

Statement on offering COVID-19 vaccines to at-risk young people

Press release

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid accepts advice from Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation to offer vaccines to vulnerable young people



Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Today's advice from the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) means more vulnerable young people at greatest risk from this virus can now benefit from COVID-19 vaccines. I have accepted their expert recommendations and I have asked the NHS to prepare to vaccinate those eligible as soon as possible.

Young people aged 12 to 15 with severe neuro-disabilities, Down's Syndrome, immunosuppression and multiple or severe learning disabilities, as well as people who are household contacts of individuals who are immunosuppressed, will be eligible for vaccination soon.

Our independent medicines regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, has approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for people aged 12 and over as it meets their robust standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

Today's advice does not recommend vaccinating under-18s without underlying health conditions at this point in time. But the JCVI will continue to review new data, and consider whether to recommend vaccinating under-18s without underlying health conditions at a future date.

COVID-19 vaccines have saved almost 37,000 lives and prevented around 11.7 million infections in England alone. They are building

a wall of defence and are the best way to protect people from serious illness. I encourage everybody who is eligible to get their jabs as soon as they can.

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[Highways England lays out roadmap to net zero by 2050](#)

From today, the Government company will take immediate and sustained action towards decarbonising England's motorways and A-roads, so they can continue to bring significant benefits to motorists, communities and businesses in a net-zero future.

Building on its work reducing carbon since 2015, the plan sets out a comprehensive roadmap to rapidly decarbonise the strategic road network (SRN).

Highways England plans to achieve this by putting roads at the heart of Britain's net zero future through three key commitments; achieving net zero for its own operations by 2030, delivering net zero road maintenance and construction by 2040; and supporting net zero carbon travel on our roads by 2050.

Contractors and suppliers will also be required to act, including commitments to reduce carbon year-on-year by using the latest technologies, so that by 2040 our road maintenance and construction is near zero emissions.

The company has been progressing towards net zero for some time, with examples including having already introduced plug-in hybrid vehicles to its fleet, installed more effective LED lighting on the M62, utilised recycling and solar power for resurfacing on the A590, and launched electric vehicle trials with Leeds, Coventry, Sheffield, Kent and Nottingham Councils.

Nick Harris, Acting Chief Executive of Highways England, said:

Highways England recognises the threat of climate change and the risks it poses for us all. That's why we're pledging to take effective action to take carbon out of roads.

Today roads are a convenient, efficient and low-cost way to travel which is why 9 out of 10 passenger miles and 79 per cent of all freight moves on roads. Our plans set out how emissions from our own operations, our construction and our customers will reduce over

the coming years.

It will put roads at the heart of the low carbon economy, while preserving the convenience and economic benefit of an efficient road network.

Highways England will generate more electricity from renewables, work with its supply chain to transition to net zero construction and support low carbon travel, all while identifying further opportunities to deliver wider sustainable development, such as green spaces and biodiversity.

To achieve net zero, Highways England is taking action by the following dates:

2025: Highways England has made a Greening Government Commitment to reduce its own carbon emissions by 75% compared with the 2017/18 baseline

2030: Highways England will be net-zero for its own carbon emissions. This includes switching to LED lighting, changing its vehicle fleet to electric and planting up to 3 million additional trees

2040: All construction and maintenance activities carried out on the Strategic Road Network will be net-zero

2050: All vehicles on our network will be net-zero. To support that we are taking action in this Road Period (2020-2025):

- to provide charging infrastructure on network and create a blueprint of on-road services for electric vehicles
- to train our Traffic Officers to meet the needs of electric vehicles in incident recovery
- to support modal shift and integration of modes
- to act as an expert advisor and assessor for Government's trials of emerging zero-carbon HGV technologies.

Transport Minister Rachel Maclean said:

We know that transport is the biggest emitter of carbon emissions, which is why I'm pleased to see that Highways England are setting out a roadmap which will clean up our air as we Build Back Greener.

This comes just days after the government unveiled its Transport Decarbonisation Plan, setting out our plans to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

This plan supports the UK Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan and the Paris Agreement. It also meets the challenge of international organisations based on scientific targets and supports the need to build back greener following COVID-19.

As the country moves towards all new cars and vans being zero emission by 2030, over a billion pounds will be invested by the government to accelerate the roll out of charging infrastructure, making charging researching electric cars as easy as filling a vehicle with petrol or diesel, and cheaper to run.

