

# COVID-19 Community Champions

Fortnightly briefing

Wednesday 4 August



# Public Health Update

**For the latest COVID-19 data, visit the Walsall Council website:**  
[http://go.walsall.gov.uk/covid-19\\_information/covid-19\\_data\\_for\\_walsall](http://go.walsall.gov.uk/covid-19_information/covid-19_data_for_walsall)

# Public Health Update – Key Messages

Simple clear messages to help us all understand the health behaviours we should be using over the summer.

## COVID restrictions end in England from Step 4 of the Roadmap

On July 19, the Government moved to stage four of the [roadmap](#) and most restrictions have now been lifted. However, the pandemic is far from over.

- If you have [any of the symptoms of COVID-19](#), self-isolate at home and [request a test](#) as soon as possible.
- Get two doses of a coronavirus vaccine.
- Continue to use symptom free testing (lateral flow devices) regularly.
- Continue to wear a face-covering in busy, indoor spaces, shops and on public transport.
- Take particular care when visiting health and social care settings and wear a face covering when doing so
- Use the summer to meet outdoors as much as possible
- When you do meet indoors, keep fresh air moving by opening windows and doors.
- Keep washing your hands or use hand gel and sanitisers when you are out and about.



# COVID-19 Key messages – Young people

- Step 4 easements combined with rising rates of young people who are testing positive for COVID-19 means there is an immediate need to extend a push on vaccination communications.
- We need to communicate to young people and their parents the reality and importance of vaccination in preventing hospitalisation.
- **Key message focus;**
  - the importance of second dose, protection against hospitalisation
  - addressing perceived low risk of covid
  - reassurance around side effects and safety
  - increased travel freedoms
  - reassuring those who haven't yet booked that it's not too late and they should book as soon as they can
  - everyone over 18 can now get the jab.



# COVID-19 Vaccinations

## Key Focus

**We are trying to increase vaccination uptake in;**

### Locality

- Increase uptake Walsall South, Bentley and Darlaston, Birchills and Leamore

### Age range

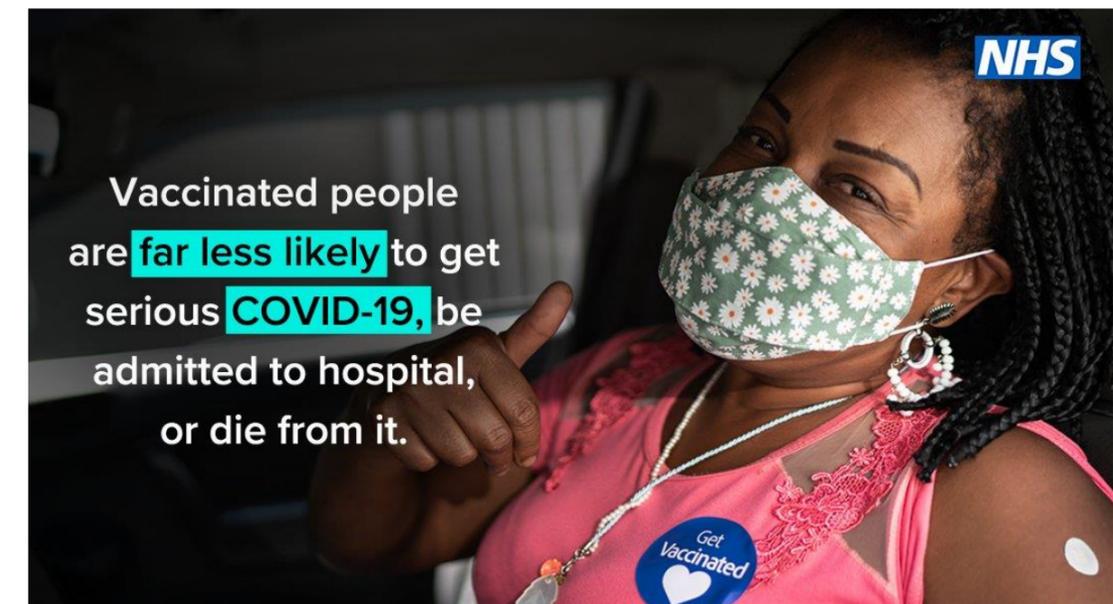
- Increase uptake in 1st dose for 18 – 29 and 30 – 39
- Increase uptake for those who are having the 2nd dose aged 30 and over (anyone who had their first vaccine in May is now due)

### Ethnicity

- Black, Black African, Black Caribbean community
- Pakistani community
- Bangladeshi community

### Other

- Pregnant women (see later slides)



# Champions Showcase

## Refugee and Migrant Centre – Shahida’s Story



Shahida is a volunteer for Refugee and Migrant Centre, working as a COVID-19 community champion. She recently shared her experience of working as a champion and supporting others.

