

Update on what the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is doing to respond to coronavirus (19 February 2021)

Norfolk and Waveney offers a vaccination to top four priority groups most vulnerable to COVID-19

Norfolk and Waveney's COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to make good progress as it was revealed that more than a third of people in the area have received their first dose of vaccine.

[Data published yesterday by NHS England and NHS Improvement](#) shows that 34.9% of people aged over 16 have received a first dose of vaccine, ranking Norfolk and Waveney third out of 42 health systems in England. The national average is 28%. The figures show 297,668 patients had been administered at least one dose of the vaccine by February 14.

NHS Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (NW CCG) has been working collectively with NHS colleagues and system partners to address concerns raised about availability of appointments at local large vaccination sites. As a result, additional appointments are being made available at local large vaccination sites over the coming days.

People in the 65-69 age range who have received a letter inviting them to book through the national website or to call 119, should continue to check the availability of appointments at local sites as they are updated daily but do also fill quickly.

According to CCG data nearly 60% of all 65-69 year olds in Norfolk and Waveney have already received their first vaccination.

The first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine should give you good protection from coronavirus. But you need to have the two doses of the vaccine to give you longer lasting protection.

Norfolk and Waveney is expecting planned deliveries of vaccines for second doses and is urging people to keep their allocated appointments unless there is a clinical reason not to so. This will help to ensure the process runs as smoothly as possible and patients get this added protection.

There is a chance you might still get or spread coronavirus even if you have the vaccine so it's important to continue to follow social distancing guidance and, if you can, wear something that covers your nose and mouth in places where it's hard to stay away from other people.

Local health leaders praise vital role of volunteers in vaccine roll-out

Volunteers from across Norfolk and Waveney have been helping the NHS to roll-out its biggest-ever vaccination programme.

Voluntary Norfolk and Community Action Suffolk have been working with NHS Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Cambridgeshire Community Services and local GP practices to provide support at vaccination centres across the region.

Following a recruitment campaign last year there are now several hundred active volunteers helping with operational duties at vaccination sites and providing transport to vulnerable patients who need to get to their vaccination appointments.

In Norfolk the Covid Response team, coordinated by Voluntary Norfolk, currently has more than 150 volunteers deployed at vaccination centres across the region. Most are working as marshals directing traffic in car parks, and guiding patients inside the centres, but others are helping in administrative roles and phoning patients to book appointments. In the week ending 5 February alone, these volunteers had completed 337 individual shifts.

Voluntary Norfolk also has volunteers supporting other local NHS services and is working with the NHS to develop new voluntary roles for which yet more volunteers will be needed.

Melanie Craig, Chief Executive of the Norfolk and Waveney CCG said: "We're extremely grateful to all the volunteers who are supporting our staff at vaccination sites across the region. Their contribution is absolutely crucial in helping maintain a steady flow of patients through the centres so our clinical staff can focus on delivering vaccinations."

As further centres open across the region in the coming weeks, many more volunteers will be needed to help the NHS deliver the vaccination programme.

Mrs Craig added: "With more centres opening soon I would encourage anyone who would like to help to get in touch with Voluntary Norfolk or Community Action Suffolk. The vaccination programme is moving at a remarkable pace and to maintain this momentum we will need many more volunteers to help at the vaccination hubs."



Norfolk volunteer Sue Garwood (pictured) has been helping at vaccination clinics in Thetford and Cringleford, doing one or two shifts a week, each of about four hours.

"The tasks vary between shifts" says Sue. "You might be marshalling outside, welcoming patients inside, making sure hygiene procedures are followed, signing people off a register or calling patients to make and confirm appointments. There is a lot to do at each vaccination centre and there are lots of volunteers, just like me, all over the county helping to make this happen."

Sue is full of praise for the efficiency of the vaccination programme: "I am staggered at the sheer number of people who are passing through these vaccination centres. Up to 400 people were vaccinated on one of my recent afternoon shifts, and a similar number would have been vaccinated that morning; it's very impressive!"

Alan Hopley, Chief Executive of Voluntary Norfolk said: "We have an amazing volunteer workforce who have really stepped up to the mark to help the NHS with its vaccination programme. Others are helping to support isolated and vulnerable people who need help with the basics like collecting prescriptions or shopping. Some are providing telephone friendship calls or door-step welfare checks. It's been an unprecedented year and it's humbling to see so many people offering their support to others."

In Waveney, Community Action Suffolk has been coordinating volunteers for vaccine hubs and patient transport. One group, the Lowestoft and Waveney Rugby Club has recently offered its services to East Suffolk Council to help get vulnerable patients to their appointments at the vaccination centres at Oulton Broad, Kirkley and Reydon.

Tony Falco of the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Rugby Club said: "We started using our minibus to run shopping trips for older people after one of the local bus routes was cancelled. Now, with the opening of vaccination sites, we're helping the local community transport provider BACT in providing transport for vulnerable people needing to get to their appointments."

How you can get involved

With the vaccination programme spanning several months, recruitment of volunteers will be an ongoing process. Voluntary Norfolk and Community Action Suffolk are urging anyone interested to get in touch and discuss the opportunities.

If you would like to join the volunteer team in Norfolk, helping roll out vaccinations in your area, sign up via the Voluntary Norfolk website www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk/services/volunteer-services/covid-response-volunteer-service.

