

UK hits 12 million top-ups in record breaking week

- In just seven days – more than 2.4 million booster jabs have been given across the UK – the best week in the programme so far
- More milestones hit as 80% of over 12s now had two doses

More than two million boosters have been given to people across the UK in the last week, as the vaccination programme continues to accelerate.

In a record-breaking week, the UK has topped 12 million booster and third jabs given in total across the UK – with hundreds of thousands of people coming forward every day to get the vital protection offered by top-up jabs ahead of the colder months.

A total of 12,164,586 booster jabs have now been given, with 340,943 recorded yesterday in the UK.

According to the latest stats, in the 7 days leading up to November 11, almost 2.5 million new boosters or third doses have been reported in the UK, which is the highest weekly increase so far.

The latest figures come in a week of major milestones, with England reporting a total of 90 million first, second and third doses being administered on Thursday, and 80% of over 12s now having had two doses.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Another excellent week of significant milestones for our vaccination programme as 12 million people have now played their part by coming forward for a top-up jab to give not only themselves, but their loved ones vital protection this winter.

We've made it easier than ever to get your booster this week by opening up appointments so people can pre-book a month in advance and I continue to urge all those eligible to get your jab as soon as possible.

For everyone who has not yet come forward for a first dose, second dose or booster – this is a national mission and it is not too late. Every jab builds our wall of defence across the country ahead of Christmas.

Following an update to the National Booking Service earlier this week, booking a booster jab has never been easier. Those eligible for a top-up vaccine – people over 50 and those most at risk of COVID-19 – can pre-book their jab five months after their second dose, making it easier and more convenient to boost their protection into winter.

People will still receive their vaccine six months after their second dose, but the change will speed up the vaccination programme by allowing people to receive a jab the day they become eligible, rather than waiting for a convenient appointment.

Vaccines give high levels of protection but immunity reduces over time, particularly for older adults and at-risk groups, so it is vital that vulnerable people come forward to get their COVID-19 booster vaccine to top-up their defences and protect themselves this winter.

The latest evidence from SAGE shows that protection against symptomatic disease falls from 65%, up to three months after the second dose, to 45% six months after the second dose for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, and from 90% to 65% for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. Protection against hospitalisation falls from 95% to 75% for Oxford/AstraZeneca and 99% to 90% for Pfizer/BioNTech.

Although the vaccine effectiveness against severe disease remains high, a small change can generate a major shift in hospital admissions. For example, a change from 95% to 90% protection against hospitalisation would lead to doubling of admissions in those vaccinated.

The booster programme is designed to top up this waning immunity. Early results from Pfizer show that a booster following a primary schedule of the same vaccine restores protection back up to 95.6% against symptomatic infection.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

It is wonderful to see the momentum of the phenomenal vaccine programme which is saving lives and reducing pressure on the NHS.

Getting your jab ahead of the winter months could be the most important thing you do as we all look forward to spending more time with our families and friends at Christmas.

I urge all those eligible to come forward to give yourself the vital protection of the life-saving vaccines.

COVID-19 booster vaccines have been delivered or booked in at every older adult care home in England where safe to do so, with almost nine in 10 care homes already visited.

People are also able to book by calling 119 and can get vaccinated at hundreds of walk-in sites across the country without an appointment. Those eligible can use the NHS online walk-in finder to locate the most convenient site.

Dr Emily Lawson, head of the NHS Vaccination Programme, said:

It is fantastic to see we have hit the 12 million mark for the number of booster jabs delivered in the UK, including more than 10 million administered by the NHS across England in under two months and this couldn't have been done without the hard work of NHS staff and volunteers up and down the country.

As booster bookings continue to boom and with hundreds of thousands of people getting their vital top-up doses every single day, I would urge the millions being invited for their booster in the coming weeks to book in as soon as possible – it will provide you and your loved ones vital protection throughout the winter.

Last month, clinical guidance was updated to enable boosters to be given slightly earlier to those at highest risk, where this makes operational sense to do so. This includes care home residents who may have received their second doses at different times to be vaccinated in the same session, as long as it has been five months since their second dose. It may also help with other vulnerable groups, such as housebound patients, so that they can have their flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time.

Vaccine confidence is high with data from the Office for National Statistics showing nearly all (94%) of those aged 50 to 69 say they would be likely to get their COVID-19 booster if offered, with the figure rising to 98% for those over 70.

Flu is another winter virus that can be serious. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

The government has launched a nationwide advertising campaign, encouraging people eligible to get their booster and flu jabs to protect themselves and their loved ones and help reduce pressures on the NHS. This includes outdoor billboards, broadcast and community radio and TV.

The offer of a first and second COVID-19 vaccine remains open to anyone who is eligible. Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England and vaccinations are taking place at sites including mosques, community centres and football stadiums.

There are more than 500 extra vaccination sites now compared to April this year, with 1,697 vaccination centres in operation in April 2021, and over 2,200 vaccination centres in operation now.

Vaccines are also available for those aged 12-15 to offer the best possible protection this winter in schools, as well as more than 200 vaccine centres.