

Community pharmacy toolkit: Delivering an open access vaccination clinic

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Contents

1. Checklist to support the delivery of an open access vaccination clinic
2. Detailed guidance
3. Case studies
4. Template press release to help promote an open access vaccination clinic
5. Template poster to promote open access COVID-19 vaccination clinics
6. Template poster to promote open access COVID-19 and flu vaccination clinic
7. Graphics to use on social media and messaging apps – branded
8. Graphics to use on social media and messaging apps - unbranded
9. Staff poster: make every contact count
10. Links to further resources

1. Checklist to support the delivery of an open access vaccination clinic

Be accessible and ensure

- vaccine clinic opening hours are appropriate for inclusion health groups, people with long term conditions and carers
- interpreters and/or translated and easy read information is available – including signposting to online resources
- [GP Access Cards](#) are available to reassure people of their entitlement to register with a GP
- to accommodate walk-in appointments where possible

Be inclusive by

- partnering with local organisations supporting inclusion health populations, people with disabilities and carers to plan and promote the open access vaccination clinic
- promoting the open access clinics at COVID-19 vaccination information-sharing events, health, community and faith events as well as online and in the media

Be welcoming and reassure people

- they do not need an NHS number, to be registered with a GP, or ID
- the information they share is confidential and won't be used for immigration purposes
- testing and treatment for COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccination is paid for by the NHS, so they will not be charged for it
- the flu vaccination is also free for a large number of individuals. See full list [here](#)
- the Covid-19 and flu vaccines are safe, do not include any harmful ingredients and can be taken by people from different faiths
- the COVID-19 vaccine does not include animal products
- the flu vaccine for 18-64 year olds is egg-based. Low-egg and egg-free vaccines are available for people who are allergic to eggs

Make every contact count across your pharmacy and at your clinics

- use motivational interviewing to opportunistically start discussions about winter health and vaccinations including those for COVID-19 and flu with everyone using your pharmacy
- make time and space to answer people's questions and concerns about vaccination
- consider offering other routine health checks at your open access clinic, such as blood pressure readings, medication support and checking inhaler technique
- support unregistered patients to register with a GP should they wish to do so, reassuring them they can register free of charge, no proof of address/ID is needed and explaining how this can help them to access healthcare and prescriptions
- be prepared to signpost people to other healthcare services, such as dental and optician services, and where appropriate, provide support to complete HC1 forms

2. Detailed guidance to support the delivery of an effective open access vaccination clinic

Introduction

The [Joint National Plan for Inclusive Pharmacy Practice](#) asks all pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to join together to develop a culture of inclusive practice and embed it into everyday care to benefit the health of our diverse communities. A [focus on continuing to address vaccine hesitancy and reducing health inequalities more broadly](#) is an identified priority.

People from inclusion health groups, those with long term conditions and carers are at risk of social exclusion. They often face barriers when accessing “mainstream” healthcare, resulting in poor health outcomes.

Inclusion health populations include people who experience homelessness, migrants in vulnerable circumstances, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, sex workers and victims of modern slavery. Facing a higher risk of becoming unwell from serious infections, they might have missed routine vaccines in the UK or not received the same vaccinations as those offered in the UK whilst living in their country of birth. Migrants are entitled to receive vaccinations including hepatitis and TB in the UK, and the majority are paid for by the NHS. More information about vaccination entitlement and translated vaccine patient information leaflets are available on the Government website Gov.UK. You can also access the [COVID-19 migrant health guide](#).

Through the offer of open access vaccination clinics, pharmacies can help address inequality in access to COVID-19 vaccination and other key services (through direct provisions and signposting). The following recommended actions will help to increase the effectiveness and accessibility of your clinic.

Recommended actions

Plan your clinic to ensure its inclusive and accessible

Ensure vaccine service opening hours are appropriate for your population.

Your local healthcare settings and organisations that provide support to inclusion health populations, people with long term conditions and carers can advise on suitable operating times as they understand their life circumstances. More information about identifying potential partners is at the end of this section.

Provide interpreters or translated and easy read information, including online resources, to help people to understand the process, what they need to do and make an informed choice about vaccination. Easy read and translated information is available from [Doctors of the World UK](#) and the [Coronavirus Resource Centre](#). For sites without access to on-site BSL support, the provision of access to the remote BSL interpretation provided by NHS 119 is mandatory.