Anyone who would like to volunteer in the Waveney (North Suffolk) area should contact www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk.

Hospital thanks community for its support

The community support for the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital has been outstanding says Chief Nurse Professor Nancy Fontaine.

Professor Nancy Fontaine, Chief Nurse, says: "We want to say a big thank you for all the support we have received, both in the first wave of the pandemic and in the last couple of months when we know how hard it has been for families and businesses. It means the world to us when we know our local community has us in their hearts and they are urging us on, however difficult it might be at the time."

"The support we have received has come in a variety of ways and from a wide range of people. Local firefighters have been helping to train our staff in the fitting of PPE masks, retired health and social care workers have volunteered to help in our vaccination centre and some have been helping our patients at mealtimes. There have also been such generous contributions from our many fundraisers who have supported us throughout this period."

"We are starting to see a reduction in the number of patients being admitted with Covid-19 and this is all down to local people sticking to the lockdown rules and we hope this will continue with the success of the vaccination programme. Please keep up the good work and let's defeat this virus together."

The wide ranging support offered to the hospital includes thank you letters, children's paintings and cards for the wards which have been raising the spirits of staff. The hospital has been overwhelmed with messages of support and gifts donated to the Norfolk & Norwich Hospitals Charity through its Amazon Smile wish list, benefiting both patients and staff. The thoughtful gifts which range from items to support wellbeing to delicious snacks and chocolate treats, have been given out to busy staff working in ward areas and departments such as the Children's Emergency Department.

This followed generous donations from the public to the hospital's 'Send a smile with Santa campaign' when all patients, including children, received a gift on Christmas Day. Staff working on Christmas Day also received a range of goodies donated by community groups.

Through national support from NHS Charities Together, which includes the money raised by Captain Sir Tom Moore, and donations direct to the N&N Hospitals charity, there has also been funding for a whole range of initiatives to support patients and staff. These include care packages for patients with cancer, additional rest areas for staff and a system to enable remote support for patients with Motor Neurone Disease.

Coronavirus vaccine scams

In the UK, coronavirus vaccines will only be available via the NHS. You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a GP surgery or pharmacy local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, the vaccine is free of charge. At no point will you be asked to pay.

Coronavirus vaccine scams

OFFICIAL

Coronavirus vaccinations are free of charge. The NHS will never:

- ✖ ask for your bank account or card details
- ✖ ask for your PIN or banking passwords
- ✖ arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- ✖ ask for documentation to prove your identity, such as a passport or utility bills

Cancer patients urged to share their experiences of health services during the COVID-19 pandemic

People in Norfolk and Waveney who have been affected by cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic are being urged to feed back their experiences to help shape future services.

The NHS is keen to better understand how patients feel about their care and to identify what has been working well and where improvements could be made.

Maggie Tween, Cancer Programme Manager for NHS Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: “We are particularly keen to hear whether COVID-19 has impacted on your ability to access cancer services, and whether the right information and support has been available to you.”

“It’s now more important than ever that we get feedback from our patients, so if you or members of your family/friends have been affected by cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic, we’d really like to hear from you.”

Follow the link to take part in the online survey which should only take five minutes.
https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/COVID_Cancer_Survey/.

Mental health support available for the public

- It's important that we look after our mental wellbeing during this time – for tips and advice visit www.everymindmatters.co.uk.
- If you are worried about your own mental health and wellbeing call First Response, a free 24/7 helpline offering immediate support, on 0808 196 3494.
- 11 to 25 year olds in Norfolk and Waveney can get support and online counselling via www.Kooth.com. The service provides support or advice on any topic, including managing your feelings during the pandemic.
- JustOneNorfolk has a wealth of information and links to support the health and wellbeing of your family: www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk.

New exhibition explores impact of pandemic on mental health and wellbeing of health and social care staff

The impact of the pandemic on public mental health and on NHS health and social care staff working in the community is explored in a new digital exhibition called A Centenary of Caring which opens today: <https://artspaces.kunstmatrix.com/en/exhibition/4400380/a-centenary-of-caring>

The virtual, interactive exhibition, which has been created to celebrate the centenary year of nursing and midwifery becoming a registered profession (2020), is a collaboration between university students and health care workers from the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership.

Students from Norwich University of the Arts and the University of East Anglia's School of Health Sciences held a series of remote meetings with health and care staff to discuss what they were experiencing day-to-day in the community and their emotional response to the pandemic. With input from NUA and UEA academics, the discussions led to the creation of works of art in different forms: from video and photography, to painting to poetry and textiles.

Julie-Anne Stevens, Specialist Children's Community Learning Disability Nurse for the Starfish Learning Disability Team at NCH&C took part in the project and created two placards entitled "WHAT/Covid terms 2, 2021".

Julie-Anne said: "I found being able to step away from work to talk with the professor and the art student really helpful to process what has and is happening. My creative piece came about after we spent time explaining our work and the impact of Covid. It soon became evident that the big issue had been communication. How we engage and communicate with people safely and effectively so that people understand us and are then able to keep themselves and the rest of their family safe.

"I have never done anything like this before, but I believe that when you get the opportunity to dance you should dance! And if I didn't like it I could stop or just never do it again. I was hesitant to take part because I am not an artist. I am so, so pleased that I did."

The exhibition is on until 12 March.