*It has been an incredible experience so far, being able to raise awareness and provide guidance where necessary; however, it has not been without challenge. Many people have been reluctant to attend appointments or even listen to the importance of getting vaccinated. It has been an immense pleasure though, I have met so many people from different parts of the world, who speak different languages. The sense of achievement when changing someone's opinion or perception for me has been incredible.*

# Champions Showcase

## Midland Mencap – Dean’s Story



Midland Mencap recently supported one of their citizens Dean to get his COVID-19 vaccination. This outcome is down to the funding that Midland Mencap received for the COVID-19 Community Champions programme.

The team were able to include specialist support for Dean, which included information sessions and face to face support with the learning disability team at Orchard Hills.

For Dean, receiving the vaccination means he is able to get back to some normality and do some of the things he had not been able to do for over a year. He was also happy to hear from a health practitioner in one of the information sessions that the vaccine was very effective to protect him against COVID-19.

Dean believes everyone should decide for themselves about the vaccine but says to people to get all the information they need to make the best decision.

# Project update (1)

## **AFGHAN COMMUNITY & WELFARE CENTRE**

- The welfare centre's experience working with newly-arrived communities/migrants/refugees has been very successful.
- Some people are not registered with a GP and, in some cases, the centre has succeeded in registering them, showing them how to book appointments and many have now had their vaccination.
- Some people have been hesitant: in particular, two ladies who had been shielding for a few months (one had asthma) were still reluctant to have their vaccination. The ladies, after three visits with a female volunteer, agreed to have the vaccination. They have now had one vaccination, with the second one already booked.
- One learning point is that those who are hesitant about having the vaccination need to be targeted in a different way. Sometimes, this is simply a question of providing different information or leaflets in a different language. Having access to an expert who can answer questions is also helpful.

# Project update (2)

## ZEBRA ACCESS

- One lady, who lived at a refugee centre, would not have the jab as people at the refugee centre would not encourage it. Zebra Access champions explained to her how important it is. A few days later she received a message on her mobile from the NHS asking her to go to a centre for her vaccination. On attending the appointment, there were some communication barriers and the vaccination could not take place. This lady was later visited by Zebra Access and supported her by attending the vaccination clinic with her, providing a BSL and relay interpreter. Staff at the clinic were then able to answer her questions and the lady was vaccinated. Zebra Access have agreed to attend the second vaccination appointment with her. This one example illustrates clearly how it is for Deaf people to have their vaccination when communication barriers exist and they are unable to ask the questions that are important to them such as allergic reactions, pregnancy and also questions relating to their medical history.
- Zebra Access have also been out in the community conducting face-to-face meetings. The majority of these deaf people have already had their first vaccination and many have also had their second. Most are elderly and are supported by hearing family who attend with them.
- Many people are asking questions such as "What will happen in winter?" And "What about the booster?" Zebra Access have said that they will pass this information on when known.

# Project update (3)

## **REFUGEE & MIGRANT CENTRE (RMC)**

- RMC still have clients coming into the office, but it has been quieter since Eid.
- Two volunteers have found full-time jobs. Although this is very good news for those volunteers, RMC said that they have left and are now therefore recruiting more volunteers. They hope to have recruited a further two by the end of this week. Because of this and the added workload on remaining volunteers, RMC have had to switch focus and re-prioritise their work.
- RMC are happy with the resources from Public Health England and are making good use of these.
- Recruiting more volunteers – hopefully a further 2 by the end of the week.

