

LMC COVID VACCINE CALL, Wednesday 6th Jan , 2021

Iain Morrison welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked our guest speakers for joining, before handing over to Drummond Begg.

Supplies of the vaccine are currently relatively low however we now have 2 vaccines to use and are well ahead of many countries in the world. We all want to be able to vaccinate more people more quickly – tonight we'll go through the reality of what we can do to provide comfort and confidence to the people we serve and those we work with.

SUMMARY/ UPDATE

David Small, Primary Care Transformation Director, NHS Lothian

We're on the brink of the next huge step to return society to some sort of normality and it's great that GPs are starting with the over 80s in the next few days. Since the last meeting the AstraZeneca vaccine (AZ) been approved and CMO letter was issued (31/12). The biggest changes have been the timing between doses and the widening of eligibility of staff groups.

Since 8th Dec, 20,000 social care staff and 2000 care home residents have been vaccinated in Lothian and we aim to complete care homes by end of Jan.

GPs will start over 80s (using AZ), and then the mass program for 79 & under will begin, with the aim of delivering 1st dose to most of wave 2 (to age 55) within 2 – 2.5 months.

As at 7/1/2021, Scotland has currently delivered 100,000 vaccines so far, of which 22,000 were in Lothian (Lothian is 15% of population) so our 22% of Scottish total is a good start.

VACCINE UPDATE

Lorna Willocks, Immunisation coordinator, Consultant in Health Protection, NHS Lothian

Substantial update to Green Book as a result of AZ approval ** reminder to always use the most up to date online version**. Main changes are;

- Pregnancy – now no need to avoid pregnancy for 2 months post vaccine, although not recommended during pregnancy (GP discussion with patient re benefits/risks of vaccine during pregnancy)
- Breastfeeding – no biological reason to preclude vaccine, so MAY be offered vaccine although not a lot safety data so need to be advised accordingly.
- Age – AZ from age 18, Pfizer from age 16
- Allergies – more relaxation for both vaccines. Do not vaccinate if anaphylactic reaction to previous dose or any components of vaccine. Additionally for Pfizer if anaphylaxis to unknown origin, otherwise both are safe if anaphylaxis is related to food, bites, etc.
- 15 minute wait – AZ doesn't require 15 minute wait unless driving (mainly syncopal issue).
- Same vaccine – 2nd dose should be same vaccine as 1st dose (no mixing).

JCVI recommendation is to give more 1st doses (ie delay second doses) as this provides much more population benefit due to effectiveness of 1st dose. AZ evidence that giving 2nd dose at 12 weeks may provide even better efficacy than giving it earlier.

The following documents were all highlighted for information;

The JCVI statement of 31 December - optimising the Covid-19 vaccination programme for maximum short term impact – very useful and addresses a lot of concerns raised;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prioritising-the-first-covid-19-vaccine-dose-jcvi-statement>

Royal Pharmaceutical Society support of change in dose interval;
[RPS statement on change in COVID-19 vaccine dosing interval \(rpharms.com\)](https://www.rpharms.com/rps-statement-on-change-in-covid-19-vaccine-dosing-interval)

The 4 CMOs letter to the profession;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-the-profession-from-the-uk-chief-medical-officers-on-the-uk-covid-19-vaccination-programmes>

MHRA (this page links to all information for healthcare professionals);
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/oxford-universityastrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-approved>

JCVI statement on priority groups;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-advice-from-the-jcvi-30-december-2020>

The Green Book chapter 14a (newly updated as at 31/12/2020);
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-the-green-book-chapter-14a>

DES UPDATE

Alison McNeillage, Primary Care Contracts Manager, NHS Lothian

106 practices have now returned the DES and reminders will be issued to the remaining practices.

Alison also provided an update on stock supplies and how these will be made available to practices (included in Vaccine Supply section below for easier reference).

VACCINE SUPPLY

Stephen McBurney, Associate Director Pharmacy Services, NHS Lothian

500,000 doses of AZ are coming into the UK in first week – 6500 coming into Lothian this week and all will go to general practice for vaccination of **own staff and ambulant over 80s**. **highlighted the amendment to earlier email of 6/1 which also referred to housebound vaccinations in error**

There will be a slow run-in initially, with first 3 shipments in next 3 weeks;

- week 1 = 64 packs (x 100 doses per pack (10 vials with 10 doses per vial)), week 2 = 67 packs, week 3 = 71 packs for the 120 Lothian practices

Board has placed the orders and are working with GP Sub/LMC to ensure a fair allocation of vaccines across practices. Those with largest number of over 80s will receive first week supply.

