



Booster Jab and COVID Pass briefing for people not registered with a GP / lacking an NHS number

In this brief document we want to help organisations supporting migrants navigate the latest announcement with regards to the COVID PASS and the booster jab.

Booster Jab for unregistered people

The Migrant Health Guide has been updated this week to reflect the fact that the booster dose like the first two doses of the COVID vaccine is available and free to everyone, regardless of immigration status.

In the box below I have pasted the updated text from the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) webpage.

Overseas visitors to England, including anyone living in the UK without permission, will not be charged for:

- testing for COVID-19 (even if the test shows they do not have COVID-19)
- treatment for COVID-19, including for a related problem called multisystem inflammatory syndrome that affects some children
- vaccination against COVID-19, including boosters

No immigration checks are needed for overseas visitors if they are only tested, treated or vaccinated for COVID-19.

Difference between third dose and booster dose

When searching for the nearest walk in / pop up on the webpage "[Find a walk-in coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination site](#)" you might notice a yellow box saying that to receive the third dose you need a letter from your GP (see below)

Important

If you are attending for a 3rd dose you need to bring your referral letter from a GP or hospital doctor. You will not be able to get a 3rd dose at a walk-in site without this letter.

It is important to know that for the NHS there is a difference between the third dose and a booster dose:

- The third dose is for individuals with [a weakened immune system](#)
- The booster dose is for everyone.

If you know of any individuals who are immunocompromised, they are entitled to a third dose followed by a booster three months on from the third dose.

COVID pass for people who received their vaccination abroad:

From the 8th of December, the government has made available the possibility of booking an appointment at selected vaccination centres to record MHRA-approved vaccines received abroad.

In this box you can see the relevant message of the NHS [website](#).

Tell the NHS about coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations you've had abroad

This service enables you to book an appointment to show evidence for any coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations you've had outside of England. This is so the NHS can securely update your vaccination record.

Who can use this service

You can use this service if you:

- are aged 18 years old or over
- have an NHS number
- have received one of these MHRA-approved vaccines outside of England - Oxford/AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria), Pfizer/BioNTech (Comirnaty), Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) or Moderna (Spikevax)

To use this service the person needs to have an NHS number which is obtained either being born in the UK or being registered with a GP in England.

Also please note that the website says that at the moment only a limited number of sites are offering these appointments. This means there may not be many appointments available in your area at the moment. More appointments will become available over time

COVID pass for people who received their vaccination at a pop-up / walk in centres but is not registered with a GP

This group of people is currently the group for which we are most concerned.

There is a risk that individuals who have been fully vaccinated at a pop up / walk in centre are unable to obtain a COVID pass, therefore they may be excluded from public places and certain types of employment and may face social and economic marginalisation.

At present a COVID pass is not easily available to vaccinated individuals who do not have an NHS number and solutions provided by the government and NHS England are not practical. Access to the

majority of COVID services is based on a person having and knowing their NHS number, something that many people in health inclusion groups still struggle to obtain.

During the first phase of the vaccination campaign, NHS England developed processes and pathways to vaccinate people regardless of whether they did or did not have an NHS number or were registered with a GP. The same is now required to ensure that those who have been vaccinated but do not have an NHS number and / or are not registered with a GP can obtain proof of their vaccination status.

Department of Health & Social Care has [provided a solution](#) by which vaccinated patients without an NHS number could obtain their temporary NHS number by contacting their administering centre or to utilising the online 'Find Your NHS Number' service and then would be able to obtain proof of vaccination.

This solution is limited for the following reasons:

- How are people supposed to know their temporary NHS number? Is it by calling/visiting their local vaccination centre?
- How should they proceed if the vaccination centre where they receive their vaccine has since then closed? (for example in West London both stadia and museums were used as vaccination centres and have since closed).
- Does the online "find your NHS number" provides also the temporarily assigned NHS number?
- What support is available for people who don't speak English?
- There is no public facing information on this solution. NHS England communications and webpages on the topic do not clearly outline how somebody who has been fully vaccinated but does not have an NHS number / is not registered with a GP can obtain a COVID pass.

It has also been suggested that individuals without an NHS number get registered with a GP in order to then obtain a COVID pass. However, given the well evidenced and continuing difficulties that certain populations face when trying to register with a GP, highlighted in separate pieces by media outlets ([Bureau of Investigative Journalism](#), [The Independent](#) and [Channel 4](#)), and [charities](#) working with health inclusion populations, this is unlikely to be a realistic or quick enough solution.

If you know of people struggling to get a pass do refer them to clinic advice line. Our clinic advice line is open from 10 am to 12 midday, Tuesday to Thursday. Call [0808 1647 686](tel:08081647686) (freephone) or email clinic@doctorsoftheworld.org.uk

Doctors of the World will continue to monitor the developments on this issue as well as any emerging and new issues arising for people including migrants struggling to register with a GP and thus accessing NHS services.