Reassure people who do not have a GP, NHS number or leave to remain in the UK about their right to have the COVID-19 vaccine and to register with a GP.

Use this [letter](#) (authored by Dr Nikki Kanani, Deputy SRO, COVID-19 Vaccination

Deployment Programme and Medical Director of Primary Care NHS England and NHS Improvement). Which is [available in other languages](#).

Where possible accommodate walk-in appointments, as they remove the barriers associated with being unable to book appointments or attend time-specific appointments. Life circumstances could mean people from inclusion health populations, or with caring responsibilities, struggle to meet a time-specific booked appointment.

Plan to be inclusive, by developing partnerships to promote and help tailor the open access clinics to meet the needs of health inclusion groups, people with long term conditions and carers. Local health organisations, community and faith groups who support inclusion health populations, people with long term conditions and carers can provide a rich source of advice and support. In addition to advice on suitable opening hours, they can advise you on how to ensure your vaccine service is inclusive and responsive to the needs of people, who often face challenges accessing mainstream services. This includes consideration of language and literacy needs; preferred service opening hours; and the physical environment to ensure it is an accessible, welcoming safe space.

These organisations and groups might also promote your vaccination clinic directly to their service-users, and display clinic posters in their premises or on their website, newsletters or social media channels. They might also advise on other places frequented by these populations, where you should promote the open access clinic such as accommodation sites, shops, places of worship, community venues, food banks. More information about identifying potential partners is at the end of this section. Template posters and social media graphics are included in this toolkit.

Promote the open access clinic in the community, work with partners to host a vaccine information event as part of your promotion. This event can help you to make the population aware of your open access clinic, but is also an opportunity to answer questions and boost vaccine confidence. Doctors of the World have produced a [COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Toolkit](#). This includes resources to support delivery of an information-sharing event on COVID-19 vaccines by organisations working with inclusion health populations. Community pharmacies could partner with local support organisations to co-deliver the event and use it as an opportunity to promote the vaccination service.

In the previous section we discussed the need to promote the service through the groups and organisations who support these populations. You can also promote the clinics online on local community social media groups and council and support organisations' websites. Your local and regional NHS organisations might also help promote your clinics. This toolkit also includes a template press release you can share with local media and partners as well as social media assets.

Be welcoming – when planning and running your open-access clinics

Reassure people that they do not need an NHS number, a GP or ID to get vaccinated. NHS England states that people who aren't registered with a GP but are eligible for the COVID-19 or flu vaccine should not be turned away or signposted elsewhere.

Vaccination can be offered without an NHS number, a GP registration or ID.

You should log the vaccination for people who do not have an NHS number within Points of Care Systems, using the patient's details and overriding the requirement to synchronise with PDS. For more information review your system help guides or log a call with the helpdesk. You can also access this [guide](#) to upload the vaccination to Pinnacle Outcomes4Health.

Reassure people that personal information collected for vaccination purposes will not be shared with the Home Office for immigration control purposes. For some people, fear that their personal information will be shared with the Home Office for immigration control purposes is a barrier to accessing COVID-19 vaccination, testing or treatment. Reassure people that information collected for vaccination purposes, and any information recorded by the pharmacy, is confidential.

Reassure people the COVID-19 vaccine is paid for by the NHS, so they won't be charged for having it, and that a large number of people can also qualify for a free flu vaccination. The [COVID-19 migrant guide](#) states 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.

Make Every Contact Count

Have COVID-19, flu and health and wellbeing leaflets in easy-to-read and local community languages available in the pharmacy. [Public Health England](#) and [Doctors of the World UK](#) have produced COVID-19 and flu vaccination information leaflets in multiple languages.

Offer the COVID-19 and flu vaccines to eligible unvaccinated people from inclusion health populations who present to the pharmacy for other reasons, and be willing to answer their questions and concerns about the vaccines. Advice on how to approach conversations about vaccination is available [here](#).

Use this opportunity to tackle the poor health, that is a common issue for people from inclusion health populations. Inform people of their eligibility for other vaccines available free of charge, and screen for common health problems by offering other free routine health checks that you may provide in the pharmacy, including blood pressure, asthma and weight checks.

For information about vaccination entitlements see [Immunisation information for migrants - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). This provides general information on vaccinations for migrants and includes translated resources for migrants on how to access other vaccinations.

