

COVID-19 Community Champions

Fortnightly briefing

Wednesday 1 September



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 or phone 01922 65 8065.

Public Health Update

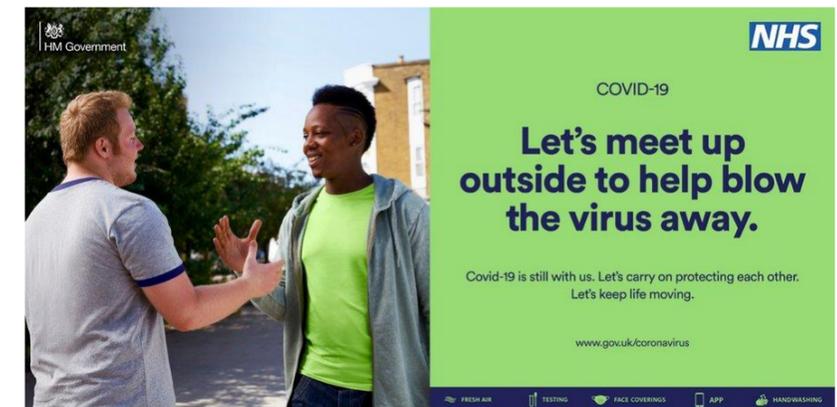
For the latest COVID-19 data, visit the Walsall Council website:
https://go.walsall.gov.uk/covid-19_information/covid-19_data_for_walsall

Public Health Update – Key Messages

Translations are now available

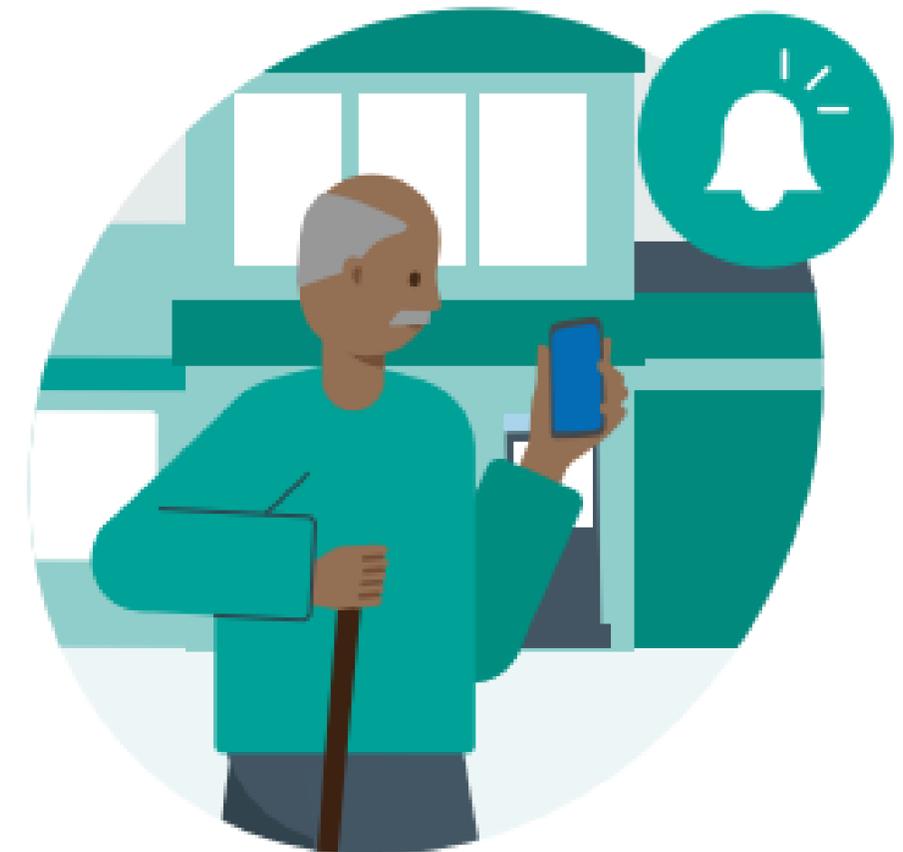
The pandemic is far from over. These are simple clear messages to help us all understand the health behaviours we should be using over the summer and into autumn.

- 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.



Changes to close contact self-isolation

- From 16 August 2021, if you are identified as a close contact of a positive case by NHS Test and Trace, you will be exempt from the requirement to self-isolate if you are under 18 or were fully vaccinated at the point when you last had close contact with the positive case. **Individuals will instead be advised to take a PCR test as soon as possible.**
- Fully vaccinated adults are those who received their final dose of an MHRA-approved vaccine in the UK vaccination programme, at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case.
- Exemptions from self-isolation for close contacts will also apply to:
 - **Clinical trial participants:** those who have taken part in – or are currently taking part in – an MHRA (Medicine and Healthcare products Healthcare Agency) approved COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial.
 - **Medical exemptions:** those who can evidence that they cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons.



