

# COVID 19 Vaccination Programme and Help and Support for people in Sefton

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## COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The NHS is working hard to vaccinate those most at risk of COVID-19 first – this means care home staff and residents, people aged over 80 and frontline health and care staff - before moving onto the next priority groups.

In Sefton our GP practices are a central part of the national programme. They are working together in groups with support from the borough's two clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to deliver vaccinations as quickly as possible to their priority patients.

Everyone will be contacted when it's their turn to be vaccinated, so please be patient and do not contact your GP practice or other NHS organisation to ask for your vaccination.

We understand that people are keen to know when they will receive their COVID-19 vaccinations. It will take some time to contact people in order of priority.

Sefton has more people aged 80 and over than other areas in the country and not all parts of Sefton were able to start vaccinating at the same time, so do not worry if you have not been contacted yet.

Not all local premises or surgeries can become community vaccination centres, as they need to meet the strict requirements. So, when it is your turn to be vaccinated, your appointment is unlikely to be at your GP practice.

Dedicated sites have been set up by our GP led service so people can have their vaccine safely. Importantly, we are urging people not to drop into any of these sites – vaccinations are strictly by appointment only.

This is the biggest vaccination programme the NHS has ever undertaken. It is a huge challenge and the local NHS is working hard to overcome any operational problems as they may arise. This means the exact weekly roll out of the programme is largely shaped by vaccine supply from the manufacturers.

In the meantime, we ask that you:

- Do not contact your GP or the NHS, we will contact you
- When we do contact you, please attend your booked appointments

Remember, it is really important we all continue to follow the guidance to stop the spread of the virus by following:

- hands - wash your hands frequently
- face - use a face covering or mask
- space - keep your distance from people

***Even if you have received a first dose of vaccine, you should still continue to follow these rules to keep you and those around you safe and free from COVID-19.***

## **The Different Ways You Might be Contacted**

In addition to **GP led services**, people may also be contacted by the following:

### **NHS COVID-19 national booking service**

Some residents are receiving letters from the national service inviting them to book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment online or by phone at a special **regional vaccination centre** (like St Helens Rugby Club), or a community **pharmacy** depending on whether these are available locally.

Importantly, anyone who is unable to go to a regional vaccination centre, or who would prefer to have their vaccination via the GP led vaccination service can still choose to do so. They do not need to take any action. They will still be automatically contacted by the local GP led service, as it works through its lists of registered patients in order of priority.

### **Hospital services**

These services are focusing on vaccinating frontline health and care workers. However, some people may have been contacted to have the vaccine as an inpatient or at an outpatient appointment at the start of the programme.

## **About the Vaccine**

The NHS will not offer any COVID-19 vaccinations to the public until independent experts have signed off that the vaccine is safe.

The COVID-19 vaccines that have currently been approved for use have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

This means the COVID-19 vaccines have gone through all the clinical trials and safety checks that all other licensed medicines go through. The MHRA follows international standards of safety.

Checks continue after approval to make sure there are no further side effects or long-term risks. Some people have experienced mild side effects – like when they have the flu or many other vaccines - but no significant side effects have been reported.

Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against ill health. They prevent up to 3 million deaths worldwide every year.

Since vaccines were introduced in the UK, diseases like smallpox, polio and tetanus that used to kill or disable millions of people are either gone or seen very rarely.

Other diseases like measles and diphtheria have been reduced by up to 99.9% since their vaccines were introduced.

However, if people stop having vaccines, it's possible for infectious diseases to quickly spread again.

