

Defence steps up support to vaccine programme

News story

More than 750 Armed Forces personnel will be administering Covid-19 vaccines and helping with planning to maximise the effectiveness of the booster rollout



A member of the Armed Forces administers a Covid-19 vaccine in Northampton

750 Armed Forces personnel have been made available to support the [NHS](#), the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) and [Scottish Government](#) to accelerate the vaccine booster programme.

Over 100 personnel are currently supporting the vaccine rollout in Scotland. 600 Armed Forces personnel have been made available to [NHS England](#) to administer vaccines, working in small teams across the country.

In addition, around 50 personnel will provide planning support to NHS England. 41 planners will deploy to NHS trusts across England and 10 logistics experts will be based at NHS England's headquarters in London.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

We have rapidly mobilised Service personnel to work alongside our dedicated health services to accelerate the vaccine booster programme.

Our Armed Forces will help to get vaccines into arms as quickly as possible as we continue our efforts to support the UK's response to the pandemic.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

We are turbocharging our COVID-19 booster programme to offer every adult in England a vaccine by the end of the year to protect people from the Omicron variant.

Building our defences through boosters is a hugely important national mission and it's brilliant to see the military supporting our NHS staff in our race against the virus.

Please get boosted now to top-up your immunity and keep yourself and your loved ones safe this winter.

Chief of the Defence Staff Admiral Sir Tony Radakin said:

I'm proud of our Armed Forces who are once again stepping up to help protect people and communities.

We have a long history of working hand in hand with the NHS as two organisations with a common goal – to help keep our people safe.

Planners based at NHS England headquarters will be led by Brigadier Phil Prosser who was previously deployed to support the delivery of the vaccine programme which began in December 2020. They will work alongside NHS England to maximise existing capacity and ensure the vaccine programme can be delivered at pace.

Since March 2020, Defence has supported over 430 tasks as part of Operation Rescript – Defence's support to the UK's response to the pandemic. Defence is currently supporting ambulance services in Wales and Scotland and the vaccine rollout in Scotland among other tasks including testing.

Support is being provided through the [Military Aid to the Civil Authorities \(MACA\)](#) process.

Personnel supporting on Operation Rescript tasks have deployed from across the three services – Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force – and are a mixture of regulars and reservists.

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