Inform people not registered with a GP that they are entitled to be registered and access the service free of charge. Everyone in the UK is entitled to register with a GP irrespective of immigration status or ability to produce identity documents. The NHS has produced a [leaflet](#) aimed at refugees and asylum seekers on how to register with a GP that could be made available at your pharmacy.

Some people may not be familiar with the role of a GP, community pharmacy, and the primary care system. Taking time to explain what the role of primary care is (e.g. provide non-emergency healthcare, manage long-term health conditions, deliver health checks, provide prescriptions, deliver vaccines and screening, refer to specialists etc) may encourage registration.

Support unregistered patients to register with a local GP should they wish to do so. Pharmacies could signpost unregistered people to their local GP practice(s). Where possible, the pharmacy could host a regular session (within the pharmacy or outside the premises), primarily run by local support organisations to assist completion of registration forms where language barriers may otherwise prevent registration.

Opportunity to discuss other health needs/vaccinations, give further information and signpost to those people needing access to other vaccinations, including Flu, hepatitis and childhood vaccinations, where appropriate. More information on entitlement is available from [Immunisation: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk). The NPA also has useful links to flu vaccination resources including posters <https://www.npa.co.uk/pgd/promotional-resources-2021>. NHS England and NHS Improvement has a free to join community of practice on FutureNHS. Open to pharmacy staff and everyone working on delivering COVID-19 vaccination you will find links to the latest vaccination equalities guidance and resources. If you don't have a FutureNHS account, [register for an account](#) and then [join the Hub](#).

You can find information about organisations supporting inclusion health populations in your area online. A good place to start includes:

- [The University of East London](#) online national directory of services and organisations supporting refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.
- [Homeless Link](#) directory of homelessness support services in England by postcode.
- [Friends, Families and Travellers](#) online directory of specialist support services.

Your local GP practice, [Clinical Commissioning Group](#) (CCG) and local authority may also have access to a directory of local services they could share with you. Your local Engagement Officer within the CCG, or Communities of Interest Lead within the Public Health team at your Local Authority, may be a good first point of contact. You might find this Local Government Association [A-Z of councils](#) helpful. The NPA provides a [flu vaccination service hub](#) for its members with links to recent updates, template SOPs and supporting resources. There's also a section on its website on [how to tackle vaccine hesitancy](#).

This document was written by Doctors of the World, National Pharmacy Association and NHS England and Improvement. It can be used by any pharmacy in England who is providing the COVID-19 and/or flu vaccine.

3. Case study – Wicker Pharmacy, Sheffield



About: In May 2021, Wicker pharmacy became one of the first three pharmacies in South Yorkshire to offer COVID-19 vaccination. An award-winning late night and extended hours pharmacy, Wicker has been offering a wide range of services to the community since 1952.

Situated on a major route, with high footfall and good bus links, it is located next to a support agency for sex workers. It's also a short distance from a Home Office immigration centre, as well as a hotel providing temporary accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees. Linking with agencies working with inclusion health groups, the pharmacy offers prescriptions for those in drug maintenance and needle exchange programmes and has a reputation for helping the local community. It is well trusted and seen as a “safe space”.

Initial operating model: Stepping forward to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination at the earliest opportunity, staff were trained in aseptic techniques and awarded trained vaccinator status by their local CCG. Initially, the pharmacy operated an appointment only system, with bookings taken for people aged 45+ through the National Booking System (NBS).

Adapting the model: Three vaccinators provided up to 200 appointments per day. However on some days as many as 80 people failed to attend. Concerned about vaccine wastage and wishing to offer a more flexible model, the team spoke to the local Director of Public Health, before introducing a small number of walk-in appointments. This adapted model continues to be beneficial in helping people from inclusion health groups to access vaccination. A significant number of whom are unable to use the NBS as they don't have an NHS number.

Impact: Over 12,500 people have received their vaccine, as the team have tirelessly built trust and confidence in the vaccination within the community.