Changes to close contact self-isolation

- The changes apply to all notifications to self-isolate, including those received through contact tracing calls and the NHS COVID-19 app.
- In addition to taking a PCR test, you may also consider:
 - limiting close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces
 - wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces and where you are unable to maintain social distancing
 - limiting contact with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable
 - continuing to take part in regular asymptomatic testing
- If you are exempt from self-isolation, you are not required to inform your employer that you have been identified as a contact of a positive case, but you may choose to do so. Employers are not expected to check whether you are exempt.



Changes to close contact self-isolation

- Unvaccinated adults who are notified of a positive close contact will continue to be asked to self-isolate.
- **Anyone who tests positive will still need to self-isolate regardless of their age or vaccination status – a legal duty will still be in place.**
- Individuals should also continue to self-isolate immediately if they show COVID-19 symptoms.



COVID-19 Vaccinations

Key Focus: We are continuing to try and increase vaccination uptake in;

Ethnicity - Confidence in the vaccines has risen, especially among ethnic minority communities who were initially most hesitant — but the uptake is still much lower than we need it to be. These communities were affected hardest at the start of the pandemic, alongside those from more disadvantaged areas of the borough. We do not want to see COVID-19 cause similar problems again. **Focus: Black, Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi community**

2nd Dose

- **Those who are having the 2nd dose aged 30 and over (anyone who had their first vaccine in May is now due)**

Locality

- Walsall South, Bentley and Darlaston, Birchills and Leamore

Pregnant women - Low uptake rates in pregnant women have also meant rising infections, hospitalisations, and complications. The vaccines are safe and the Pfizer and Moderna jabs are recommended for all pregnant women.

Age range

- 1st dose for 16 –17, 18 – 29 and 30 – 39

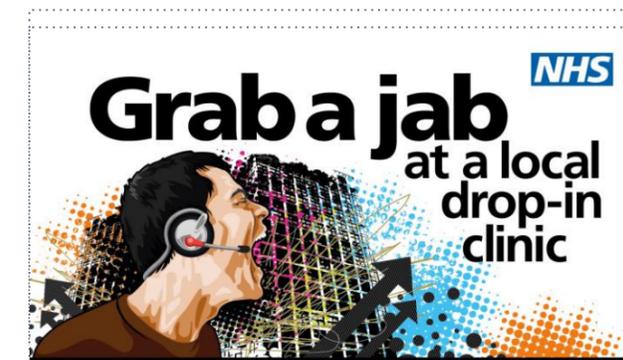
COVID-19 Vaccination

Vaccinating young people aged 16 and 17

- The COVID-19 vaccines are available free of charge for everyone aged 16 and over. This age range will have Pfizer
- The first dose has been shown to provide 80% protection against hospitalisation. Protection could be even higher as younger people respond better to vaccines and some will already have had the COVID-19 infection, meaning they will have an even better response to a first dose.
- Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms and even more unlikely to become seriously ill, to be admitted to hospital, or to die from it. The COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness
- Drop in sessions are being promoted on the CCG website
<https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/health-advice/covid-19-vaccination>

How you can help

- Let your networks know 16, 17 and 18 year olds can receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
- Use the new assets from Public Health England for younger people to let them know about the benefits of the vaccine.
- Let your networks know how 16, 17 and 18 year olds can drop in for their vaccine or book online / phone 119 for a convenient time.



COVID-19 Vaccination

Pregnant women

- We are continuing to encourage all expectant mums to get the vaccine.
- 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.
- COVID-19 vaccines offer pregnant women the best protection against COVID-19 disease which can be serious in later pregnancy for some women.
- The first dose of COVID-19 vaccine will give you good protection. You need the second dose to get longer lasting protection. You do not need to delay this second dose.
- If you have already had a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine without suffering any serious side effects, you can have your second dose with the same vaccine when this is offered.
- You can find facts about the vaccine and women who are of childbearing age on our CCG website along with stories of local women who have had the vaccine <https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-and-women-of-childbearing-age>

An NHS poster titled "COVID-19 Vaccination and Pregnancy". It features an illustration of two pregnant women, one in a red top and one in a white top. The poster contains the following text:

COVID-19 Vaccination and Pregnancy NHS

Doctors and midwives recommend ALL pregnant women have their COVID vaccination. It is the best protection against COVID for you and your baby.

