

## Media Release

29 December 2020

### **Teams prepare to vaccinate care home residents as vaccinations also begin at two further community sites**

Teams of vaccinators are preparing to begin vaccinating care home residents and staff between Christmas and New Year. At the same time two more GP-led community sites will begin vaccinating people aged over 80 and health and care staff.

Joint senior responsible officer for the Somerset COVID-19 vaccination programme, Andy Heron said: "I am delighted that we are taking the vaccine to care homes to protect our older residents and those who care for them. Care home residents and workers have been identified as priority groups to receive the vaccine by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation and it is important that we deliver the vaccine to these groups to protect the most vulnerable in our county. At the same time it is really good news that the COVID-19 vaccine will now also be delivered in two further GP-led community sites."

"My thanks go to everyone who has made this possible. Teams of people from GP surgeries, Somerset County Council, Somerset CCG, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust have worked through the exceptionally complex logistics to deliver the long-awaited vaccine to the people of Somerset and it is very fulfilling to see it delivered to local people."

Dave Partlow, Somerset County Council's strategic manager for adult social care, who is part of the Somerset vaccination programme, said: "I am working closely with our care home managers and we cannot wait to begin the roll out of the vaccine to our most vulnerable residents. We are starting with larger homes that care for people with dementia because higher rates of COVID-19 can occur in these homes where it is more difficult to contain. However, I want to be really clear with our message to all other care homes – this is just the start of our vaccination programme and we will come to you as soon as possible."

Between Christmas and New Year COVID-19 vaccinations will also begin at North Petherton Rugby Club in Bridgwater and the Shape Centre Mendip District Council offices in Shepton Mallet. GP-led sites have been developed by primary care networks (groups of local GP practices) who have been working closely together to develop detailed plans to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations in community locations.

Dr Amelia Randle, GP at Park Medical Practice and vaccination lead for the Central Mendip primary care network, said "We are delighted to be starting the vaccination programme for our most vulnerable patients. It has been a huge amount of work, in a short space of time, but we have seen fantastic team work from all our colleagues from neighbouring GP practices and, together, we have been able to set up the next local vaccination services.

“It has been a very emotional time, not only for the first patients to be invited to the clinic, but for all the health and care teams involved in the planning of these events.

“We know that lots of people are eager to find out when they may be vaccinated, or have questions about the vaccination programme, but, please don’t contact your local GP surgery – we will contact you when the time is right and we will be able to answer all of your questions when you come for your appointment.”

### **Roll out of the vaccination programme so far**

On 6 December Yeovil District Hospital (YDH) was announced as one of the first 50 hospital hubs to receive supplies of vaccine and vaccinations at the hospital began in the week beginning 7 December.

At the start of the week beginning 14 December, vaccinations began at four GP-led sites developed by primary care networks (groups of local GP practices) who have worked closely together to develop detailed plans to deliver COVID-19 vaccinations in community locations. The first four GP-led sites where patients received vaccinations were at Taunton Vale Healthcare, Taunton; The Mulberry Centre, Berrow; West Mendip Community Hospital, Glastonbury; and The Gateway Centre in Yeovil.

Towards the end of the week beginning 14 December, vaccinations also began at three further GP-led sites - at Frome Medical Centre, Minehead Community Hospital and the Henhayes Community Centre, in Crewkerne.

These sites have worked through the complicated logistics required to deliver the vaccine safely in a suitable environment. This involves ensuring we have all of the kit that we need including clinical supplies, IT equipment, printed patient leaflets and bins; that we have a range of colleagues on hand to greet patients, explain the vaccine to them and take informed consent, draw up the vaccine, administer it and record it; and ensuring that all these site can be appropriately managed, including considering a range of aspects including infection prevention and control, cleaning and appropriate traffic management.

### **People are asked to support the NHS:**

- Please don’t contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you;
- When we do contact you, please attend your booked appointments. You will be given all the information that you need and we will be able to answer any questions you may have at your vaccination appointment.
- And please continue to follow all the guidance to control the spread of the virus and save lives

For more information on the NHS vaccination in Somerset please visit:

<https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-during-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset/>

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

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