**Covid-19 Information Update Issue 15 (updates from previous Bulletin in yellow)**

**Covid Information Champion update**

The number of coronavirus cases in Hertfordshire is falling but now is not the time to get complacent. We must continue to play our part to stop the spread. Thanks to the work of GP practices, hospitals, pharmacies, our larger vaccination sites and thousands of volunteers, more than **720,000 people** have received at least one vaccine dose in Hertfordshire and West Essex.

**Vaccination update**

Phase two of the vaccine programme is progressing well, with over half of the newly eligible 45-49 population already vaccinated with their first dose. People aged 42 and over are now eligible to book their vaccine, booking is available on the [**National Booking Service**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/)

**Rapid Testing**

1 in 3 people who catch Covid don’t display any symptoms, which means that the virus can be spread without realising it. Rapid testing sites, designed to detect COVID-19 in people without symptoms, are offering ‘lateral flow tests’ across Hertfordshire and now do not need to book – just walk in. You can also order rapid Covid testing kits to use at home or collect them from a local site or a pharmacy taking part in the lateral flow test scheme (if unavailable online).

Twice weekly rapid testing enables us to find cases and prevent the spread of infection. Getting into the habit of twice weekly testing helps to keep our friends and family safe, and alongside the vaccination programme, will help ensure we can continue to ease our way out of lockdown. [**Click Here**](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest) for more information.

**Rapid test home kits selfie campaigns**

Selfies should be sent to: **corporate.communications@hertfordshire.gov.**uk with the subject line **‘Rapid Test Selfie’**

**Remember, if you have COVID symptoms, you must get a ‘PCR’ test. Find out how to get a PCR test** [**Click here**](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test)

**Vaccination and pregnancy – new advice**

[**Click Here**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-issues-new-advice-on-covid-19-vaccination-for-pregnant-women) for new guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises that the Covid-19 vaccines should be offered to pregnant women at the same time as the rest of the population, based on their age and clinical risk group. There have been no specific safety concerns identified with any brand of coronavirus vaccine in relation to pregnancy. As there is currently more data for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines in pregnancy, pregnant women will be offered these vaccines where they are available.

**Walk-in vaccination sessions for frontline health and social care staff**

Eligible frontline social care and health staff aged over 30 who have yet to book their vaccine can **Book Online** [**Click Here**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/) or walk into several vaccination centres when they are open without the need for an appointment. Opening times for staff are available [**Click Here**](https://www.hct.nhs.uk/covid-19/walk-in-vaccination-times-for-health-and-social-care-staff-1st-and-2nd-doses-of-covid-19-vaccination-astra-zeneca-until-end-of-april/) Staff must bring their NHS number, proof of ID and vaccination card (if they have already received their first dose). Frontline Health and social care workers who are 11 weeks post their first AstraZeneca vaccination and who don’t currently have a booked appointment for their second dose, can use the walk-in sessions to get their second jab.

**Unpaid Carers**

Unpaid Carers are being reminded to register with their GP practice as a Carer. This means they canbook their COVID-19 vaccine with their GP and get relevant information, support and advicefrom healthcare services **[Click Here](https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/register-as-an-unpaid-carer-with-your-gp-template-letter)**

**Resources**

There is a huge amount of resources you can access to get the correct information on coronavirus and the vaccines. False information is often being shared online which can lead to some serious consequences. The government have created a [**SHARE checklist**](https://sharechecklist.gov.uk/) to help and protect you from false information online.

You can find more information about the vaccination programme, including FAQs and resources for adults with learning disabilities and resources in different languages and formats [**Click Here**](https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/information-and-resources)

Videos have been created by some of Hertfordshire’s Covid Information Champions in different languages about the coronavirus vaccine [**Click Here**](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgtazLRY5Zd-yrK9YZzsEukHC4SmQ4mO0)

**If you or your family need financial or practical help and advice with the cost of food or fuel, please get in touch with HertsHelp**

Visit [**www.hertshelp.net**](http://www.hertshelp.net) email **info@hertshelp.net** or call **0300 123 4044**

For more information and guidance for residents and businesses during the pandemic please [**Click Here**](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**“What will you be doing?” #WWYBD COVID-19 campaign**

In this campaign, Herts County Council is encouraging people to keep following the rules in pub gardens, gyms, shops, and private gardens so that there isn’t a delay in the reopening of sports grounds, restaurants, and cinemas.

From this week, businesses in the community will be showing their support for the campaign by displaying the campaign message: **“What will you be doing?”** outside their venues and posting images on social media using the hashtag **#WWYBD**.

This message invites people to look forward to what they’ll be doing this summer as restrictions ease, but also asks what they’ll be doing to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Herts County Council is looking for businesses, clubs and community venues to take part. It could be a cinema with a letter board outside, a theatre with a poster board for its upcoming events, or a sports club with a street-facing fixture board. Herts County Council can provide posters where needed.

If you know of any spaces in your community that could help, HCC would like to know and can contact them directly with more information.

For further details, please contact **grace.fordham@hertfordshire.gov.uk**