COVID-19 in pregnancy
Most will have no symptoms or have mild cold/flu symptoms however....

- Getting covid after 28 weeks is more risky for you and your baby
- There is a higher risk of problems in your pregnancy including an increased risk of pre-eclampsia
- There is a greater risk of premature birth
- Pregnant women with COVID are more likely to need to go into hospital, or even need intensive care

What the data says

- There is no evidence that the vaccine is harmful in pregnancy
- There is no evidence the vaccine can affect yours or your partner's fertility
- UK vaccines are not 'live', so cannot give you the virus
- Pfizer and Moderna were given to 130,000 pregnant women in USA with no safety concerns
- You are still able to breastfeed after your vaccination

Women who are at higher risk of severe disease

- Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)
- Underlying medical condition e.g. diabetes
- BMI 25 or more
- Age 35 or more
- Over 28 weeks pregnant

Ways you can avoid catching COVID

- Get both your vaccinations
- Meet outside or open windows and doors for indoor visitors
- Wear a face covering in crowded places and on public transport
- Wash your hands with soap regularly and for at least 20 seconds
- Ask people you live with to stay cautious and follow the above

For more information please scan the code. or visit www.rcog.org.uk/covid-vaccine

How you can help

- Let your networks know pregnant women can receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.
- Please refer to midwife / Health in pregnancy team / GP if there are any questions outside of your competency.

COVID-19 Vaccination

Five reasons to get your COVID vaccine if you are pregnant (PHE Blog)

The COVID-19 vaccine is available to pregnant women at any point during their pregnancy. To date at least 62,000 women in the UK have received at least one dose. If you're expecting, [here are five key reasons](#) why they should get the jab.

Breastfeeding

- You can find facts about the vaccine and women who are of childbearing age on our CCG website along with stories of local women who have had the vaccine <https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-and-women-of-childbearing-age>

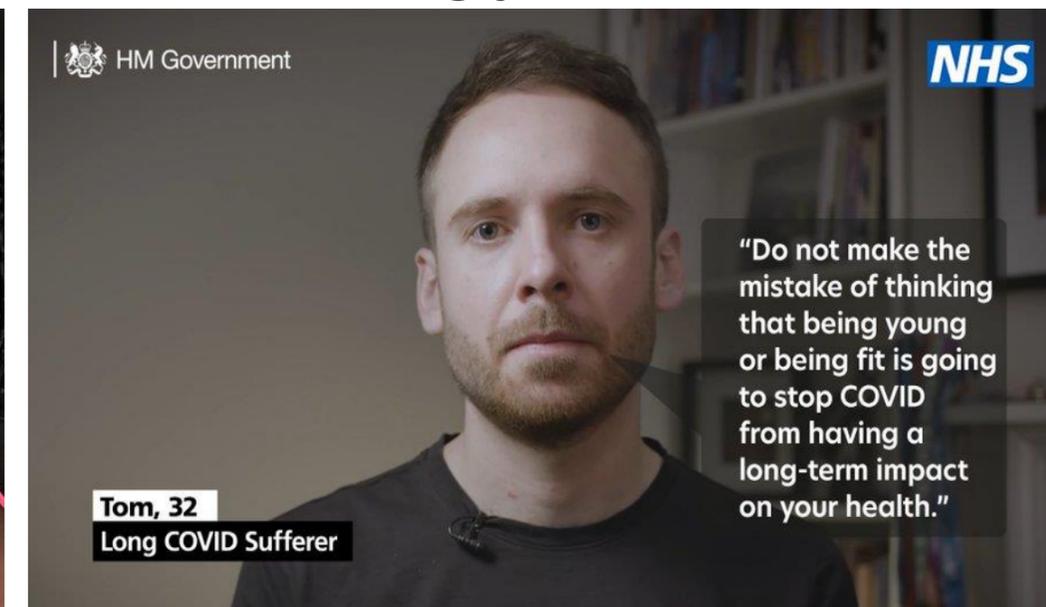
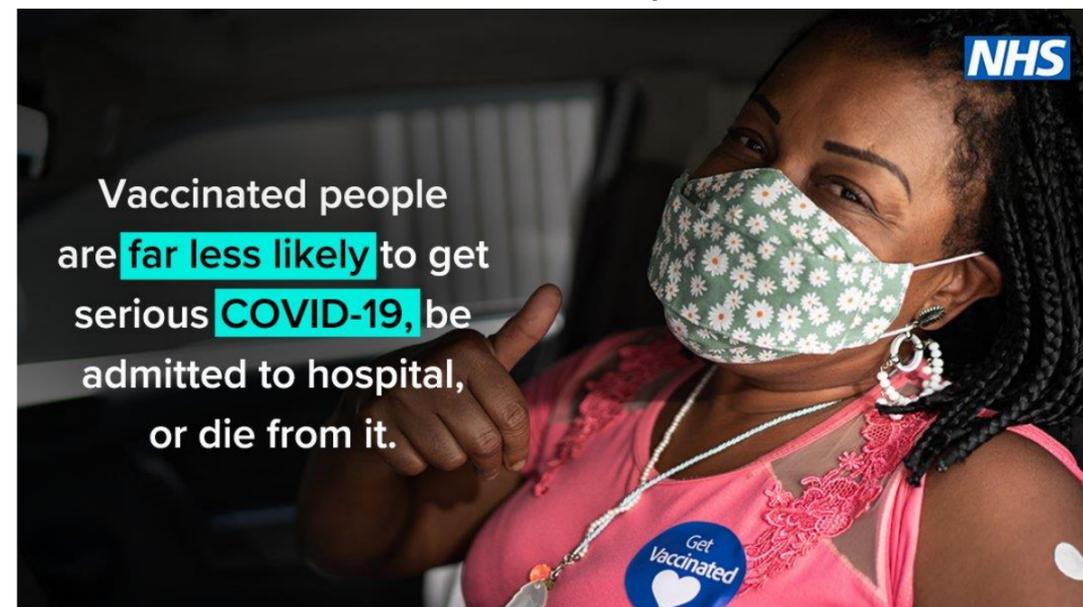
COVID-19 Vaccinations

