

Seven things to know about the Covid-19 vaccination programme

1. It will be safe

The NHS will not offer Covid-19 vaccinations until it is safe to do so and a vaccine has proved to be safe, effective and in the best interests of the public. All vaccines have to pass strict safety tests and be approved by the MHRA, which is the independent UK regulator for medicines and vaccines. The MHRA has prioritised the review of Covid-19 vaccines and agreed to receive data throughout the trials to speed up their review process, but it will still be carrying out a full review to make sure that a vaccine is safe and effective before it will approve its use.

2. The people at greatest risk from Covid-19 will be offered a vaccine first

Like seasonal flu, it is important that people who might be more vulnerable receive their vaccination first. The independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is currently advising that the priority groups for vaccinations are care home residents and staff, people aged over 80 and health and social care staff, and that the vaccine should then be rolled out to the rest of the population in order of age and risk. This may change as we learn more about the characteristics of the different vaccines and who they are most effective for but we will continue to follow the advice from the JCVI and work to prioritise the most vulnerable people.

3. You will be able to get a vaccine wherever you live

Vaccines will be available in a number of different locations in all communities. This will include a range of community and primary care locations, plus new dedicated vaccine centres. Plans have taken account of the differences in local geography and communities and access to public and private transport to make sure people will be able to get a vaccine as easily as possible.

4. You will get your vaccine from a fully trained vaccinator.

It is not just nurses who can provide vaccinations and there will be a wide range of staff giving the Covid-19 vaccines to make sure people can get one as quickly as possible. Everyone who will be giving the vaccinations will have received full training and be qualified to do so.

5. You still need a flu jab

A Covid-19 vaccine will not protect you against the flu, which can also be very serious for older people and those with health conditions. If you have been offered a flu vaccine, please try to have this as soon as possible to help keep you safe and well.

6. Other health and care services will continue while the vaccination takes place

It is important that people can get a Covid-19 vaccine as quickly as possible but it is also important that this does not disrupt other vital health services. We are making sure that we can provide vaccinations without affecting other vital health services in hospitals, GP practices and the community.

7. The NHS will be ready to deliver a vaccine as soon as one is approved.

We don't know yet exactly when the first vaccine will be available but a huge amount of work is taking place to prepare for this. The NHS, local authorities and public sector and voluntary organisations are working together to make sure people across West Yorkshire can get a vaccine as soon as one is approved.