Learning:

- Accessible and flexible options are needed to ensure vaccination is accessible to people without an NHS number, who can't use the NBS
- People who are not registered with a GP practice, won't be re-called for their second vaccine or receive the usual reminders for appointments, however staff found that people kept their Covid-19 vaccine appointment card safe and returned on the specified date for their next dose
- Give priority access to people who might exhibit challenging behaviour and/or lead chaotic lives when they are in the pharmacy, as many will struggle to attend appointments, wait around or return another day

- Carefully reorganise the premises to ensure sufficient socially distanced seating for people after their vaccination
- Plan staff resourcing carefully due to the time needed to:
 - answer questions about COVID-19 vaccination, initially staff handled large volumes of calls about its safety and impact on medications and allergies
 - enter client details without a NHS number on Outcomes4Health platforms, initially this was difficult but can now be done using a name and DOB
 - locate the correct patient record of anyone presenting for a follow-up vaccination who is not registered with a GP and had their first or earlier dose(s) at a different centre, and has either no or multiple NHS numbers – the team needed to allow an extra 20 – 30 minutes to do this

Top tips:

- **Make Every Contact Count** – some people have not had access to healthcare services for a long time. Helping them to access primary care and register with a GP is the best way to support their long term health needs.
- **Be visible** - utilise the inside and outside space to make your clinic visible to passers-by and to protect people waiting for their vaccine
- **Be approachable** - being physically outside the barrier of the shop door led to more people approaching staff to discuss any vaccination concerns and enabled staff to invite people inside for the vaccination
- **Be flexible** – try to accommodate any requests for a vaccine on the same day, or as soon as possible from people from an inclusion health group
- **Work with your established and wider connections** – such as
 - local agencies working with inclusion health groups
 - your local authority and engagement officer at the CCG/ICS who can signpost you to other agencies working with these vulnerable groups
 - your local Safeguarding Hub for help to navigate the additional training needed, including Level 3 Safeguarding Children and Young People, to provide vaccinations to a wider age group
- Learn what is important to your community – the team found discussing the concept of the “vaccine passport” and future travel was helpful in overcoming some hesitancy, and encouraged eligible people to download the NHS app

You can find out more about opportunities to take part in the Community Pharmacy Local Enhanced Services COVID-19 vaccination programme here: and periodically submit an expression of interest via the NHS England website [Coronavirus » Community pharmacy Local Enhanced Service Specification – phase 3 coronavirus vaccination \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

A number of pharmacy based COVID-19 vaccination case studies are available on the [Doctors of the World website](#) and the [COVID-19 Vaccine Equalities Connect and Exchange Hub](#).

4. Template press release to promote your clinic

Dear news desk:

[Pharmacy name] open access vaccination day will help the most vulnerable to stay well this winter

As the months turn colder, [pharmacy name] will hold an open-access vaccination clinic on [DATE AND TIME] at [VENUE and ADDRESS]. Pharmacy staff will provide information, advice and access to vaccines to help the community stay well this winter.

Open to everyone in our community, regardless of their immigration status or personal circumstances, people will be able to get the free COVID-19 vaccine. Those who are eligible, will also be offered other important vaccines such as the flu vaccine Which is also free of charge for a large number of individuals.

[YOU CAN INCLUDE A SHORT QUOTE FROM A STAFF MEMBER AT YOUR PHARMACIST TO INVITE PEOPLE TO YOUR CLINIC – remember to state the name and job title of the person who provided the quote]

The clinic is free for everyone to attend, including vulnerable people who might not be registered with a GP, do not have an NHS number or a permanent address. All information and discussions shared with pharmacy staff will be used for health purposes only. The pharmacy welcomes everyone in our community, who might have missed earlier opportunities to have these important vaccines, to get them now. The COVID-19 and flu vaccines, and other important vaccines, will help to protect you, your family and your community.

Notes to editor

1. The COVID-19 vaccine is available to everyone in England aged 12 and over.
2. It is safe and does not contain any animal or harmful ingredients.
3. It has substantially reduced the risk from severe COVID-19 in the UK population.
4. You do not need to have a GP or an NHS number to get the COVID-19 vaccine.
5. The Evergreen offer means that people who might have missed their appointment for the first or second dose of their COVID-19 vaccine can have it now.

Get your COVID-19 vaccination here:



If you are homeless or don't have a GP, get your free COVID-19 vaccine

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- Ask how we can support you with your medicines.

Should I get vaccinated?

Yes - this is safe and the best way to protect yourself and others from severe COVID-19.

Walk in, no need to book

Get your vaccinations here

On:



If you are homeless or don't have a GP, get your free COVID-19 and flu vaccinations

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- Ask how we can support you with your medicines.

Should I get vaccinated?

Yes - this is safe and the best way to protect yourself and others from severe COVID-19.

Walk in, no need to book

Get your vaccinations here

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If you are homeless or don't have a GP, get your free COVID-19 and flu vaccinations

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- Ask how we can support you with your medicines.

Should I get vaccinated?