Data accurate

Weekly rates

Importance of 2nd dose (Fully vaccinated 2 weeks after the second dose)

- The first dose of the vaccine starts the process of building up protection. The second dose works to greatly reinforce this protection. Moreover two doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill.
- Given the spread of the virus and the serious health risk it poses, the second dose is strongly recommended.



How you can help

- Let your networks know the importance of the 2nd vaccination
- Know where you can get Astra Zeneca / Pfizer 2nd vaccinations from in Walsall (there are always pop-ups happening across the borough) [COVID-19 Vaccination | How to access your vaccine in the Black Country and West Birmingham \(blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk\)](#)

Close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case will no longer need to self-isolate if they are either:

- Double jabbed
- Under 18 years old



CCG Update

- **Encouraging uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine to 16-17 year olds** – Drop in sessions are being promoted on the CCG website <https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/health-advice/covid-19-vaccination> More information and guidance on the vaccine and children & young people, including helpful questions and answers is also available <https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-children-young-people>
- **Vaccine hesitancy amongst pregnant women** – We are continuing to encourage all expectant mums to get the vaccine. You can find facts about the vaccine and women who are of childbearing age on our CCG website along with stories of local women who have had the vaccine <https://www.blackcountryandwestbirmccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine-and-women-of-childbearing-age>
- **COVID-19 Booster and Flu vaccinations** – we are awaiting guidance on this programme and will update once more information has been shared.

Project update (1)

Aisha Mosque

Successes:

- Have closed over the summer but pulling together a database of contact information to share COVID-19 information.
- Pulling together two women only events (English and Urdu) to take place to improve vaccine confidence.

Learning points:

- The increase in positive cases over the past few weeks has seen an uptake of the vaccination within younger community.

Project update (2)

New Testament Church of God

Successes:

- Have now made contact with Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Congregation are making plans to record videos of their COVID-19 journey to share

Learning Points

- Have held a community event but due to bad weather the turn-out was low
- Making contact is difficult when waiting for people – chasing is required!

Project update (3)

Aaina Community Hub

Successes

- The podcast has now been recorded and is ready to be shared online.
- Have a case study available where a resident has listened to the podcast and – awaiting for confirmation if able to share.

Learning Points

- Have reached saturation point with the surveys provided by the project team.
- Have received consistent feedback from the community that the vaccine was produced too quickly. Believe that Testimonial from a healthcare professional to discuss how the vaccine was produced would benefit the community.

Project update (4)

Oak Tree Trust Walsall

- Went on a community beach trip last week of 58 people and managed to capture 30 surveys in total. Lateral flow testing also encouraged for those on the trip beforehand. Continuing to run drop-in centre on Thursdays between 1-3pm, promoting across social media platforms. Currently awaiting confirmation to deliver a talk to The Eden Projects Youth Group, date & time tbc.

Zebra Access

- Have not yet approached the young deaf community around the vaccines including those at Walsall College. Seeking to engage soon.
- Have produced a video in BSL to encourage testing within the community.