# Project update (4)

## **NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD (NTCOG)**

- NTCOG are continuing to complete surveys, with the telephone surveys going particularly well. They are finding in their face-to-face interviews that some people are still very hesitant about the vaccine because of incorrect information they are getting from family and friends. It is difficult to say to these people that they need to ensure the information is from a trusted source. NTCOG are persevering and continuing to drive home the message.
- NTCOG advised that they have received a lot of leaflets and have distributed those they ordered. The remaining leaflets, not specifically ordered by them, will be handed to other religious organisations to distribute.
- NTCOG have been in contact with one of the churches in Caldmore to discuss COVID and the vaccination. As the gentleman was unsure where they were with COVID, NTCOG followed this up to offer support. Many of their church members have already been vaccinated and no help is required at present. A NTCOG representative has been invited to the church to talk to champions and to provide advice.
- NTCOG placed a banner outside their church on Wednesbury Road. The two faces appearing on the banner are those of the church's, who wanted to show that as leaders of the church they are supporting this activity.
- NTCOG is planning a conference with people aged 18-39 with someone in attendance who will be able to answer questions.

# Project update (5)

## **AAINA COMMUNITY HUB**

- Community Champions have hosted the vaccination bus on a couple of occasions and continue to provide support. They are promoting vaccination uptake at community events such as their AGM that took place on 31 July and will also be attending a whg event on 24 August.
- Aaina continue to distribute literature.
- There is now a new catchment audience through a play scheme that has recently started. There are 30 new families and associated social links.
- Previously supported at the centre, Aaina are now taking mobile devices out into the community to help people with booking appointments.
- Themes emerging from the work on questionnaires (74 were returned this month) will inform a podcast that will soon be made. Aaina plan to include testimonials and will talk through topics such as possible side effects.
- People are expressing concern about travel arrangements and are also worried that the vaccination seems to be mandatory rather than choice.
- The update from the Walsall Black Sisters is that they continue to engage with local residents and also to support the vaccination bus.
- Aaina are working with a local scout group to make a podcast in an easy-to-understand format.

# Project update (6)

## **RYECROFT NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE**

- Ryecroft NRC are continuing with the questionnaires although these are taking a long time to process.
- The COVID App recently received its 8000th download. However, Ryecroft has had to remove this temporarily from the Google Play Store due to Google's implementation of a new privacy policy. Ryecroft NRC will be working with Google to resolve this issue. The App has received a very good response from MIT in America and it has also received an award.
- Three people from a mental health support group at the centre were persuaded into having their jab (one who was terrified of needles!)
- Now that the centre is becoming much busier, Ryecroft plans to reinforce the COVID messages gained from their work with all of their user groups, two of which are African-Caribbean faith groups.
- Ryecroft have recently had a good number of people (16 this week alone) turning up at the centre for PCR tests having booked through an official portal. However, Ryecroft has never offered this service. This will be looked into by Public Health.

# Project update (7)

## MIND-KIND

- MindKind have recently completed their schools' podcast. The schools have received the podcast but have not responded and MindKind have therefore made the decision to release it.
- Although very active, MindKind have not done a great deal of promotion on social media. They would welcome assistance with that.
- MindKind have done work around vaccine hesitancy, talking to students who are back home from university for summer. Some students say they would have a vaccination but are put off because of other members of the family who are hesitant. Last week two students were vaccinated but did not want to provide a testimony for confidentiality reasons. It is becoming apparent that this is starting to create a divide in some households.
- MindKind now come to the end of its own COVID project but will be providing assistance to Oak Tree Trust.
- The special day for mums and children was hugely successful. More than 100 people attended. They talked about the reasons for having or not having the vaccination and the information gained can now be used to create further sessions in the future. One-to-one drop-in sessions are to start this week.
- Focus up to now has been on getting people vaccinated. However, MindKind would like to offer a regular, daily test session and this would also provide an opportunity for people to chat.
- Several mums (approximately 23-24) have requested the vaccination bus schedule. They have asked us not to publicise this.
- A connection has recently been made with Mill Street mosque that aims to encourage men's talk. Oak Tree Trust would like to do a podcast and would appreciate the help of a medical professional.

# Project update (8)

## VERA GROUP

- Vera Group continue to raise awareness amongst their groups of:
  - Restrictions
  - Testing
  - Vaccination process
- To date, 250 conversations have been conducted and 180 surveys completed.
- Recent activity has included distribution of leaflets/booklets, providing advice on social media and sharing case studies.
- Face-to-face activity has continued and has identified individuals not registered with a GP.
- Recent lifting on travel restrictions for quarantine has encouraged some to have their vaccination as many are planning to travel. However, some people feel that they have been forced into having the vaccination.
- Case studies are important as are the experiences of champions.
- The leaflets and booklets in Russian and Romanian work well.
- Lifting of restrictions for quarantine good – also bad because some feel they have been forced into having it.

