health inequalities and learn lessons from the past year. This includes planning for our next winter which I know isn't an easy thing to get our heads around when we are not even out of this one.

Of course, crucial to any of our plans will be supporting our staff across health and care after a very long year and a hard winter. As always we owe them, and all our key workers, so much and I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for their dedication and commitment. Please do spread the word about our regional staff hub where there is support and advice for all staff – whatever their job or place of work across health and care. There are more details [here](#).

## **Flu vaccinations**

Tomorrow, some of our teams who were involved in the flu vaccination programme will be reflecting on what worked well and how we can improve uptake even further, especially in our under-served groups. We can be really proud of what we achieved this year with more people vaccinated against flu than ever before. As I have said before, it is no mean feat in a pandemic. Well done everyone and I look forward to hearing about our key actions for this year.

### **Collaborations**

I also wanted to share this short [film](#) from our NHS Find Your Place campaign – it formed part of a presentation to a panel of judges for the Health Service Journal awards today. It is just one of the many examples we have of what can be achieved when we all work together.

### **Thank you**

Please stay safe and 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**

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## **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.

**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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