Yes - this is safe and the best way to protect yourself and others from severe COVID-19.

Ask us how to book

7. Example graphics to use on social media and messaging apps - branded



Look out for your nearest pop up clinic. To find out more information contact your local council for details.



Look out for your nearest pop up clinic. To find out more information contact your local council for details.



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Look out for your nearest pop up clinic. To find out more information contact your local council for details.



You can access these graphics in other languages here:

<https://www.healthpublications.gov.uk/ViewArticle.html?sp=Scovid19vaccinationsocialmediacards2021national>

8. Example graphics to use on social media and messaging apps - unbranded

COVID-19 vaccination clinic

Open to everyone

- No proof of address
- No NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- **No need to book**

Having both doses of your COVID-19 vaccination reduces your risk of being hospitalised due to COVID.



Get your COVID-19 vaccination

Everyone welcome

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- **No need to book**



Book your COVID-19 vaccination here

Everyone welcome

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes

Having both doses of your COVID-19 vaccination reduces your risk of being hospitalised with COVID



COVID-19 vaccination clinic

Everyone welcome

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes
- **No need to book**

Having both doses of your COVID-19 vaccination reduces your risk of being hospitalised due to COVID



Get your winter vaccinations

Open to everyone

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes

Having both doses of your COVID-19 vaccine, reduces your risk of being hospitalised due to COVID.



Get your winter vaccinations here on:

Open to everyone

- You do not need proof of address
- You do not need an NHS number
- Your details will not be shared for immigration purposes

Having both doses of your COVID-19 vaccine, reduces your risk of being hospitalised due to COVID.





Making Every Contact Count to help your patients this winter

Optimising opportunities to talk about flu and COVID-19 Vaccination

Children, young people and adults who are eligible may not have had their COVID-19 or flu vaccination(s) because they might have:

- concerns that the vaccine will impact existing health condition(s), medication or future plans such as studies, work or pregnancy
- been misinformed about the vaccine or risk of COVID-19 by friends, family or online
- have low trust in the vaccine, local authorities and public services

Talking to a trusted health professional can help increase vaccine confidence

Use motivational interviewing to initiate a conversation around health and wellbeing:

- step into a quiet area to have the conversation
- have up-to-date information available about how they can get their vaccination(s) and vaccine guides in different formats, for example, easy read or translated versions

Here are some links you might find useful

- www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/supporting-behaviour-change/motivational-interviewing
- www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/making-every-contact-count/
- www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-easy-read-resources

**Discussing COVID-19 and flu vaccination could help to
protect your patients and others this winter**

11. Links to further resources

[Community pharmacy Local Enhanced Service Specification – phase 3 coronavirus vaccination \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

Flu vaccination: [who should have it this winter and why](#) and [information for the public on who can book and when](#)

NHSEI Community pharmacy [Updates and guidance](#) about COVID-19.

[Preparing for community pharmacy to contribute to the COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) Guidance on Pharmacy-led Local Vaccination Services.

[JCVI advice in response to the emergence of the B.1.1.529 \(Omicron\) variant: next steps for deployment](#)

[COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination for pregnant women](#)

[Third primary COVID-19 vaccine dose for eligible cancer patients](#)

[COVID-19 vaccination deployment: booster vaccination for cohort 10 and second doses for 16 and 17-year olds](#)

[Vaccination as a condition of deployment \(VCOD\) for all healthcare workers](#)

[National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports - GOV.UK](#)

[General Pharmaceutical Council FAQs for pharmacy professionals and pharmacy owners](#) relating to the Covid-19 Vaccination programme and standards

[NPA Covid-19 updates – overview of Covid-19, including latest news and updates](#)

[NPA Covid-19 Vaccination programme resources and direct links](#) to key websites to support you and your team deliver the Covid-19 programme

[SOP for mobile and roving vaccination centres](#) (includes “Pop-ups” and temporary vaccination sites at Community Pharmacies) (July 2021)

Vaccinating children and young people [C1384-Vaccinating-children-and-young-people-frequently-asked-questions.pdf \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

Vaccine SOPs [Standard Operating Procedures – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)

[Vaccine Confidence Dialogues..Community Pharmacy...guest speaker HE Seth George Ramocan - YouTube](#)

Doctors of the World [vaccine confidence toolkit](#)

[How to address vaccine hesitancy - The Pharmaceutical Journal \(pharmaceutical-journal.com\)](#)

