

New national NHS letters issued - inviting patients to book their own vaccination appointments

Dear stakeholder,

This weekend, another cohort of people across England aged 80 and over and living within a 45 minute drive of one of seven new large-scale vaccination centres, will start to receive national letters inviting them to book themselves a COVID vaccination appointment. A copy of the letter is attached for your information.

If you receive calls from members of the public who are confused, or concerned about travelling to one of the vaccination sites bookable through the national website, the following may help you or your staff to explain the situation:

These are letters from the national NHS system and are being sent out to people aged 80 and over during the coming days. If you've already had your first dose of the vaccine from a local GP-run vaccination hub or hospital, you can ignore this letter. The practice or hospital which gave you your first vaccination is responsible for arranging your appointment for your second jab.

If you haven't had your first vaccination yet (and you are aged 80 or over), you can choose to book an appointment for yourself using the web address or phone number in the letter. If you book in this way, you will be offered an appointment at one of the large vaccination sites – our nearest is currently at a venue called Robertson House, close to the centre of Stevenage. However, this venue is fully booked for the next week or two, so you may be offered a vaccination site further away than this. You can choose to have your vaccination in your local area instead. Your GP will contact you as soon as they are ready to offer you an appointment.

Background

If patients from Hertfordshire, west Essex and the surrounding areas respond to the letter by calling 119 or going online, their closest option is currently the Robertson House vaccination centre in Stevenage, which is being run by Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust. This vaccination centre is one of the first seven large-scale sites across the country which began vaccinating on Monday 15 January. However, this site is fully booked until 25 January. As a result, patients may be offered an appointment even further from home – in another NHS region. It is possible that if patients have made a local appointment or been vaccinated very recently they could also receive a letter. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

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