**Covid-19 Information Update Issue 16 (new updates in yellow)**

**Covid Information Champion update**

The number of coronavirus cases in Hertfordshire is falling but now is not the time to be 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 **One million doses** have been given in Hertfordshire and West Essex so far.

**Vaccination update**

The vaccination programme extended to include everyone aged 40 and over from 30 April. It is important to remember that the offer of a vaccine isn’t time limited. If you know someone who was unsure and didn’t take up an offer to have their vaccine earlier in the year, a dose has already been allocated to them and the health service would be delighted to support them to take up their vaccination. **Remember that you aren’t fully vaccinated until after the second dose**. Getting the second jab is as important as getting the first. 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 you do not now 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.

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.

**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)

**Expert online panel to answer public questions on fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding**

One of the issues which people report as deterring them from having their COVID-19 vaccination, is uncertainty about the vaccines and fertility, pregnancy and breastfeeding.

To help to set minds at rest, a panel of experts from across our health and care system are coming together to help answer common questions about the jab. We’re asking the public to submit questions they’d like answered by emailing **communications.hvccg@nhs.net** or by commenting on the social media posts promoting the event.

The questions received will be addressed to a diverse online panel of experts who specialise in obstetrics, maternity, microbiology, infection control and pharmacy. The session will be recorded and shared so that people can watch at a time that suits them. A link to the recording will be shared as soon as it is available.

**Hate crime reporting**

While Hertfordshire is generally a safe and tolerant county, like anywhere else, crimes and incidents motivated by hatred can occur. Hate crimes include assaults, threats or acts of vandalism, or any other crime committed against someone because of their disability, race, religion, transgender identity or sexual orientation.

The impact of a hate crime on someone can be devastating. It can cause them to lose their confidence and be fearful about coming and going from their home, being out and about in public places or just going about their daily lives.

Hate crime is not tolerated in Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire Constabulary has specialist hate crime officers to tackle and challenge these incidents, educate people and support those who have been affected.

You can report hate crime online at www.herts.police.uk/report [**Click Here**](https://www.herts.police.uk/Report/Report) You can speak to an operator in the Force Communications Room via the online web chat [**Click Here**](https://www.herts.police.uk/Information-and-services/About-us/Contact) You can also call the **non-emergency number 101** or in an **emergency dial 999**. You can also report hate crime online at True Vision a national Police funded website [**Click Here**](https://www.report-it.org.uk/)

***For more information about where to report hate crime visit hertsagainsthate.org***

**New COVID-19 video specially made by a Romany journalist for the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen community**

Romany film maker [@bowers\_jake](https://twitter.com/bowers_jake) has made a video to raise awareness among the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen community about #Covid19, talking about the impact of the virus, and asking safety and religious questions about the vaccine. Please share it widely across your networks [**youtube.com/watch?v=D4-S7x…**](https://t.co/ubHD8zfO39)

**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)