Key points:

- 75% reduction in the company's own carbon emissions by 2025
- 100% electric car fleet by 2030
- Replace 70% of all lighting with LED by 2027
- An extra three million trees planted by 2030
- First net-zero road enhancement scheme by 2030
- Develop a zero carbon 2040 roadmap for cement, concrete and asphalt by June 2022
- Make digital roads an integral part of Road Period 2, and build this into Road Period 3 strategy and beyond from 2023
- By 2023, publish a blueprint showing how EV charging services should be provided on motorways and major A-roads.
- By end 2022, Highways England will report to Government on its proposed approach to zero carbon HGV trials on its roads

Alasdair Reisner, Chief Executive at Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA), said:

Our members recognise their responsibilities to protect current and future generations from the impact of climate change.

How we build and maintain our roads naturally plays a key role in meeting net zero goals. Roads form a critical backbone of the UK economy, supporting not just our personal journeys, but contributing substantially to economic growth.

As an industry we must recognise what good looks like, understand where it's going and always challenge our thinking, in order to deliver sustainable infrastructure for the long term.

You can [read the net zero plan](#) here.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Every adult in UK offered COVID-19 vaccine

- More than 46 million people have received a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine
- More than 35 million people have had both doses
- Public are urged to come forward for jabs as soon as possible

Every adult in the UK has been offered a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine – hitting the Prime Minister’s target ahead of schedule.

A total of 82,413,766 doses have been administered in the UK, with 46,314,039 people receiving a first dose (87.9%) and 36,099,727 people receiving both doses (68.5%).

The Prime Minister set targets to offer a vaccine to all adults in the UK and to vaccinate two in three adults with both doses by 19 July – and both were achieved by Sunday 18 July ahead of the government cautiously proceeding with step 4 of the roadmap today (Monday 19 July).

All adults in the UK are able to get their second doses after eight weeks. This will mean every adult has the chance to have both doses by mid-September.

People are urged to get their first and second doses as soon as possible to protect themselves and the people around them. Double vaccinated people will be able to return to doing the things they have missed, such as going on holiday and attending event which require the NHS Covid Pass.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Barely 8 months since the first vaccine was given, reaching these targets is another extraordinary achievement.

Thank you again to everyone coming forward, and to those helping others to get jabbed. You are the reason we are able to cautiously ease restrictions next week, and return closer towards normal life.

Now let’s finish the job. If you’re over 18, book both your jabs today.

Data from Public Health England (PHE) shows COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against hospitalisation from the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant. The analysis shows the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 96% effective and the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is 92% effective against hospitalisation after two doses.

Further analysis from PHE and the University of Cambridge also suggests vaccines have so far prevented an estimated 11.8 million infections and almost 37,000 deaths in England alone.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The fact we have hit another vaccine target early is testament to the sheer dedication of NHS teams and local volunteers in every corner of the UK who are at the centre of the phenomenal rollout of the life-saving vaccines.

Our world-leading vaccination programme is helping to build up a strong defence around our population, saving tens of thousands of lives and preventing millions of infections to allow us to cautiously progress through the roadmap.

Please come forward for your vaccines if you haven't already – it's the best way to protect you, your family and your community from COVID-19 and to help us all return closer towards normal life.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

Another brilliant achievement – thank you to everybody who has got their jabs so far and the NHS for their brilliant efforts to vaccinate as many people as possible.

As we start to cautiously ease restrictions, I implore every adult, no matter your age, background or occupation, to get your vaccine as soon as possible.

People who have been vaccinated with both doses will not have to quarantine on their return to England from an amber list country – with the exception of France – from 19 July, providing they received their second jab at least 14 days prior.

From 16 August, double vaccinated people will also no longer be legally required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case.

The test, trace and isolate system will remain a vital tool to reduce transmission. The legal requirement for contacts of confirmed cases to self-isolate will continue until 16 August, helping to slow the rise in cases that we're expecting to see as we unlock, and in turn help to protect the NHS.

After the 16 August, positive cases and all adults who have not received two vaccine doses will still be legally required to isolate, further controlling transmission.

Guidance has been set out on how to stay safe, including wearing a face covering in enclosed and crowded spaces and keeping spaces well ventilated.

The UK government secured early access to more than 500 million doses of the most promising COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the entire UK, crown dependencies and overseas territories. The UK's medicine's regulator, the MHRA, was the first in the world to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines, allowing the rapid deployment of vaccines across the country and ensuring the UK has one of the fastest vaccination programmes in the world.

Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms and even more unlikely to get serious cases of 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.