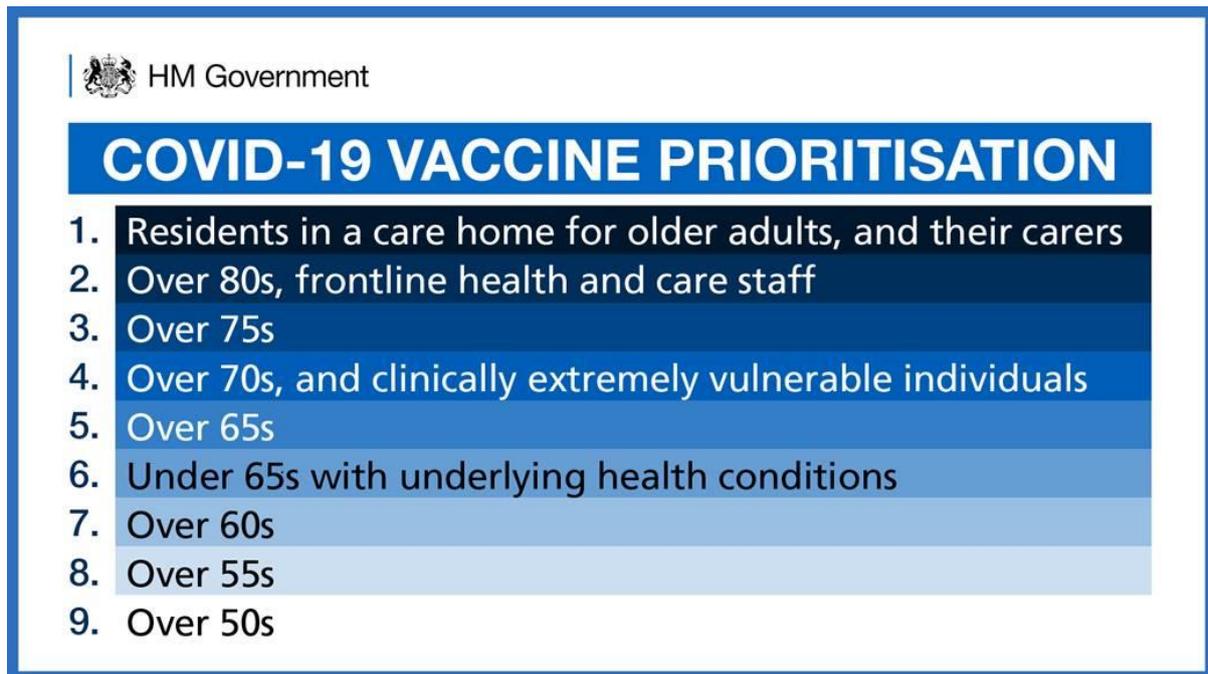
You can find videos provided by Liverpool Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust about the general role and importance of all vaccines in protecting health in other languages (Arabic, Chinese, Nepali, Nigerian (Yoruba), Polish, Romanian, Pashto, Farsi/Dari) here [www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk](http://www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk) or [www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk)

## How is the Vaccine Being Prioritised?

The NHS is currently in the process of offering the vaccine to people aged 80 and over, those who live or work in care home, and frontline health and social care staff.

When everyone in these groups has had the chance to get their first dose of the vaccine the programme will expand to other people that are at risk either due to their age group or medical condition. This is in line with the advice from the national Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI).

You can see the order of priority below:



The graphic is a blue-bordered box containing the HM Government logo and a list of COVID-19 vaccine prioritisation categories. The categories are numbered 1 through 9, with the first three categories (1-3) highlighted in a darker blue background.

HM Government

### COVID-19 VACCINE PRIORITISATION

1. Residents in a care home for older adults, and their carers
2. Over 80s, frontline health and care staff
3. Over 75s
4. Over 70s, and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. Over 65s
6. Under 65s with underlying health conditions
7. Over 60s
8. Over 55s
9. Over 50s

## **Staying Safe**

We are aware some people are receiving suspicious calls and text messages offering the COVID-19 vaccination, so we are reminding residents:

- The vaccine is only available on the NHS for free to people in priority groups, and the NHS will contact you when it is your turn. Anyone offering you a paid-for vaccine is committing a crime.
- The NHS will never ask you to press a button on your keypad or send a text to confirm you want the vaccine, and will never ask for payment or for your bank details.
- At the moment we are also not making house calls to deliver or discuss the vaccine. Anyone offering this now is committing a crime.

If you receive a call you think is fraudulent, you should hang up. If you think you have been the victim of fraud or identity theft, you should report this directly to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. If you are vulnerable, and particularly if you are worried that someone has or might come to your house, you should report it to the Police online or by calling 101.

## **More Information on the Vaccine and the Programme**

You can find latest updates about the local vaccination programme from the CCG's websites here [www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk](http://www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk) and [www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk)

You can read some frequently asked questions about the vaccine programme in Cheshire and Merseyside here <https://www.cheshireandmerseysidepartnership.co.uk/covid-19-vaccination-faqs/>

You can find out more about the national vaccination programme here [www.nhs.uk/covidvaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covidvaccine)

## National Lockdown

### What do the Restrictions Mean?

Since Tuesday 5 January 2021, the message from the Government has been that people in England must '**stay at home**' except for essential purposes.

The Government's guidance says you must not leave or be outside of your home except where necessary. Everyone should follow this guidance - it is the law.

#### **You can only leave the home to:**

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area;
- meet your support bubble or childcare bubble where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

If you do leave home for a permitted reason, you should always stay local - unless it is necessary to go further, for example to go to work. Stay local means stay in the village, town, or part of the city where you live.

Visit the Government's website for full details of what you can and cannot do at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

This is a link to an easy-read guide about the national lockdown and staying at home - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/952298/National\\_Lockdown\\_Easy\\_Read.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/952298/National_Lockdown_Easy_Read.pdf)

You can find a breakdown of what this means for Sefton Council services at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/miscellaneous-pages/community-services-during-covid-19/>

### Clinically Extremely Vulnerable People

People who are clinically extremely vulnerable you are advised to only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential. We recommend that you do not attend work.