# Project update (9)

## MIDLAND MENCAP

- Midland Mencap are continuing with completion of questionnaires and have linked in with some key partners who have now been completing questionnaires with their users. Partners have also been sign-posting citizens to Midland Mencap for support further. This is welcome as it is felt that this assists in broadening people's social networks.
- Several Midland Mencap COVID champions have supported the vaccination bus in Walsall.
- Midland Mencap are engaging with individuals who have recently had their vaccination to talk about their experience on video. It is proposed to use this for social media.
- Plans are underway for further Covid support/information sessions and focus group with a health professional (learning disability nurse) to be delivered in August.

## Pregnancy

- We are encouraging more pregnant women to get their COVID-19 vaccine.
- Nationally we are seeing more pregnant women being admitted to hospital with severe COVID-19 symptoms. They are at greater risk of becoming unwell with COVID-19, especially in later stages of pregnancy,
- If you're pregnant, it's important to have both doses of your COVID-19 vaccine to protect you and your baby. Becoming unwell with COVID-19 in the last trimester
  - Doubles your chances of stillbirth
  - Triples your chance of a premature birth
  - Increases the risk of needing an emergency caesarean section
- The vaccine cannot hurt an unborn baby as it is not a live virus, so it **cannot** be passed to the baby through the placenta. The antibodies you develop after having the vaccine can be passed through the placenta so it is likely the baby will have greater protection against the virus when born.
- Although the vaccine itself is new it's based on science that has been used safely for pregnant women for years and years.



Public Health England

**Pregnant?**

**Have your COVID-19 vaccines!**

It is important to have both doses of your COVID-19 vaccine to protect you and your unborn baby.

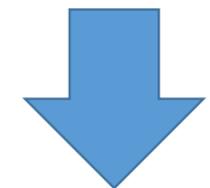
COVID-19 infection is currently circulating and can be serious for pregnant women.

Thousands of pregnant women have been safely vaccinated in the UK and worldwide.



Call 119 or go online to [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/) to register for your vaccination appointment. You can also attend walk in, mobile or pop up vaccination clinics in your area.

 **COVID-19 immunisation**  
Helping to protect you and your pregnancy



**Please advise pregnant women to speak to their GP, Midwife or the health in pregnancy team with concerns.**

# COVID-19 Vaccination

[Coronavirus Hub - RCM](#)

**Is it safe for my baby?**

The vaccines do not pass virus across the placenta to the baby. They help you develop antibodies to the virus so you're less likely to become unwell if you get COVID. Antibodies pass through the placenta, so it's likely that your baby will have greater protection against the virus when they are born.

**Can I wait until after the baby's born?**

More and more pregnant women being admitted to hospital with severe COVID-19 symptoms. None of them have had both doses of the vaccine. Your chances of being severely ill with COVID in the late stages of pregnancy are much higher, your risk of stillbirth doubles and the risk of having a preterm baby trebles. It really is best for you and your baby to get vaccinated now.

**Is it safe for me?**

Around 200,000 pregnant women have now been vaccinated in the USA and UK, with no adverse effects on the woman, pregnancy or baby.

[www.rcm.org.uk/coronavirus-hub](http://www.rcm.org.uk/coronavirus-hub)



# COVID-19 Vaccination

## Update on the COVID-19 vaccination for 16 and 17 year olds

All 16 and 17-year-olds in the UK will start being offered a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination within weeks, after an announcement from The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on 4 August.

One dose of the vaccine will give the 16 and 17-year-old age group good protection against severe illness and around 80% protection against hospitalisation. They will not need parental consent and will receive the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccination.

As soon as the NHS has confirmed dates for the roll-out to this age range to start further information will be available and we will share. For the moment the vaccination continues to only be available to those aged 18 and over.