Movianto will contact practices and will deliver on your already agreed set day for delivery, as per flu.

Movianto will also deliver needles and syringes to accompany number of doses being delivered (no excess), although practices may need different needles for morbidly obese.

Mid Jan – expect that flows of AZ will significantly increase – Board will continue to control order while demand exceeds supply, with a possible move to flu-type ordering once supply>demand.

Vaccines are fridge storage items – reminded to ensure temperature monitoring is undertaken. Contact **Mandy Canning** (mandy.canning@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) for any advice needed.

Once punctured, AZ vial has a **6 hour expiry date** when kept 2-25oC and can be moved much more easily than Pfizer. However please consider shelf life if considering opportunistic delivery – we do not want to waste vaccines (10 doses per vial).

A number of practices in week 2 will have more than they need (pack can only be 100 dose packs) – COVID vaccine team are working out a way of safely transferring these between practices.

Blue bins (waste disposal) and alcohol swabs are needed. Blue top bins have been sourced and will be provided through HSCP hubs, either pick up or delivery (similar to PPE). If you urgently need one, email GMS Contract team - if not week 1 delivery practice, please hold off until week 2 so as not to overload.

Initial stock of alcohol swabs has been sourced and will initially go out via hubs (2 boxes per practice) but then through PECOS. Process will be confirmed 7/1.

Anything needed in short term but not available on PECOS, please contact GMS Contract team and they will help out practices that are stuck (gms.contract@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk).

Waste packaging/sharps bins – Concern that people will try to obtain waste packaging to make counterfeit goods so please dispose of all packaging securely. **National advice from PHS and NES – put packaging in blue topped containers. DO THIS UNTIL YOU HEAR OTHERWISE.** Once clarification received, practices will be informed.

**** FROM CHAT – CARE HOMES ARE REMOVING PACKAGING LABELS AND PUTTING THESE INTO BLUE BINS, REST OF PACKAGING IN RECYCLING ** - Vaccine board team are seeking urgent clarification**

TRAINING

Liz Young , Practice Nurse Team Manager, NHS Lothian

Webinars to support vaccinators in safely and effectively delivering the COVID vaccine are taking place up to Thursday 8th Jan (details were circulated to practices on 31/12 and 4th Jan). Everyone was encouraged to attend. A recorded version of the webinars will be made available on TURAS (account needed), or also via this link (select “Trainers”, then scroll down to “Webinar”);

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/37676/immunisation/covid-19-vaccines>

Proficiency Assessment Tool – National requirement, has to be completed but as experienced vaccinators we should only need to go through this once (or until you as a vaccinator are happy). However, this is a completely new vaccine so there is new learning and we need to consider this and be sure we know and understand the vaccine and the procedures around it. The proficiency tool is generic so can be used for any COVID vaccine going forward.

GPs – you need to know too e.g. what happens if breach in cold chain as you may be alone without your PN. Suggest do one on each other first!

Health Care Support Workers – national protocol signed off by SG but yet to see. HCS workers – SVQ trained, level 6 or 7 and 1-2 years experience are eligible. Propose they are not included in vaccination team for first 2 weeks until confirmed / established safe procedures.

We are aware of concerns about length of training. This is not the gift of Lothian to adjust – we’ve fed back nationally but the decisions are made elsewhere.

The following link to the NHS Lothian Education and Training site is regularly updated and provides handy Training Guides which list the required training and other mandatory requirements needed in order to deliver the COVID vaccine;

<http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Vaccine/Training/Pages/default.aspx>

VACCINE RECORDING

Paul Schofield, Head of Digital Innovation, NHS Lothian

Ian Thompson – GP guru on all things IT

- **Over 80s/practice patients** – record directly onto **Vision/EMIS** (system will pull info into TURAS)
Uniformity over both systems, templates in place.

****May also want to remind over 80s that they'll be called back in 3 months for 2nd dose****

- **Members of staff (patients elsewhere)** – record on **TURAS** (data capture tool created by Scottish Government, already used for annual reviews and amended slightly for vaccine management).

Positive feedback so far on TURAS ease of use.