You can find Government guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

## **Available Support**

For people who do not have a support network, Sefton Council and Sefton CVS can provide support during the coronavirus crisis. They can help with things like **urgent food delivery, general help with loneliness, prescription collection and help to get online**. People should fill in an online form at <https://forms.sefton.gov.uk/covid19referral/> or can call 0345 140 0845 between 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 10am-4pm Saturday and Sunday.

For **health and wellbeing** support, visit <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/miscellaneous-pages/health-and-wellbeing-directory.aspx>. We have also attached an easy-read guide to this email.

People can visit <https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support> to find **other available support**.

For people who are **extremely clinically vulnerable (previously shielding)**, NHS Volunteer Responders are continuing to offer support to those who need it, including collecting and delivering food and medicines. To arrange support, people can call the NHS Responder scheme on 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week) or can visit <https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/>

People with Covid-19 symptoms have been required to self-isolate by law. To help those on low incomes who are unable to work from home, the Government is providing a £500 '**Test and Trace Support**' payment. People can apply online at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/covid-19-in-sefton/covid-19-support/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme.aspx>.

People in **short term crisis** may be eligible for Sefton's Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme (ELAS). Information can be found at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/advice-benefits/emergency-limited-assistance-scheme.aspx>

## **The Life Rooms Pathways Advice Service**

The Life Rooms have a **Pathways Advice Service** delivered by **telephone and email**, available **Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm**. We're available to chat and offer signposting advice to help you in areas such as:

- Life Rooms Learning
- Volunteering
- Vocational Training
- Employment
- Finances
- Housing
- Mental Wellbeing
- Physical Wellbeing
- Family/Caring Roles
- Social Interactions

To speak to an advisor or to find out more, please call us on **01704 383 198** or email [liferooms.support@merseycare.nhs.uk](mailto:liferooms.support@merseycare.nhs.uk)

**You can also request to speak to a Life Rooms Pathways Advisor via video call. Please contact The Life Rooms to find out more.**

To find out more about The Life Rooms and the virtual services currently on offer, visit [www.liferooms.org](http://www.liferooms.org)

## **What Should You Do If You Think You Have COVID-19?**

If you have any coronavirus symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

**Get a test and stay at home.**

If you need medical advice about your coronavirus symptoms visit [www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19](http://www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19)

## **COVID-19 Testing in Sefton**

**If you DO have coronavirus symptoms:**

You can book a test by calling 119 or visiting [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

You should also get a test if you have been asked to get tested by

- NHS Test and Trace
- Sefton Council

**If you DO NOT have coronavirus symptoms:**

Because the Government's latest regulations say that people in England must 'stay at home' except for essential purposes, only key workers and those with caring commitments during the lockdown should now go for a SMART test.

This includes people who:

- Work in supermarkets or those shops that can open
- Work in schools or caring environments where on-site testing is not taking place
- Are unpaid carers and volunteers
- Are in other public-facing roles

Walk-through SMART COVID-19 testing for people in those groups is now taking place 8am to 8pm, no appointment necessary, at:

- Splash World in Southport\*
- Bootle Leisure Centre
- Aintree Racecourse

\*Please use rear car park of Dunes/Splashworld, accessible from the Esplanade, opposite the Lifeboat Station.

**Check on the live [Find a Test map](https://sefton.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/findatestcenter.html) to see if the sites are busy and how long you might have to wait**

**For more information about COVID-19 testing in Sefton visit [www.sefton.gov.uk/testing](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/testing)**

## Healthcare Advice and Treatment for Non-COVID-19 Illnesses and Injuries

Your NHS is still here for you during the COVID-19 pandemic, so don't delay in seeking medical help if you need it.

Many services are working differently to keep you and their staff safe – like assessing you first over the phone or by video - but they are still there for you when you need them.

- You can find a wealth of trusted advice about hundreds of health conditions, a symptom checker and details of GPs, pharmacies in your local area by visiting [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- Your local pharmacy offers free, confidential and expert advice on a range of health issues. It can also help you to self-care and prepare for many common winter illnesses and offer advice on which medicines to keep in stock at home.
- Your GP practice is there for you whenever you need medical help for illnesses you cannot treat yourself. Contact by phone – do not visit your practice without calling first.
- When you need medical help or advice fast, but it is not a 999 emergency, you can contact NHS 111 online [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or by call 111 at any time day or night.
- You can now do many things online, like ordering repeat prescriptions and booking appointments. Visit your practice website for details or download the NHS App <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-app/>
- For help with mild to moderate stress, anxiety, or depression, contact Talking Matters Sefton, our 'talking therapies' service. Phone 0151 955 3200, ask at your GP or visit [www.mhm.org.uk/talking-matters-sefton](http://www.mhm.org.uk/talking-matters-sefton)
- If you or someone you care for has a serious or life-threatening emergency – like chest pains or signs of stroke - **call 999 immediately** as every second counts.

**Find out more about your health services at:**

[www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services](http://www.southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services) -

**if you live in Southport and Formby**

[www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services](http://www.southseftonccg.nhs.uk/your-health-services) -

**if you live in south Sefton**