Announcement:

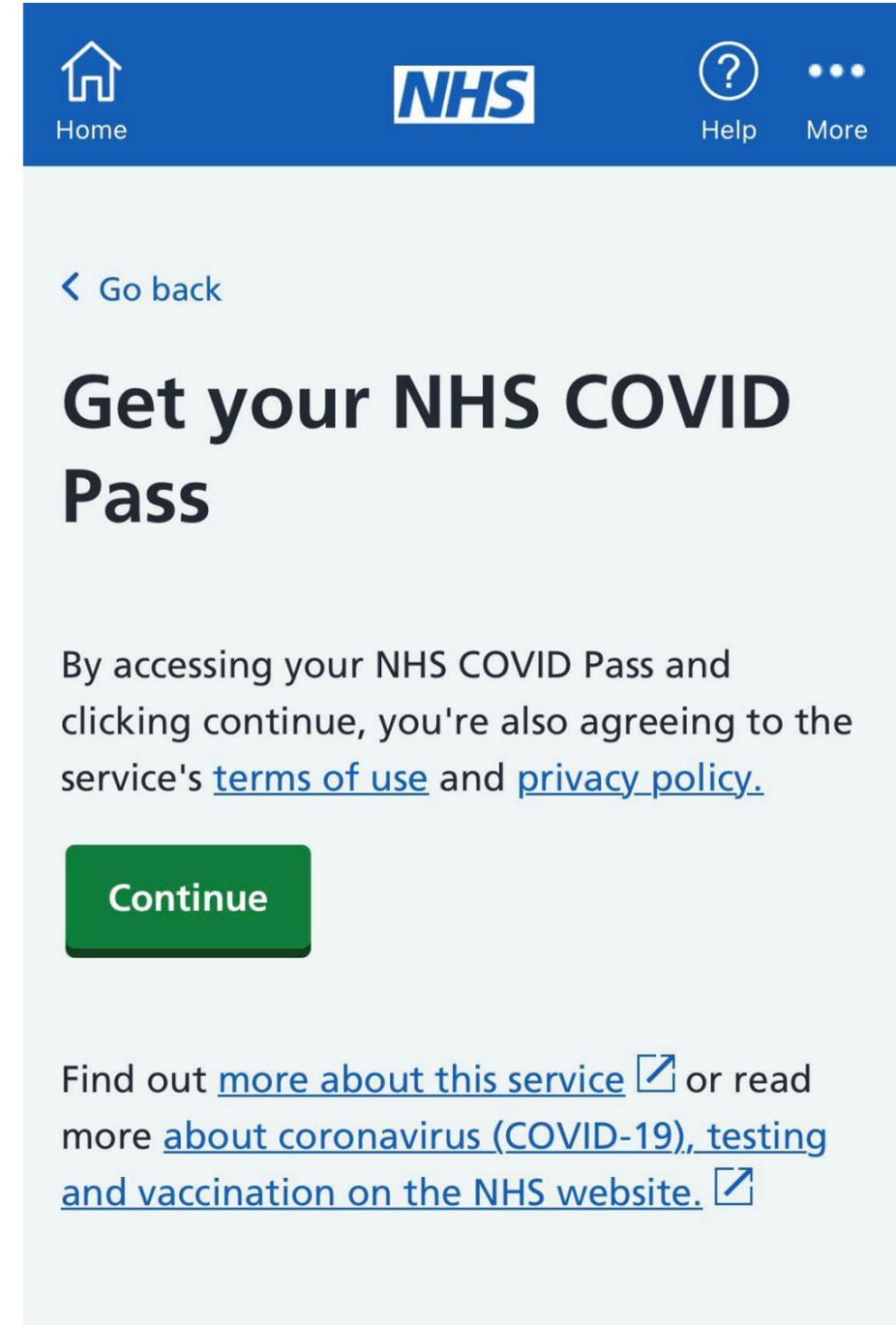
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-issues-updated-advice-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-young-people-aged-16-to-17>



# COVID-19 Vaccination

## NHS COVID-19 Pass

- The [NHS COVID Pass](#) allows you to confirm your COVID status and evidence that you are at lower risk of transmitting to others through full vaccination, a recent negative COVID-19 test, or proof of natural immunity
- **This is your COVID-19 status.**
- You may be asked to show your pass to travel abroad, or at events and venues in England asking for proof of your COVID-19 status.
- You can get your COVID-19 pass by;
  - Digital
    - [The NHS App](#) (you must be registered with a GP) This is different to the NHS COVID-19 app
    - NHS website
  - Paper copy (you do not need to be registered with a GP)
    - Request online
    - Phone 119



