

New vaccine uptake plan published

- Ministers and NHS launch plan to help boost vaccine uptake in all communities
- Plan based on local initiatives already in place that are successfully boosting uptake
- Plan sets out best practice and will help vaccinators and local leaders to engage with communities
- Comes ahead of 15 February target date to give all top 4 priority groups their first jabs

Published today (Saturday 13 February), the [COVID-19 vaccination uptake plan](#) sets out how the government and NHS England are partnering with directors of public health, charities and the faith sector to increase vaccine take up and ensure equal access.

Evidence from the roll-out so far has shown the vital role of health and social care staff and community leaders who are providing advice and information to their local communities.

Data published today shows comparable vaccine programmes achieved a 75% uptake rate, but so far, the COVID-19 vaccination programme has exceeded expectations, seeing 93% uptake in those over 75 years of age. Our aim remains to achieve the highest possible uptake in all other groups.

Vaccine Deployment Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

We have seen an incredible response so far from the public to the vaccination programme and are on track to offer everyone in the top priority groups a jab by 15 February.

We recognise that some groups feel more hesitant about getting a jab, or have more barriers, both physical and mental, preventing them from accessing one when it's offered.

Each shot in the arm brings us closer to beating this terrible virus. That's why we are setting out our plan to make sure everyone is protected equally, by working hand in hand with those who know their communities best to make sure as many people as possible take up the offer of a lifesaving vaccination.

The plan highlights work being done at a local and national level to make sure specific groups, including those with mental illness or without a fixed address, can access the information and advice they need to make a decision on taking up the vaccination.

Building on work already underway to reach more hesitant audiences, which includes translating vaccine resources in over 13 languages, the plan aims to raise awareness of how the NHS is making vaccination accessible to all,

especially ethnic minorities, homeless people, asylum seekers and those with disabilities.

Community leaders are being urged to make clear that an NHS number is not needed to get a jab and that there are a large number of vaccination sites spread right across the country that people can go to. Over 98% of the UK population now lives within 10 miles of a vaccination site.

The uptake plan sets out best-in-class real-world examples of community-led engagement to improve vaccine uptake that other local areas could replicate to drive uptake in their areas. This includes:

- the GP Federation Alliance for Better Care have launched a mobile vaccination service in Crawley, staffed by members of the community, to reach those who are housebound or less physically mobile
- the OneSlough Partnership has trained vaccine community champions and produced social media resources to dispel vaccine myths and boost vaccine uptake within their communities
- Bradford Council and the Race Equality Network have built on established groups and events such virtual women's exercise classes and befriender services as a forum to ask questions and share information about vaccination
- NHS England and NHS Improvement have produced short films to provide accessible information for people with a learning disability including autism, about what a vaccine is, how it's made and how to decide whether to get vaccinated
- a branch manager at MiHomecare, a domiciliary care provider in North London, noticed her staff were initially hesitant to take the vaccine, so she shared a video of herself getting a vaccine on her workplace social media and WhatsApp group. This led to a noticeable increase in staff vaccine uptake

Local initiatives are also being bolstered by national support programmes. The Community Champions scheme that recently received a £23 million boost is helping 60 local councils to fund local engagement with groups including older people, those with disabilities and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

NHS England and PHE have been working with Rethink Mental Illness to produce communications materials which aim to overcome barriers and address common causes of concern faced by people living with severe mental illnesses or learning disabilities and autism.

A new Vaccination Equalities Committee, led by NHS England and NHS Improvement, is bringing also together government departments with national representatives from the Association of Directors of Public Health, local authorities, Fire and Police services and third sector organisations to advise and guide the vaccine deployment programme on addressing inequalities.

The plan published today builds on the [UK COVID-19 vaccines delivery plan](#), published on 11 January, which provided details about vaccine investment and supply, as well as the operation of vaccination sites across the country.

Equalities Minister Kemi Badenoch said:

COVID-19 affects everyone, whatever their background. Life-saving vaccines need the trust and confidence of every community to protect us all from the virus. That is why the government is working with local figures, faith leaders, and doctors to combat misinformation and encourage everyone to get vaccinated.

Two months since the start of the vaccination roll-out, over 13 million people across the UK have already taken up the offer of a vaccine. Jabs are now being administered at 267 hospitals, 1,034 local vaccination sites, 90 vaccination centres and 194 community pharmacies. The NHS is on track to offer a first dose to the top 4 priority groups by 15 February – care home residents and staff, frontline health and social care workers, all those aged 70 or over and the clinically extremely vulnerable.

NHS top trauma surgeon and volunteer vaccinator Dr Martin Griffiths said:

Thanks to the fantastic efforts of hard-working NHS staff and volunteers, the largest vaccination programme in the health service's history has now jabbed four in five people aged 70 and over – but it's not too late to come forward.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are disproportionately affected by COVID so it's really important they get the vaccine. I've had it myself but understand that each person has their own specific reasons why they are hesitant and I want to ensure every person I see understands the vaccine is safe and effective as this will help us all get back to as normal a life as possible.

- [ONS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)
- the [COVID-19 vaccine uptake plan is published on GOV.UK](#), and includes full details of all case studies
- [latest NHS data on COVID-19 vaccinations](#)
- of the 10,523,774 first doses administered up to 7 February, 8,161,314 (78%) were white British or white Irish, and 875,344 (8.3%) were from ethnic minority backgrounds, including 4.7% Asian (excluding Chinese) and 1.6% black
- to arrange interviews with the case studies, please [contact the DHSC press office](#)