

UPDATE ON COVID VACCINATION – 07/01/21

VACCINES – AstraZeneca has now been approved. Chief Medical Officers have directed that doses for both Pfizer and AstraZeneca should be 12 weeks apart (was 4 weeks). This allows much greater coverage of 1st dose in a shorter time.

WAVE 1:

STAFF – 20,000 staff have received first dose of Pfizer. This includes care home staff. The definition of eligible staff will widen to include care at home staff and work is underway to plan for this. Those who have 2nd dose appointments in January will have these moved to March.

The new definitions of eligible staff as set out in the CMO letter of 31/12/20 are set out below. NHS Lothian will assess the size of these groups and availability of vaccine and will communicate arrangements as soon as possible.

CARE HOMES – 1/3 of care homes (residents and staff) will have been given 1st dose of Pfizer by 10/01/21. Similarly, 2nd doses will be moved to 12 weeks after 1st dose. The care home programme will now accelerate using the staff capacity that would have been giving 2nd doses.

OVER 80'S – GPs will start to give 1st dose of AstraZeneca to over 80's from 07/01/21.

UNPAID CARERS – It is now clear that they will be included in the mass vaccination programme in Wave 2.

WAVE 2:

VOLUMES – with the change in timing of 2nd dose it may be possible to vaccinate a greater number of people with 1st dose if AstraZeneca supply allows. This will be a government policy decision on the timing of the cohorts. NHS Lothian had built in some spare capacity, but this will be assessed against any likely change.

There is not yet a national start date for wave 2, but it is assumed to be early February for planning purposes.

VENUES: the mass venues at Pyramids Business Park, Queen Margaret University and Edinburgh International Conference Centre have been confirmed and detailed work is underway to bring them into use. Discussions are continuing with Royal Highland Show (it was not possible to resolve the issues relating to the drive through plan at RHS, but a “drive to and walk through” plan is possible) and a 5th venue.

Local venues have been confirmed as: East Lothian Community Hospital, Midlothian Community Hospital, Leith Community Treatment Centre, Mountcastle Medical Centre, Craigmillar Medical Centre, Gracemount Medical Centre, Pennywell AllCare Centre, Howden Health Centre and Strathbrock Partnership Centre.

BOOKING – each cohort will be sent an appointment letter giving a date, time and place for vaccination. If this does not suit, the recipient can change it by going online or calling a national call centre. It is still not clear what criteria the national system will use to allocate location of appointments to individuals.

David Small, Director of Primary Care Transformation, Vaccination Lead

07/01/21