The screenshot shows the NHS COVID Pass service page. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with a home icon labeled 'Home', the NHS logo, a help icon labeled 'Help', and a more icon labeled 'More'. Below the navigation bar, there is a light blue background with a 'Go back' link. The main heading is 'Get your NHS COVID Pass'. Below the heading, there is a paragraph of text: 'By accessing your NHS COVID Pass and clicking continue, you're also agreeing to the service's [terms of use](#) and [privacy policy](#).' Below this text is a green 'Continue' button. At the bottom, there is a paragraph of text: 'Find out [more about this service](#) or read more [about coronavirus \(COVID-19\), testing and vaccination on the NHS website](#).'

# New Resources

## COVID-19 vaccinations and pregnancy poster and social media cards

A set of 4 posters aimed at pregnant women encouraging them to have both of their COVID-19 vaccinations are now available. There is a set of social media cards to go with these posters and they can be downloaded and shared on social media and websites.

An [easy-read version of this leaflet](#) is available for people with a learning disability and their carers.

[British Sign Language videos](#) are available to view.

A [Braille version](#) of this leaflet is available to order.

Paper copies of this leaflet are available to order for free or download in the following languages:

[English](#), [English large print](#), [Albanian](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Chinese](#), [Estonian](#), [Farsi](#), [Greek](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Latvian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Panjabi](#), [Polish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Brazilian](#), [Romanian](#), [Russian](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Turkish](#), [Twi](#), [Ukrainian](#) and [Urdu](#).



Public Health England

### Pregnant?

**Have your COVID-19 vaccines!**

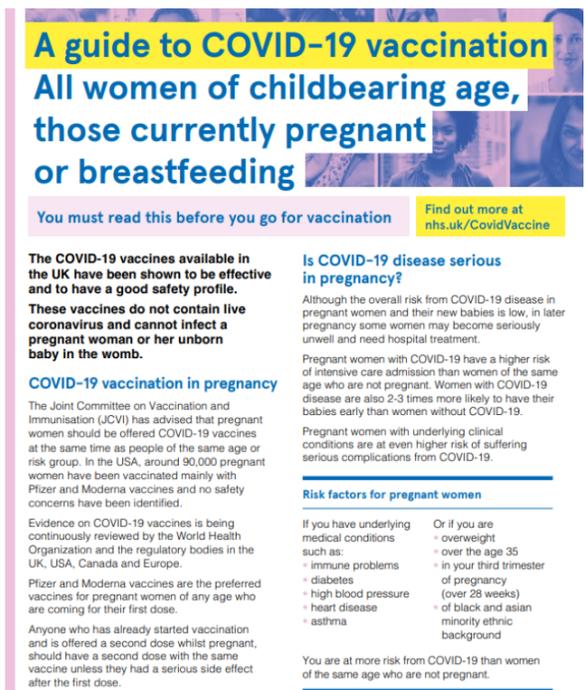
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COVID-19 infection is currently circulating and can be serious for pregnant women.

Thousands of pregnant women have been safely vaccinated in the UK and worldwide.

Call 119 or go online to [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/) to register for your vaccination appointment. You can also attend walk in, mobile or pop up vaccination clinics in your area.

COVID-19 immunisation  
Helping to protect you and your pregnancy



### A guide to COVID-19 vaccination

All women of childbearing age, those currently pregnant or breastfeeding

You must read this before you go for vaccination. Find out more at [nhs.uk/CovidVaccine](http://nhs.uk/CovidVaccine)

**The COVID-19 vaccines available in the UK have been shown to be effective and to have a good safety profile. These vaccines do not contain live coronavirus and cannot infect a pregnant woman or her unborn baby in the womb.**

**COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that pregnant women should be offered COVID-19 vaccines at the same time as people of the same age or risk group. In the USA, around 90,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated mainly with Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and no safety concerns have been identified.

Evidence on COVID-19 vaccines is being continuously reviewed by the World Health Organization and the regulatory bodies in the UK, USA, Canada and Europe.

Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are the preferred vaccines for pregnant women of any age who are coming for their first dose.