YouGov polling also shows the UK continues to top the list of nations where people are willing to have a COVID-19 vaccine or have already been vaccinated and ONS data published on 2 July shows that more than 9 in 10 (96%) adults reported positive sentiment towards the vaccine.

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.

'Attacks on humanitarian operations are an assault on basic human values'

Thank you, Mr President. And thank you Secretary-General, Mr Mardini, and Madam Grosjean.

Mr President, attacks on humanitarian operations are an assault on basic human values. They are shameful. They add to the human suffering of conflict, by targeting those workers who are trying to alleviate it.

In Tigray, for example, which is on the brink of a man-made famine, parties to the conflict are impeding aid deliveries, destroying infrastructure, and targeting civilians, including aid workers.

Whilst the announcement of a humanitarian ceasefire by the Government of Ethiopia on the 28 June was welcome, we have witnessed continued efforts to

hamper aid delivery.

The UK again stresses that all sides must remove barriers blocking aid, protect infrastructure, facilitate banking services and allow communications equipment into Tigray.

Sadly, Tigray is not unique – not an exception.

In Afghanistan, hospitals are being targeted.

In South Sudan, humanitarian supplies are being destroyed.

In Yemen, bureaucratic restrictions are delaying the delivery of lifesaving aid.

In all three countries, and others, aid workers are being attacked.

The UK's Special Envoy for Famine Prevention has visited several countries to call for the respect for International Humanitarian Law by all parties to conflict.

This Council has a responsibility to ensure this.

We welcome our agreement last week to adopt resolution 2585, facilitating the continued delivery of lifesaving cross-border assistance for 3.4 million people in Syria.

We must now work together to implement relevant resolutions which have the provisions to hold to account those who breach International Humanitarian Law.

This includes strengthening our use of sanctions, while ensuring that sanctions and counter-terrorism measures do not themselves hinder the delivery of assistance.

Through our Tri-sector Group, the UK is working with NGOs and banks, to find legal, safe and transparent ways to ensure that humanitarian aid benefits those in need.

And while we work towards an end to conflict, International Humanitarian Law is there to protect civilians and the humanitarian space and workers on which they rely.

This Council has a duty to hold to account those who fail to respect those basic principles.

Guidance published on new carbon capture technologies

The Environment Agency has [published guidance on carbon capture](#) as part of its aim for a net zero future.

It comes in the wake of the Government setting out the ambition to capture 10Mt of carbon dioxide a year by 2030.

Working with the UK Carbon Capture and Storage Research Centre (UKCCSRC), other UK regulators, and consulting with industry stakeholders, the Environment Agency has produced Best Available Technique (BAT) guidance for post-combustion carbon dioxide capture.

Operators wishing to capture carbon dioxide from their combustion process in England will need an environmental permit from the Environment Agency, and the guidance will help businesses which must demonstrate that they meet strict requirements that protect the environment and communities before being granted a permit.

[The guidance](#) can also be used by other organisations and members of the public who want to understand how the environmental regulations and standards are being applied.

Lee Rawlinson, Director of Regulated Industry at the Environment Agency, said:

The Environment Agency has an important part to play in permitting many of the energy technologies that are likely to emerge over the coming years. This is part of our Climate Ambition to help create a net zero nation that is resilient to climate change.

As an environmental regulator, our role is to ensure that these new technologies, including carbon capture, are conducted in a way that protects people and the environment. Our Best Available Technique guidance will go a long way towards achieving that.

Prof Jon Gibbins, University of Sheffield and Director of UKCCSRC, said:

The BAT Review process has been a good opportunity to work closely with industry to assess public-domain information on practical post-combustion carbon dioxide capture experience.

The plan is to update the Review document as more information becomes available from the current wave of full-scale projects that are being planned in the UK and globally – hopefully soon.

Luke Warren, Chief Executive of the Carbon Capture and Storage Association (CCSA), said:

The CCSA welcome the publishing of the first UK Best Available Techniques guidance for new build and retrofit post combustion capture amine plants for power and CHP. This review is an important early step that provides essential net zero CCS facilities with permitting guidance and support to allow them to transition through the permitting phase at the rate required to reach the UK Government's cluster ambition.

The CCSA were pleased to coordinate input activities to the review through its BAT sub-group and diverse membership, and are pleased to see the regulator actively engaging in this activity. The CCSA also recognise that further work will need to be done to ensure the full breadth of CCS technologies are recognised by relevant BAT guidance, and we are disposed to provide continued support to this process.

The [carbon capture guidance is available on gov.uk](#).