Currently 2 levels of TURAS access;

- **Registrar** (admin stage). Inputs patient info (CHI), adds to relevant GP clinic, inputs date of vaccine
- **Vaccinator** (deliverer). Choose relevant patient from list, checks no other vaccine in last week, confirm consent, inputs vaccine info/batch number, injection site.

Paper forms can be completed as an alternative to inputting Vaccinator tasks live online, and there will be functionality later in January to allow the Registrar to input this data retrospectively into TURAS.

Alternatively, the administrator could be set up as another Vaccinator to allow input of all data, although only recommended if easily identifiable as admin only person and not giving any vaccines.

Paper forms and TURAS guidelines are being issued to practices this week. **REMEMBER TURAS IS FOR RECORDING STAFF VACCINES ONLY, SO LOW VOLUMES.**

Link to TURAS Guidance for GP Practices and Offline paper forms (scroll to bottom of page);

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/37676/immunisation/covid-19-vaccines>

****DON'T BE PUT OFF BY LENGTH OF DOCUMENT! IT'S MOSTLY PICTURES. ****

Link to TURAS system;

[Turas | Vaccination Management | Sign in \(nhs.scot\)](#)

STAFF VACCINE & BOOKING

David Small

Two avenues for GP teams in Lothian;

1 - AZ within practice

2 – Pfizer via central staff clinics.

Within practice, good practice is vaccinators first, then rest of practice staff – all part of Wave 1.

Ensuring no vaccine wastage is very important and had to carefully consider the implications of cancelling all 2nd dose appts if unable to refill with 1st doses – 1st vaccine bookings have now been made into these slots but not through the central booking system. Also carefully managing levels of vaccine sent out to central staff clinics to reduce waste. The plan from 7/1 onwards is not to accept those who turn up for 2nd dose as this has been well communicated (texts sent, speed read, notices on clinic doors, etc).

We will have enough Pfizer vaccine to give 2nd dose to those getting 1st dose, although may have to limit the number of Pfizer 1st doses we offer and possibly draw a line at end of January.

New online staff vaccine booking system will be launched by end of this week / early next week. New process will be communicated as soon as signed off – should make the booking process a lot easier – don't need TRAK access to book appointments. People should hear in the next week or two for 2nd dose appts at March/April clinics.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Neil MacRitchie, Medical Director of Lothian LMC

Staff who are currently in the shielding category but have now been vaccinated (whether 1st or 2nd dose) should continue to work from home and shouldn't return to patient facing roles. Occupational Health have advised that this may change in the coming months but currently the advice is the vaccine changes nothing about the precautions needed at work, organising a test if symptoms develop, or following the shielding advice.

Occ Health advise using the following link to the COVID-age tool which is constantly updated and improved; https://alama.shinyapps.io/Covid_Age/

It's important we don't let down our guard on FACTS over the next few months, even though vaccine is being delivered.

MASS CAMPAIGNS

David Small

The 79 and under population will be called to large-scale vaccination centres – EICC, Pyramids Business Park, Queen Margaret University car park (drive through) have all been confirmed. Also looking at "drive to then walk through" at Royal Highland Showround and The Gyle although it's been more difficult finding similar venues in East & West Lothian. More local venues will also be supplementing, particularly for those without access to transport, etc. Some will operate all week, others weekends/evenings only.

Not yet clear how the booking system will work, but it will be managed by a national system where patients will get a letter with an appointment and only need to take action if they need to change it, via a booking line. Likely to also be more localised Q&A lines available (is there parking nearby, what bus routes, etc).

Any enquiries into practices should be informed "The NHS will contact you and you will be allocated an appointment". We expect the system to work and we need to trust that it will.

Housebound patients will be vaccinated by community nursing teams and expected in January, although priority has been care homes and over 80s in GP practices.

Volunteers for COVID vaccine mass campaigns – Much of the mass campaign will be delivered through volunteers – 300-400 volunteers have already made contact and are independent contractors of all types. Rates of pay have been set nationally (£210 per session for GPs).

The mass campaigns will run for months and there are lots of shifts to fill. Those interested should email covidWVvac@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk.

Drummond's final comments

Our job is to continue to provide comfort and confidence to those we serve.

We know things won't go right all the time, often due to things outwith our control. I hope within Lothian we will continue to work together with kindness and patience, and together we will get through this.

Thank you to Lothian LMC office team for hosting our largest ever meeting with 720+ attendees.