Anyone who has already started vaccination and is offered a second dose whilst pregnant, should have a second dose with the same vaccine unless they had a serious side effect after the first dose.

**Is COVID-19 disease serious in pregnancy?**

Although the overall risk from COVID-19 disease in pregnant women and their new babies is low, in later pregnancy some women may become seriously unwell and need hospital treatment.

Pregnant women with COVID-19 have a higher risk of intensive care admission than women of the same age who are not pregnant. Women with COVID-19 disease are also 2-3 times more likely to have their babies early than women without COVID-19.

Pregnant women with underlying clinical conditions are at even higher risk of suffering serious complications from COVID-19.

**Risk factors for pregnant women**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| If you have underlying medical conditions such as: | Or if you are  |
| • immune problems                                  | • overweight   |
| • diabetes   | • over the age 35                                      |
| • high blood pressure                              | • in your third trimester of pregnancy (over 28 weeks) |
| • heart disease                                    | • of black and asian minority ethnic background        |
| • asthma   |  |

You are at more risk from COVID-19 than women of the same age who are not pregnant.

# New Resources

## What the NHS COVID Pass letter tells you: translated versions and alternative formats

The NHS COVID Pass letter you receive will be in English. You can get information about what the letter tells you in other languages and alternative formats. However, you'll still need to show the original English letter to demonstrate your COVID status, for example when travelling abroad. You do not need your letter in a language to match the country you're intending to travel to.

### Translated versions

Read [translated versions about what the NHS COVID Pass letter tells you](#).

### Easy read

Read an [easy-read guide about what the NHS COVID Pass letter tells you](#).

### Braille and large print

You can get a [Braille or large print version of the NHS COVID Pass letter via the NHS website](#) or by calling 119 (select the 'NHS COVID Pass service').

### Audio format

You can get an [audio version of the NHS COVID Pass letter via the NHS website](#) or by calling 119. Your letter and the audio file on a CD will be sent directly to you. It should arrive within 7 working days.

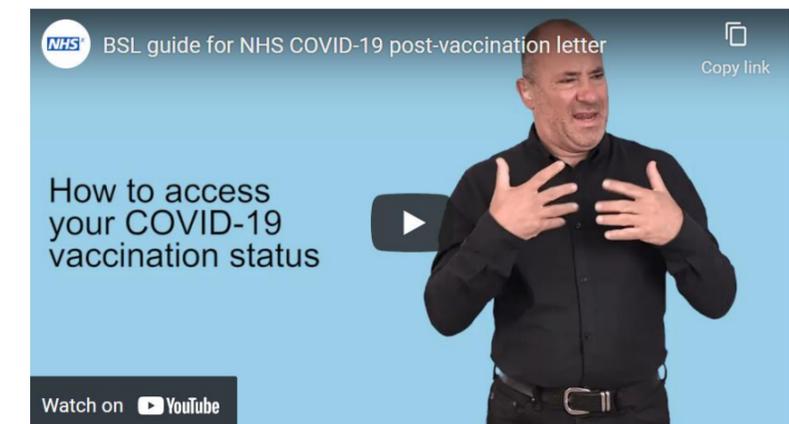
### British Sign Language (BSL)

[Watch a video](#) about the NHS COVID Pass letter in BSL, not including personal details.

Guidance

## What your NHS COVID Pass letter tells you (English, text only)

Updated 20 July 2021



# New resources



HM Government

NHS

**Get your second dose sooner.**

Go to [nhs.uk/covidvaccination](https://nhs.uk/covidvaccination)

