



# COVID-19 Briefing



---

## COVID-19 ICS update - 14 January 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 cases

As expected hospital covid admissions are continuing to rise across the region and are now higher than in our previous peaks last year. So, it's a tribute to all of our teams that we are managing this level of demand and we are of course prepared for the days that lie ahead too.

As ever our priority is to ensure the safety of our patients and support our staff through the next few days and weeks. In terms of planned care, every effort is being made to maintain as much of this as possible but some non-urgent care has been postponed in

the region. Individual organisations are reviewing this on a daily and case-by-case basis; as we balance increases in admissions, staff availability and the need to create additional capacity.

Overall, we are within our critical care capacity and have plans to create more space in case we need it. We are also maintaining all clinically urgent cancer care and working in partnership across providers.

In case you didn't see it, Professor Chris Gray was quoted in The Independent about the current situation across the system. You can read that [here](#)

Our hope is that lockdown measures will kick in soon and we will start to see a decline in community cases, and therefore pressures across our hospitals, care homes and primary care. But there is a bit to go yet.

### **Vaccine**

A huge thank you from me to everyone for their extraordinary efforts to roll out the covid vaccine. [Regional data](#) has been published today and our region is doing really well with around 46 per cent of over-80s receiving their first dose of vaccine in North East and Yorkshire.

Other good news, last Friday the Moderna vaccine became the third to be approved the UK regulator the MHRA. You can read more [here](#)

I am sure you have been touched by the many stories of people who have been vaccinated this week. The opening of the Newcastle International Centre for Life as a large vaccination centre was great to see and it will vaccinate around 1,000 people a day, which is fantastic news. I also hope you caught the story of Isabella Curry, who was vaccinated in her own home in Cramlington on her 100th birthday this week. What a birthday present!

Invitation letters are being sent to people aged 80 or over, who live 30 to 45 minutes-drive, from the new centre and explain how they can book a slot (over the phone or online through the national booking service).

But we are also reminding people:

- if they receive an invite from the national booking service for the Centre for Life they can, if they prefer, wait and go to their GP practice for their vaccination. It is likely that their invite will arrive from their GP very soon. There's enough vaccine for everyone who wants to have one, so they don't need to worry about making a trip to Newcastle if they are happy to wait until their GP contacts them.

- if they have received an invitation to be vaccinated already from their GP

practice/PCN we are asking them to keep this appointment rather than go to the Centre for Life.

In terms of the large vaccination centres we do expect further sites to be announced. Some changes are being made at the Centre for Life to reduce queuing and enable people to wait inside, safely. It's also important to remember that in addition to this centre, a huge effort is taking place across primary care, care homes and in our hospital trusts to roll out the vaccine to many parts of the region.

We are continuing to ask the public to be patient - to wait to be invited for their vaccine and not to call their GP surgery. Understandably people are eager to get the vaccine but that does mean practices are being inundated with calls. For those that are booked in for their vaccine, we are asking that they keep their appointment and turn up on time and not too early, as this can cause queuing.

Please help to share these important messages through your own channels.

### **Lateral flow tests (LFT)**

All of our trusts are currently identifying the number of LFTs they require for the next three months in order to continue carrying out asymptomatic testing for patient facing staff. The numbers will include tests required for those trusts utilising these tests in emergency departments and maternity. It is anticipated that trust stocks will be replenished by the end of this month. Until additional stock is received, we continue to work collaboratively across our system to ensure that where there is an urgent need for LFTs within an organisation, this is facilitated through mutual aid. There have been numerous examples this week where stock has been redirected to other areas across our network - thanks to everyone involved for their support.

### **Clap for carers**

As the weekly 'clap for carers' returns many of us across the region are asking the public to show their continued support for the NHS, not by clapping, but by simply sticking to the rules. I hope you will join us sharing this message and thanking people for supporting all key workers at this time.

As ever, our thoughts very much remain with those that have lost a loved ones during these difficult times and with all key workers across the country who continue to look after us all.

Best wishes,  
Alan

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

---

## Other news and updates

**Mental health support:** Health Education England are providing online training for healthcare staff during Covid-19, both to support their service delivery and also support their wellbeing.

This will consist of a series of experiential learning webinars covering a range of topics that are informed by the evidence about managing and healing from adversity. They will cover aspects of relational support, leadership, service design, specific interventions and tools, safety (both physical and social), unintended consequences and issues of empowerment and social cohesion .

They are free to access and are being delivered on Zoom. Links to each session, along with more details about each, can be found at <https://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/your-mental-health/coronavirus/for-staff/staff-webinars/>. Recordings of the sessions will also be available on the Recovery College Online webpage after they have taken place. For more information please contact [claire.chapman8@nhs.net](mailto:claire.chapman8@nhs.net)

**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](https://www.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](#).

---

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage subscription](#)

North of England Commissioning Support Unit  
[NHC-TR.NENCCOVID19@NHS.net](mailto:NHC-TR.NENCCOVID19@NHS.net)

MailPoet