

Extra COVID-19 support deployed to North East

Following the latest review of COVID-19 support provided to areas in England, the government is deploying additional support to the seven local authorities across Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and County Durham, and five local authorities in the Tees Valley.

The decision is based on the latest data and local insights and will provide targeted additional support to try and slow the growth of COVID-19 variants in the region, whilst also carefully monitoring NHS pressures and the number of cases and deaths. This support package will be in place for five weeks from Monday (26 July) to allow for targeted local action.

The support package includes the option to deliver extra testing in these targeted areas, the provision of logistical support to maximise vaccine and testing uptake, and further help for local public health campaigns.

Local residents are urged to remain cautious and follow the national guidance; including to wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport; meet outdoors where possible; let fresh air into homes or other enclosed spaces, and consider minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.

This package of additional support has been in place in Bedford, and across most of the North West for between six and ten weeks, and there has been a great deal of exceptional work locally to drive up testing and vaccine uptake. Whilst the short-term measure of additional support will end in these areas, the government will continue to work closely with local authorities in Bedford, Blackburn with Darwen, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Liverpool City Region to help them manage COVID-19 growth rates in their areas.

Public Health Minister Jo Churchill, said:

As the data changes it is vital that our public health response continues to change with it.

By working in lockstep with local authorities and directors of public health, this additional support should help turn the tide on these growing case numbers and extend the wall of protection that vaccines is creating across the country.

We all have a part to play in the continued fight against this virus and our message is a clear one: the best thing we can all do

to protect ourselves and our loved ones is getting jabbed. If you haven't had your first or second doses, I'd urge you to book your vaccination at the first opportunity.

The vaccines have already helped to prevent over 8 million infections and have saved thousands of lives in England. The vaccination programme has substantially weakened the link between cases, hospitalisations and deaths. Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms and even more unlikely to get serious COVID-19, to be admitted to hospital, or to die from it and there is growing evidence that they are less likely to pass the virus to others.

The full list of areas in the North East where additional support will be offered is:

- The North East LA7 (Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland)
- Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesborough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton on Tees)

The full list of areas where additional support will be scaled back is:

- Bedford Borough Council
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- Blackpool Council
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan)
- Lancashire County Council (Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire, Wyre)
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (Halton, Knowsley Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral)
- Warrington Borough Council