EVERY VACCINATION GIVES US  
**HOPE**



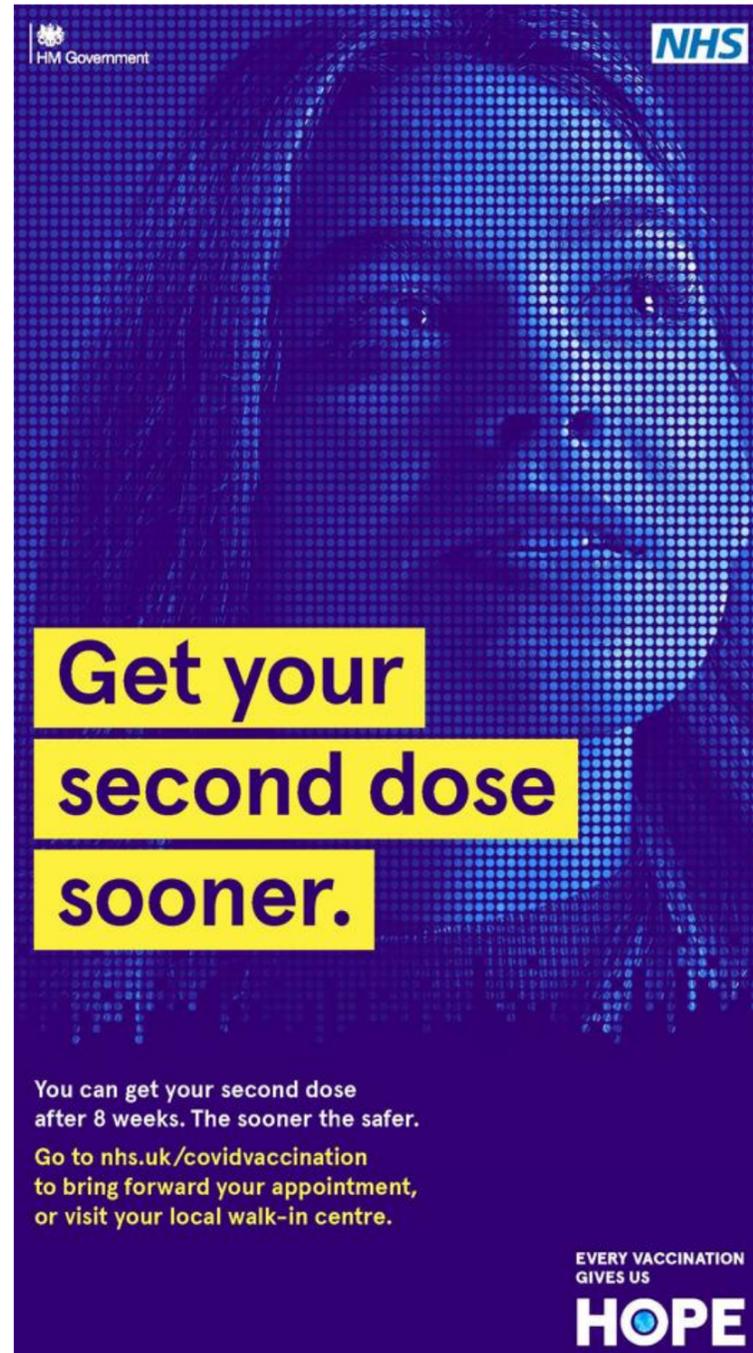
HM Government

NHS

**Let's get vaccinated.**

Go to [nhs.uk/covidvaccination](https://nhs.uk/covidvaccination)

EVERY VACCINATION GIVES US  
**HOPE**



HM Government

NHS

**Get your second dose sooner.**

You can get your second dose after 8 weeks. The sooner the safer.

Go to [nhs.uk/covidvaccination](https://nhs.uk/covidvaccination) to bring forward your appointment, or visit your local walk-in centre.

EVERY VACCINATION GIVES US  
**HOPE**



HM Government

NHS

**Let's get vaccinated**

The Covid-19 vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others. The sooner, the safer.

Go to [nhs.uk/covidvaccination](https://nhs.uk/covidvaccination) to book, or visit your local walk-in centre.

EVERY VACCINATION GIVES US  
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HM Government

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EVERY VACCINATION GIVES US  
**HOPE**

For further information please visit the [NHS](https://www.nhs.uk) website and the [GOV](https://www.gov.uk) webpage.

# Public Health On-call

Walsall Public Health continue to operate a seven-day COVID-19 advice line for businesses, organisations and education settings.

The phone line is open **8am–6pm Monday to Friday and 10am–2pm on weekends and bank holidays.**

The helpline should be your first point of call if:

- you are notified you have had a positive case in your setting
- you are informed of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by the [NHS Test & Trace service](#)
- you have any questions on infection control to reduce the spread of the virus.

The team will work with you to assess the risks and advise you of what actions to take. By taking this early action they could stop a major outbreak.

Contact the team by email [walsall.healthprotection@nhs.net](mailto:walsall.healthprotection@nhs.net) or phone 01922 65 8065.